



### FOR NATURE AND PEOPLE IN INDONESIA



# 50 Indigenous Leaders' Voices

for Nature and People in Indonesia



### Title

Fifty Indigenous Leaders' Voices for Nature and People in Indonesia

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\* The name of each sub-title (1-50) refers to the name of the indigenous community

## FOREWORD

Indigenous Peoples and local communities play an outsized role in nurturing and sustaining life on Earth through their cultures, customary systems and deep connections with their collective lands, waters, and territories. This reality is increasingly well recognized and accepted in mainstream conservation, science, and society.

"Fifty Indigenous Leaders' Voices for Nature and People" is a powerful contribution to our collective understanding of Indonesia's awe-inspiring diversity, told by those who know it best: Indigenous women, men, and youth from customary territories across the archipelago. By sharing their stories, perspectives and wisdom in this publication, they are sharing a precious gift with the world.

Each contributor speaks to their views on Indigenous Peoples as conservation actors, conservation stories and the status of government recognition in their community, challenges, and aspirations and hopes. Together, they showcase a wealth of lived experience and knowledge that are gathered and passed on through generations – still rarely heard in mainstream discourse but unrivalled in their depth, breadth, and nuance. It is particularly heartening to see so many contributions from Indigenous youth activists, as they are the links between their communities' current customary leaders and elders and future generations who will take up the baton in decades to come

The contributors do not gloss over the harsh realities that Indigenous Peoples face on the frontlines of our interconnected planetary and social crises, nor should they. They also provide insightful lessons, clear direction and inspiration – not only for their own communities but also for decision-makers, conservation practitioners and everyday citizens alike. Each of us has the responsibility to ensure a healthy, sustainable and equitable planet for all and for generations to come, and the voices in this publication add to the growing calls to collectively rise to this challenge.

On behalf of the ICCA Consortium, the global association for territories of life, I extend my heartfelt appreciation and congratulations to the Working Group on ICCAs in Indonesia for compiling this publication and for the celebration of its first decade. The Working Group, which brings together ten Indigenous and civil society organizations, has contributed significantly to the movement for ICCAs—territories of life, both within Indonesia and globally, and I have confidence that they will continue to do so in the years to come. Thank you for sharing these beautiful gifts.

Sincerely,

Holly Jonas, LLM Global Coordinator ICCA Consortium

## INTRODUCTION



FOR US, CONSERVATION IS AN EXPRESSION OF THE COMMUNITY'S CARE, A MANIFESTATION OF ITS MORAL AND SPIRITUAL DUTY TO PROTECT THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND ALL THE RESOURCES IT CONTAINS.

The Indigenous Peoples of Adat Dalem Tamblingan di Catur Desa, Bali

The interview with fifty traditional leaders and activists, both men and women, from indigenous communities in Sumatra, Kalimantan, Java, Bali, Nusa, Sulawesi, Maluku and Papua, reveal one overarching message, that conservation of the natural environment is part and parcel of Indigenous Peoples' cultures and codes of ethics. For Indigenous Peoples, conservation and sustainable development are integral parts of their culture and local wisdom. For them, the fate of human society and the natural environment are inextricably linked. Protecting the customary territories involves far more than merely protecting land and natural resources, it is about protecting the source of all life, maintaining the relationship between humanity and the Divine. Conservation and protecting natural resources and biodiversity is part of Indigenous Peoples' identity. Fulfilling their duty to protect the environment and everything within it from damage and loss provides them with a sense of dignity and pride.

In this publication entitled, Fifty Indigenous Leaders' Voices for Nature and People, traditional leaders, activists and other figures share the history and conservation traditions of their peoples, explain the challenges they face, and express their hopes for the future of their lands, waters and territories.

The stories demonstrate that the customary systems of governance in the territories of Indigenous Peoples are an effective means of protecting biodiversity and the ecosystem. Within their customary territories, communities have long adopted effective zonation plans that include also special conserved areas, tightly guarded according to customary laws, local wisdom and traditions. The stories reveal the growing number of initiatives where self-empowered and self-aware youth continues the advocacy of their fathers/mothers and rediscover the traditions of their ancestors to safeguard their homelands. However, the stories also make it clear that Indigenous Peoples still suffer from encroachment by companies and the pressures of agribusiness on their customary territories. All leaders make a common call to the government to maintain their commitment to passing the law on the recognition and protection of Indigenous Peoples and recognize the conservation contributions of Indigenous Peoples and local communities to biodiversity targets of Indonesia.

There is still a long way to go to ensure the rights of Indigenous Peoples throughout the Indonesian archipelago. Only a small handful out of the fifty interviews are success stories related to the recognition of indigenous and traditional forests, areas and territories, with many more describing ongoing struggles and difficulties. The wide range of conservation practices implemented by Indigenous Peoples and local communities can together protect the natural environment and provide a strong basis for the achievement of a prosperous, healthy, fair, and sustainable society, for this and future generations in Indonesia. The protection and recognition of ICCAs can strengthen Indonesia's leadership in biodiversity conservation at global level.

We hope that the publication of the this book can provide additional inspiration for countries to secure a fair, sustainable, and inclusive future. Moreover The publication also includes glossary that might be useful for readers to have further explanation about all local phrases used in a whole.

Sincerely,

Kasmita Widodo WGII Coordinator



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> ICCAs-Indigenous Peoples and Community Conserved Areas and Territories.

# **SUMATERA**



### **01. MUKIM SIEM**



ASNAWI ZAINUN

CUSTOMARY LEADER Aceh Besar, Aceh

IN MUKIM SIEM, AS ELSEWHERE IN ACEH, COMMUNITIES ENGAGE IN CONSERVATION PRACTICES DESCRIBED IN A BODY OF CUSTOMARY LAW KNOWN AS MEUKUTA ALAM ADAT QANUN. THOSE WHO VIOLATE THE LAW ARE SUBJECT TO SANCTIONS.

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

For centuries, Indigenous Peoples have lived in harmony with nature, utilizing, managing and preserving natural resources to ensure the survival of their communities. To achieve this, Indigenous Peoples engage in activities to protect and conserve the natural environment in which they live, including through efforts to protect natural sources of water in their territory.

### CONSERVATION STORIES

In general, the Acehnese community, including the Mukim Siem community, adhere to a set of rules known as the *Meukuta Alam Adat Qanun*. These rules outline the manner in which natural resources may be used, prohibiting the felling of trees within 1200 fathoms (1 fathom = 180 cm) from water sources or within 120 fathoms from the banks of the river; in livestock grazing areas; and on mountain slopes. These rules also encourage the planting of trees that retain water, such as sago palm, on rice fields. In cases where the customary laws are violated, sanctions are imposed. These laws are enforced by traditional custodians responsible for the management of the forest and their natural resources. For example, custodians charged with the responsibility for managing forest land are known as gle, while custodians with the responsibility for managing rice fields are known as blang.



#### **GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION**

Following the promulgation of Law No. 18 of 2001 concerning Special Autonomy for the Province of the Special Region of Aceh and Qanun Number 19 of 2013 concerning Spatial Planning for the Province of the Special Region of Aceh. Indigenous Peoples in the province have engaged in a struggle for their rights to their customary territories and natural resources. The Aceh Besar District has Qanun no. 8 Year 2009 concerning Mukim Government that provices and recognizes the of authority Mukim or traditional inter-village institutions that govern non-agricultural land and resources beyond the boundaries of villages. However, these provisions have yet to be fully implemented due to the fact that the district has not yet issued technical regulations and implementation guidelines.

#### CHALLENGES

The lack of a government policy that explicitly acknowledges the customary community's rights to their traditional territory undermines the implementation of customary law in conservation areas. In addition, with increasing social and economic pressures, there has been a shift in the values of the Indigenous Peoples, which has eroded their willingness to adhere to customary laws. With increasing pressures, some members of the community were tempted to fell trees in protected forests to sell for fuel to a nearby brick factory, causing significant environmental damage.

#### ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

It is critically important that laws at both the national and subnational levels are formulated to acknowledge Indigenous Peoples' custodianship over their traditional territory and to enable them to apply customary environmental practices. This includes the full involvement and participation of Indigenous Peoples in all matters related to formulating and implementing conservation practices in these areas. This will enable Indigenous leaders to work with members of their communities to implement the customary rules related to the conservation and protection of the natural environment and its resources.



### **02. BOLUS SIMANJUNTAK**



JESPAER SIMANJUNTAK CUSTOMARY LEADER North Tapanuli, North Sumatra



WE HOPE THAT THE RIGHTS TO OUR CUSTOMARY LANDS THAT HAVE BEEN SEIZED BY THE TOBA PULP LESTARI COMPANY ARE RETURNED TO US

### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

We are still struggling for the return of our land, which has been seized by Toba Pulp Lestari (TPL). We still try to protect our remaining *hamijon* on slopes that the company occupied yet. *Hamijon* is our name for the land passed down to us from our ancestors and on which we grow *kemenyan* (or frankincense trees) for our livelihood.

### CONSERVATION STORIES

PT. Toba Pulp Lestari (TPL) is a timber plantation company that has a large concession in North Sumatra. This company has existed since 1982 and has significantly affected the indigenous communities in Tano Batak. Many parts of the concession area intersect with our territory. The presence of the timber plantation company has resulted in significant loss of the *tombak hamijon* which belong to the Indigenous Peoples in *Tano Batak. Hamijon* is our name for the land passed down to us from our ancestors on which we grow *kemenyan* or frankincense trees (*Styrax* spp).

The only remaining hamijon in our customary territories lie in areas outside the land controlled by TPL, on the steep slopes. The kemenyan trees are already old, they need to be replaced with younger trees. We protect the hamijon by conducting a number of traditional rituals. In June, we hold the gur gur ritual, with a communal feast to express our hope that the yields from the frankincense trees will be good. In July, we begin to tap the trees to collect the sap. Every household still takes part in these rituals. We protect the hamijon by conducting our traditional rituals. In the forest land that is left to us, we continue our practice of replanting the



kemenyan trees. Since our rights to our land have been taken from us, we still replant the trees on the remaining land. But we are still in conflict with the TPL, so for now we can only plant on the slopes.



#### **GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION**

In February 2017, the Ministry of the Environment and Forestry conducted verification to the customary а territory of the Op. Bolus Simanjuntak. In October 2017, representatives of Op. Bolus Simanjuntak community and 10 other representatives of the Indigenous Peoples who are in conflict with TPL visited the Ministry of Environment and Forestry to discuss conflict resolution. Then, on March 19, 2018, Op. Bolus Simanjuntak's representatives attended a meeting with the director of the Tenure Conflict Management and Customary Forests (PKTHA) of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) at the Community Initiative Development Study Group (KSPPM) office in Parapat. Then, on May 3, 2018, Op. Bolus Simanjuntak attended a multi-stakeholder meeting with the Director of the PKTHA-KLHK, representatives of TPL, and the North Tapanuli district government in Medan.

### 🚺 CHALLENGES

AfterthemeetinginMarch2018between our community representatives and the PKTHA Director in Parapat, and after the multi-stakeholder meeting on 3 May 2018 in Medan, TPL has continued to conduct its operations in our customary areas. After the meeting in Medan, TPL became even more aggressive. They and the other companies started planting and harvesting eucalyptus trees. It wasn't like that before. The agreement signed in Medan on May 3, 2018, clearly states "that the community will respect the company's eucalyptus trees, but after existing trees are harvested, the company will not be allowed to plant new trees." The company has completely ignored the agreement.

### ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

We hope that the customary rights to our lands that have been seized by the Toba Pulp Lestari company are returned to us.

### 03. GOLAT SIMBOLON GOLAT NAIBAHO



JONTER SIMBOLON CUSTOMARY LEADER Samosir, North Sumatra



WE HAVE CUSTOMARY RULES FOR COLLECTING TIMBER. IF ANYBODY NEEDS TO TAKE TIMBER FROM THE FOREST, THEY MUST SEEK THE AGREEMENT OF THE TRADITIONAL ELDERS AND EXPLAIN WHY THEY NEED THE TIMBER.

### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

As Indigenous Peoples, we protect our customary forests from illegal logging activities. We are dependent on the forests so we protect our sources of water from erosion, we protect the areas where we gather medicinal herbs and other plants to meet our needs. We have a water spring that we call *mual*, which supplies water to the Mangaraja river.

### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

We have customary rules for collecting timber. If anybody needs to take timber from the forest, they must seek the agreement of the traditional elders and explain why they need the timber. It is forbidden to collect timber for sale, but it is permitted if a member of the community needs to build a house. It is forbidden to cut down young trees, only large trees can be felled. We have special procedures for the collection of timber. Before cutting down the tree, we must pray to the Creator to ask for permission. We call this natumartar arboesakti. After a ceremony that lasts for around an hour, we can cut the tree down. The first tree that is taken is used for the central support pole of the newly constructed house. After a year, another ritual is conducted, called aulak natumihau, which is to return a piece of the wood used for the building of the house to the forest. One of the pieces of wood used to build the house is cut and wrapped in white cloth, then placed in the *parririan*. This is the way of our ancestors.

To protect our forest from illegal logging activities, we agreed to growing coffee among the trees in our forest so that we have the source of livelihood and we can keep going to the forest regularly. We also plan to plant palm trees along the river to prevent erosion and to maintain the quality of the soil.



#### **GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION**

So far, no government agency has formally acknowledged the community and its activities to protect the forest, while the threat of illegal logging continues.



#### CHALLENGES

In recent times, there has been a lot of illegal logging in our customary areas.

When we heard about it, we went into the forest to secure the wood and take it to the village, then we took action to identify the culprit. However, we found out that the timber was harvested to build a health center during the Covid-19 pandemic, authorized by the government. But there's a lot more logging that we don't know about. If we hear the sound of chainsaws, we go out straight away. If they realize that we are coming so they ran away.

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We hope that our customary lands are reclassified so that they are not included in the state forest areas and that we will be able to continue to protect our customary forests and other traditional areas. The central government has already issued advice to district governments to recognize the customary territories of Indigenous Peoples.



### **04. UMA SAUREINUH**



NULKER SABABALAT CUSTOMARY LEADER Mentawai, West Sumatera



ACCORDING TO THE DISTRICT SPATIAL ZONING PLAN, THE SAUREINUK CUSTOMARY AREA IS INCLUDED IN THE [STATE] FOREST AREA. THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD REVISE THIS TO RECOGNIZE OUR CUSTOMARY FORESTS IN THEIR SPATIAL PLAN

### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

The Indigenous Peoples are conservation actors. The Saureinuk community always protects their forests. They forbid anyone from felling trees at random in several and protect several locations such as water springs, areas where medicinal herbs grow, hunting grounds. If they need wood for building, they will collect it in certain places through selective logging and should not be careless.

#### CONSTRAINTS ON CONSERVATION PRACTICES

To prevent erosion and other damage to the ecosystem, it is forbidden by customary law to cultivate land on steep slopes and around riverbanks. People who cultivate land on riverbanks must plant trees. The community knows that this practice makes the soil fertile and prevents landslides.

The community is very aware of the benefits of refraining from damaging the environment and maintaining the sustainability of the customary forest. The rules are clear and not negotiable, that must be maintained and sustained. If there are violations of the law in the customary areas, the customary court will impose a fine.

### GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

The district head has issued a decree Number 384 of 2019 concerning Recognition and Protection of Uma Saureinu' in Saureinu Village, South Sipora District as a Customary Law Community Unit in the Mentawai Islands Regency. In addition, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry has issued decree of recognition of our customary forests. The Saureinuk indigenous community have been asked to continue to protect their customary forests.

### CHALLENGES

The lack of community empowerment programs is still an obstacle. None of these things have been provided to us at the community level. There are provisions of the regulations (Mentawai Islands Regency Regional Regulation Number 11 of 2017 concerning Recognition and Protection of *Uma* as a Customary Law Community Unit in Mentawai Islands Regency) that mandate these things, but in practice it hasn't been implemented.



The district government should include budget allocations for the empowerment of the community and for the sustainable management of our customary forests, based on our traditional law. The village government should issue a village-level regulation the acknowledging existence of the indigenous community and its customary law so that there are no conflicts or claims and counterclaims when it comes to resolution of disputes within the community itself.

> Ritual of the Indigenous Peoples in Mentawai Copyright : Rob Henry/ Mongabay Indonesia



### 05. ORANG RIMBA MAKEKAL HULU



MIJAK TAMPUNG INDIGENOUS YOUTH ACTIVIST Tebo, Jambi



HOW ARE WE TO ACHIEVE OUR ASPIRATIONS OF BECOMING A PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY LIVING IN HARMONY WITH THE NATURAL **ENVIRONMENT?** 

#### **INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS**

Our community plays an important role in protecting the environment. From time immemorial, the Orang Rimba have applied local wisdom to protect and preserve the environment.

#### **CONSERVATION STORIES** FROM THE COMMUNITY

The Orang Rimba protect and preserve so many different areas of land according to our traditional law. On Bukit Dua Belas, an area located in Jambi Province, there is an area known as Tano Torban, which is protected by customary law because the community believes it to be the place of gods. According to Orang Rimba custom, whenever a child is born, they are given two trees to take care of throughout their lives. Our name, Orang Rimba, means 'people of the forest' because of these and other customs. The forest represents everything that we are. In addition to the Tano Turban, there is another area known as Benteng Kalaka, which is a traditionally protected land where all forms of agriculture and other human activity are forbidden.



#### **GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION**

Even though the Orang Rimba have held and managed Bukit Dua Belas for hundreds of years, but in 2004 the government turned the area into the Bukit Dua Belas National Park (TNBD) through a decree issued by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry. The Orang Rimba refused to recognize the government's decree because we felt we weren't involved in it and that the government did not respect our rights. Thus, the Orang



Rimba community advocated for a revision of the National Park rules. We reached a compromise in 2018, when adjustments were made so that our customary law was recognized within the TNBD zoning system. The government has recognized the community's traditional practices in the TNBD management rules, but so far no comprehensive legal framework has been developed.

#### CHALLENGES

The Makekal Bersatu Group has conducted an initiative to preserve the forest around the National Park through a rattan nursery program, which was intended both to protect the natural environment and to improve the livelihoods and welfare of the Orang Rimba community. However, the government did not welcome the initiative, even though the economic value of jernang, the resin we produce from the rattan, is quite high and it is also a forest plant. Why hasn't the government included measures to promote the cultivation of rattan in its social forestry programs? The Orang Rimba have a body of local knowledge related to the cultivation of this plant, so it would be suitable for our community.

### ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

If we have the opportunity to discuss zoning with the head of the TNBD administration and the government, we hope that they incorporate the local wisdom of the Orang Rimba community into their policies, including by allowing us to cultivate rattan, as this is a valuable source of livelihood for the community. We also want the Orang Rimba to be involved in discussions with the TNDB management before decisions are made or policies are formed, as these decisions and policies have a direct impact on all members of the Orang Rimba community in TNBD.

### **06. RANTAU ANDIKO SUNGAI SUBAYANG**



DATUK SUPARMANTONO CUSTOMARY LEADER Kampar, Riau



WE HAVE A WEALTH OF NATURAL RESOURCES, BUT IN ECONOMIC TERMS WE ARE POOR

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

Indigenous peoples are important actors in the management of conservation areas. Long before the government established the Rimbang Baling forest as a wildlife reserve, the Indigenous Peoples had already established a system of customary land rights and regulated the use of customary lands according to the patterns and zones set out in the customary law.

### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

Take the example of the *lubuk larangan*, a protected water source. This shows the community's local wisdom. The prohibitions related to this water source serve a useful purpose, with some zones where people are allowed to take fish and some zones where it is forbidden. It is permitted to fish here only once a year, when the fish are auctioned according to custom. In addition, there are areas known as imbugano, which are designated as wilderness areas. This is also a manifestation of the community's local wisdom. In these areas, it is forbidden to cut down trees or cultivate crops. According to traditional law, they are designated as protected customary forest. They can be used to collect medicinal herbs, to find wild fruit, and to hunt for meat.

### e GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

We have submitted a description of our conservation practices to support

our claims to be acknowledged as an indigenous, tribal people. We complied with all the government's procedure for the submission of a customary forest rights management plan, but so far, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry hasn't processed our submission. I don't mean to blame any particular party, but the Natural Resources Conservation Agency, a central government agency which is meant to be responsible for the social forestry program scheme, has not responded at all to our request for recognition of our customary forest. We have never been invited to meet with representatives of this agency.

#### CHALLENGES

The biggest challenge comes from within the community itself. The people who live in the protected forest areas look at the way people are living on the outside, earning up to Rp 15 million per month, while they can only stare at the forest without any means of securing a livelihood. Second, the government agencies never respond to the community's requests. We made our simple request to sit down with the government to discuss the means to make the forest sustainable while at the same time taking into consideration the livelihoods of the people who live within it. Economic issues are an important problem for the community. We need to find alternative sources of livelihood for the community in the conservation area to meet their needs.

### ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

We hope that we can continue to protect the forest and serve as its guards. Give us an alternative source of income, keep us busy for the next five years by teaching us how to grow crops, how to grow rubber, so that we no longer need to go into the forest to cut down trees just to meet our household needs.



Fish harvesting customary practice in *lubuk larangan* <sup>Copyright: Aldya Saputra</sup>

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### **07. TALANG PARIGI (TALANG MAMAK)**



### GILUNG

INDIGENOUS YOUTH ACTIVIST Indragiri Hulu, Riau



THE NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGED BY THE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY SHOULD BE USED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE COMMUNITY. THE COMMUNITY SHOULD NOT BE INTIMIDATED BY THE GOVERNMENT

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

In fact, members of the indigenous community guard the forests. For the community, the forest is crucial. But it is being damaged by outsiders. And the National Park administration doesn't work in collaboration with the community to protect the forest. If members of the indigenous community even try to go into the Bukit Tigapuluh National Park, the administration drives them out, so the community can't do anything.

### CONSERVATION STORIES

The community conducts conservation practices to protect the forest, which plays a vital role in their

life as a source of herbs. Conservation carried out by the community is to protect the forest because the forest has important values such as a place to get herbs, to collect the materials for marriage ceremonies, to collect rattan, roots, and other forest products to meet our daily needs. We have to guard our gravesites and other sacred places in the forest. At certain times of the year, when the community conducts rituals of these places, they come in to protect and maintain them.

### GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

The government hasn't provided us with any acknowledgement or support at all, even after the community has struggled for seven years to demonstrate the validity of our claims according to their rules. Until now, they still haven't recognized the indigenous community.

#### CHALLENGES

The Indigenous Peoples of Talang Mamak have requested meetings with the district head at his office to resolve the issues related to the recognition of Indigenous Peoples, but it seems that the local government is nervous about acknowledging us because of the opening up of the area to transmigration programs and private sector companies. The Talang Mamak community has never entered into any form of agreement with these migrants from outside.

There are three customary areas within the Bukit Tigapuluh National Park in which the community is completely forbidden from collecting rattan or agarwood.

### 👗 ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

First, we hope that a clear distinction made between the lands of is the Talang Mamak indigenous community and the national park's designated forest areas. Secondly, we hope that the National Park authority works in collaboration with the community to protect the forest, or that our customary land is rezoned so that it doesn't fall within the National Park area and that the indigenous community is responsible for maintaining and managing it.



# JAVA and LESSER SUNDA ISLANDS

Bali Lombok Flores Island Alor Island

Timor Island

Banten

### **08. KASEPUHAN KARANG**



**ENGKOS KOSASIH** 

INDIGENOUS YOUTH ACTIVIST Lebak, Banten

WE NEED TO STRENGTHEN OURSELVES, ECONOMICALLY, EDUCATIONALLY AND CULTURALLY. THEN WE CAN SHOW THAT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CAPABLE OF MANAGING THEIR OWN LANDS, SUSTAINABLY

AND IN HARMONY WITH NATURE

### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

You can consider the Indigenous Peoples as conservation actors because we actively strive to manage and protect our customary lands. At Kasepuhan Karang, we have been protecting the forest for a long time now. The community best knows how to manage and conserve the lands on which we live.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

Since time immemorial, the original ancestors of the Kasepuhan Karang people entrusted the forests to the incuputu, whose duty is to enforce the traditional law. According to this law, some parts of the forest are considered sacred and closed to all forms of human use, including agriculture. The area is totally protected and nobody is permitted to use the resources there. The body of traditional law is known as the Tatali Paranti Karuhun. If anybody violates this law, harm will come to them, with a curse known as Kualat or Kasantap, because they have damaged the forest or used resources without permission its from the Kasepuhan. The people in Kasepuhan Karang still follow these laws. These days, apart from our traditional conservation practices, we also plant fruit and other useful trees, such as durian, mangosteen, and coffee, to support our conservation efforts. These efforts are intended not only to protect natural resources, but also to improve the living standards of the community itself. When all members of the community prosper, bad behavior such as the theft of



timber from the customary forests can be reduced or eliminated.



### **GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION**

The rights of the Kasepuhan Karang community have been recognized by the district government, with the promulgation of District Decree concerning No. 8 Customary Forests in 2016. However, the has not been properly decree implemented yet, particularly the provisions concerning community empowerment. However, since the degree has been implemented, we have received quite a lot of support and assistance, through programs to provide seed stock for coffee and other crops.

#### CHALLENGES

In practice, we still face many obstacles. For example, when the community tries to set up environmental initiatives in the forest areas, we still don't know who to report to and so on. However, those obstacles are not so important. The government should implement socialization programs so that the community and everyone else better understands the legal status of our customary forests. The community still has trouble effectively managing these customary forests themselves. Also, we still don't have a very good relationship with the National Park administration. They don't seem to understand the legal status of the Kasepuhan Karang Customary Forest yet. That means that in practice, there are still a lot of conflicts.

### ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

We hope that conservation initiatives are implemented on the basis of local wisdom and in a manner that meets the needs of all members of the community. It is difficult to achieve just and equitable development, development that truly meets the needs of Indigenous Peoples. One means of achieving it would be to strengthen education for indigenous youth to empower them to manage our customary lands without interference and to resist the encroachments of developers.

### **09. KASEPUHAN PASIR EURIH**



### MAMAN SAHRONI

INDIGENOUS YOUTH ACTIVIST Lebak, Banten



OUR BELIEFS ARE EXPRESSED IN THE PHRASE LEUWEUNG TEH SUMBER KAHIRUPAN JEUNG KAHURIPAN INCU PUTU, WHICH MEANS THAT WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE FOREST IS THE SOURCE OF ALL LIFE AND LIVELIHOODS FOR THE COMMUNITY. IF THE FOREST IS DESTROYED, IT IS THE SAME AS IF WE WERE DESTROYING OUR OWN LIVES

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

I believe that the Indigenous Peoples of Pasir Eurih can be described as conservation actors because throughout the history of the community, we have adhered to the mandate of our karuhun (ancestors) to protect the forest.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

The Kasepuhan Pasir Eurih divides its customary territory into a number of different zones, including a production zone and a conservation zone, known as *Leuweung Tutupan*, an area that we have protected for generations. We implement our own system of forest police, who are known known as ronda or *leweung* police, whose function is to monitor all matters affecting the forest on Mount Bongkok, visiting once or twice a week to ensure that the area is conserved and to prevent the theft of wood. Leuwung Garapan is the name for a zone in which the community can engage in agriculture and gardening, so long as they adhere to the customary law, which is administered by traditional institutions, known as Kasepuhan. The customary law is still enforced. In the past, there have been cases when people outside Pasir Eurih have stolen wood. They are processed according to customary law, before being handed over to the police.



#### **GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION**

The Kasepuhan Pasir Eurih has been recognized through the promulgation of a District Regulation regarding the Recognition of the Kasepuhan Eurih Customary Territory in 2012 and another regulation related to the recognition of customary forests in 2019. Since the recognition of our customary forests, the provision of support by the authorities has not been optimal. Not all elements from the district or provincial governments have provided assistance, with most of the assistance we have received coming from the Ministry for the Environment and Forestry's BUPSHA scheme, through the Pesona Bank program, who provided funds to a value of Rp. 50,000,000 (approximately U.S.\$3,500). We used these funds to procure coffee seeds, which we distributed among the community.

After our customary forests were recognized, we established an institution known as the Kasepuhan Eurih Pasir Indigenous Youth Community (KOMPAK). KOMPAK is the entity which receives and manages the funds provided by the Ministry. As the name KOMPAK suggests, our youth community is very active in activities such as establishing revolving libraries, providing training, planting coffee and so on. Now we are trying to increase the level of women's participation as well.

#### CHALLENGES

We need seedstock to plant in our customary forests, to plant trees and other vegetation that function to protect the forest or that provide economic benefits, such as fruit trees. So far, we have not been provided with this. We also have plans to conduct a



detailed mapping process to identify the areas of land to which we have rights in Pasir Eurih, to identify areas of land under cultivation by members of the community. We haven't done this yet.

### ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

We hope that in the future, the government's priority agenda for the conservation and management of the forests will focus not only on the preservation of the natural environment, but also on the livelihoods and welfare of the community. The forest management system requires the full participation of the community, who should receive economic benefits for their role in managing and preserving forest and facilitating the the achievement of the government's goal of "a sustainable forest for a prosperous community." Community development must be a bottom-up process, starting with deliberations at the hamlet and village level so that government development initiatives are conducted in accordance with the needs and aspirations of the community.





### **10. KASEPUHAN CIROMPANG**



AJAT SUDRAJAT

INDIGENOUS YOUTH ACTIVIST Lebak, Banten



THE GOVERNMENT MUST CARRY OUT DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION INITIATIVES BASED ON THE NEEDS AND WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF THE COMMUNITY, NOT ONLY TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE GOVERNMENT. THAT WAY, BOTH THE COMMUNITY AND THE GOVERNMENT WILL BENEFIT

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

1 think you can say that the community is conservation actors because the community understands the environment in which they live better than anybody else. Kasepuhan community Cirompang has а traditional system for dividing the social and natural environment into zones, a spatial planning system. example, according to this For traditional system, certain areas are zoned as water springs or forests. The community has to plant trees around the water springs to protect them, and so on. The state should recognize and support this traditional system

CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

In Kasepuhan Cirompang territory,

the Indigenous Peoples still adhere to a body of customary law known as tatali paranti karahun, which has come down to the community through the generations. It sets out a comprehensive code for the management of our customary areas, in harmony with the environment. Around Cirompang, there is forest zone known as Leuweung Tutupan, where it is not permitted to cut trees or clear land. The area must be protected, because it contains water springs. Another forest zone is called Leuweung Garapan, where the community is permitted to cultivate crops and use the resources in a sustainable way. The community still believes in these laws and upholds them, through customary institutions known as Kasepuhan, which receive support from the village government. These laws benefit the whole community, because the customary lands around Kasepuhan Cirompang are still clean, with good, well-maintained springs, providing sufficient water for agriculture and to meet the daily needs of the people.



The community traditions of Kasepuhan Cirompang have been recognized by the government, through the promulgation of the Kasepuhan Cirompang Customary Forest Decree in 2019. Although there has been no direct handover of the land to the community by the President, following the promulgation of the decree, the community felt a great sense of relief that their rights had been restored to them. The community is currently engaged in efforts to regenerate the

forest, planting water-retaining plants such as Pangium and fruit trees that provide benefits to all members of the community. This initiative is being supported by the Ministry of the Environment and Forestry's Bank Pesona program<sup>1</sup>. The village government is also implementing a community empowerment program through the Village Fund, involving the planting of 3,000 avocado trees. But I'm disappointed to say that even though the District Regulation on the **Recognition of the Indigenous Peoples** of Kasepuhan was promulgated in 2012, there hasn't been any followup or efforts to actually implement the regulation by the Lebak District Government.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>The Bank Pesona program is an initiative of Badan Usaha Perhutanan Sosial and Hutan Adat (BUPSHA)





#### CHALLENGES

Even though the community's rights to their customary forests have been formally recognized through the promulgation of regulation, there hasn't been any follow-up, there haven't been any empowerment programs for the community. They were talking about some detailed mapping project, but they haven't taken any action yet.

### logical series and hopes

We hope that the community will be able to benefit from the customary forest on their traditional lands and that the government will support them in their efforts to manage the area sustainably. The government must take the community's needs and aspirations into account with their development plans, not only their own needs. We need to meet with the right people from the government or from any other institution to help the community build their capacities and to better understand how to manage the customary forest so that the community can meet its own needs and achieve prosperity. As they say, don't discard us lightly, as if we were a pebble you can just toss into the river.



### **11. KAOLOTAN CIBADAK**



**RUHANDI** 

CUSTOMARY LEADER Lebak, Banten



THE STRENGTH OF INDONESIA LIES WITH ITS INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, AND ESPECIALLY ITS INDIGENOUS FARMERS

### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

You can describe Indigenous Peoples as conservation actors, because they protect and manage their customary lands, with the direct participation of the community and to the benefit both of the community itself and to the natural environment, passing their knowledge down from generation to generation.

### CONSERVATION STORIES

For generations, the villagers have been conducting their lives in a way that protects both the natural environment and their own communities. One example of this is the customary forests, which are protected by the community themselves. In WarungBanten, according to the ways of our ancestors, the village and all the areas surrounding it are divided into seven Aub Lembur, or zones, one of which is Dungus Kibujangga (customary forest). This division of the social and natural environment into seven Aub Lembur creates harmony and balance between the community and the natural environment in which they live. To manage the Dungus Kibujangga, the community adheres to a body of oral law that has been passed down through the generations. These laws outline a great number of prohibitions and taboos. For example, it is forbidden to construct houses close to water springs, which provide a resource to the entire community. The community willingly adheres to these rules, which are now reinforced by the village government. Adhering to these laws provides many benefits to the community. For example, this area was affected by a long drought that lasted for almost seven months. Praise to God! The people of Kaolotan Cibadak didn't suffer from the drought at all, with the water from the springs continuing to flow and to meet the needs of the people, with sufficient water for the rice fields.



### **GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION**

The traditions of the community in the village of Warung Banten in Kaolotan Cibadak have been formally recognized and affirmed through the promulgation of Lebak District Regulation No. 8 of 2015 concerning Recognition and Protection of the Indigenous Peoples of Kasepuhan. However, these regulations have not yet been properly implemented. The community here has a very good relationship with the village government, which supports the community in their efforts to conserve the natural environment through a number of means, including through promulgation of the Village the Regulation on Natural Resources Management.

### CHALLENGES

One of the biggest issues relates to poor communication with the district government, which makes it difficult for the community to provide input on policy that affects it. For example, when the community engaged in a participatory mapping process to delineate the boundaries of the village, no officials from the district government were present or took part. The community in Warung Banten were among the first to conduct that sort of participatory mapping process, but while the government acknowledged our efforts, it didn't provide any real support. In general, local government support for Indigenous Peoples is still very limited.

## ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

Looking to the future, we hope that the district government will take a more positive attitude toward building the community's understanding of the role and purpose of conservation zones, rather than merely threatening them if they violate the law. At present, they just say if you cut down trees, you will be punished, and so on. Regarding development initiatives more generally, we hope that the government accommodates the community's hopes and aspirations and involves them in activities that directly impact their lives. For example, if the government is drawing up a district spatial plan, the community must be involved so that it doesn't have negative effects on their way of life.



## **12. ADAT DALEM TAMBLINGAN DI CATUR DESA**



PUTU ARDANA CUSTOMARY LEADER Buleleng, Bali



OUR ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION PRACTICES ARE BASED ON CAREFUL ADHERENCE TO A SYSTEM OF TRADITIONAL VALUES THAT WE BELIEVE ARE OUR SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DUTY TO MAINTAIN

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

For the Masyarakat Adat Dalem Tamblingan (MADT), environmental conservation practices are based on careful adherence to a system of traditional values that they believe it is their spiritual and moral duty to maintain. These traditional values are based on a belief system known as Piagem Gama Tirta, which literally means "reverence for water." This belief system forms the basis for all of the community's customary values and practices, with reverence for water being a core belief that defines a system of practices to protect soil, water and biodiversity in the community's traditional lands.

## CONSERVATION STORIES

Throughout its history, the MADT community has recognized the Mertajati Forest as the source of all life, with water from lakes in this forest believed to have medicinal, life-giving properties, with the main lake around which the community originally lived referred to Lake Tamblingan (from phrase tamba eling, or 'becoming aware'). To protect the forests and lakes, in the 13th century, the people from the original Tamblingan village migrated to four different places in areas around the lake, creating new villages collectively known as Catur Desa ("four villages"). These villages are Munduk, Gobleg,

Gesing, and Umejero. The four villages similar spiritual shared beliefs. related to maintaining the sanctity of Lake Tamblingan. The community's traditional beliefs include what is known as the Tri Mandala concept, which divides different types of land into areas associated with parts of the human body, the head, body and feet. According to this belief, Tamblingan Lake and Mertajati Forest are considered to be the head, the highest and most sacred part of the human body.

The MADT is primarily an agricultural community, with the people depending on agricultural production for their livelihoods. We recognize the impact of our activities on the natural environment. In all our daily activities, we must show respect and care for the environment by engaging in regenerative practices.

Based on extensive practical experience going back through generations to the time of our ancestors, we understand the impact of the gravitational force of the moon, sun, earth, and the stars on the seasonal cycle. We use this to calculate agricultural activities and rituals. The community's commitment to our spiritual belief system, our reverence for water, provides us with guidelines for all daily activities, and not just for ritual activity. As a manifestation of our commitment to this belief system, the community is currently engaged in participatory mapping of the MADT traditional lands and formulating an inventory of natural, social, and cultural resources. Through these measures, we hope to establish organic farmers' groups so they can play a role in protecting biodiversity and social cohesion and conserving our natural resource-based economy by avoiding activities that may result in damage or degradation to the environment.

### CHALLENGES

Government agencies have engaged with the MADT community to work together on a number of activities, including programs to clean the area surrounding Lake Tamblingan. Currently, the MADT community is trying to get the Mertajati forest recognized as a Customary Forest. We want to manage it in accordance with the spiritual values of the community. At the moment, the forest is currently recognized as a Nature Park, under the management of the Nature Conservation Agency (Balai Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam, BKSDA).

## GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

Many of the government's proposals for the moment, the community, including those related to agricultural practices, are not consistent with the community's spiritual values. Full legal recognition of the MADT community and its rights is vital for this community so that we can develop based on our own system of spiritual beliefs. This is guaranteed by the Indonesian Constitution and the District Regulation on Traditional Villages in Bali. The community is worried by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry's designation of our land as a Nature Park, with many of the rules and regulations issued by both the national and subnational governments governing Nature Parks not in accordance with local wisdom. We are also troubled by inconsistent, unclear policies related to regional development. We worry that it could have a significant negative impact on our community.



#### **ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES**

The MADT community hopes that the MADT lands will be included in the Eastern Java-Bali Mountain Forest ecoregion so that its significance as a source of water for almost a third of Bali's land area is recognized. We want our rights to these lands and the Mertajati Forest to be recognized, with these areas classified as Customary Forests. The Piagem Gama Tirta belief system is a source of local wisdom programs that government and private investments could use as a reference to ensure that they are aligned with the MADT community's values, so that their activities are designed to enhance and strengthen the biodiversity and environmental functions of the forest, to build social cohesion, to ensure the emergence of а conservation economy, to strengthen cultural values, and to develop a creative system of modern management.





## **13. TENGANAN PEGRINGSINGAN**



### I PUTU WIADYANA

INDIGENOUS YOUTH ACTIVIST Karangasem, Bali



THE PEOPLE OF TENGANAN PEGRINGSINGAN ARE PROUD OF OUR ROLE IN MANAGING CUSTOMARY FOREST IN A SUSTAINABLE MANNER, THEREBY PROVIDING BENEFITS NOT ONLY TO MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY THEMSELVES

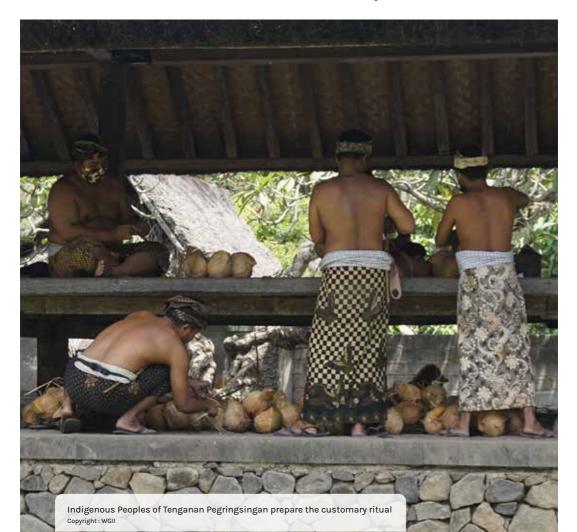
## INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

In my view, the *Tenganan P*egringsingan Indigenous Peoples can be described as conservation actors because the community has formulated clear rules for the management of natural resources, with these rules still consistently applied and adhered to.

## CONSERVATION STORIES

The traditional village of Tenganan Pegringsingan covers an area of approximately 917.2 hectares, of which about 583 hectares consists of customary forest, with the rest being made up of rice fields and areas of settlement. To manage the customary forest, the Tenganan Pegringsingan Traditional Village has a body of customary rules known as awig-awig (written rules formulated by the current community's ancestors in order to regulate the management of natural resources and relations between members of the community). First, the awig-awig prohibit the selling of community lands in Tenganan Pegringsingan to outsiders, which plays an important role in protecting this land from encroachment by investors and developers. Second, a number of the rules contained in the awig-awig relate to the management of the forest, with prohibitions on felling living trees unless there is a clear and specific need, such as to build a house for a newly

married couple (hak tumapung). In Tenganan Pegringsingan, if a newly married couple wants to leave their families' households and establish a household of their own, they must customary procedures follow to obtain permission to fell the trees, with the process closely monitored by traditional institutions. In addition, the customary forest area is divided into two zones, the first of which is known as bet, with resources from this area only to be used for very limited purposes. The second zone is known as tegalan, and can be used for a wide range of purposes, including the cultivation of coconut. If the customary laws regarding the use of forest resources are violated. customary sanctions can be imposed, with the sanctions including the confiscation of timber and monetary fines. If the violator is a member of the traditional village institution, known as Krama Desa, then he or she may be expelled. These customary lands are collectively managed by the village institution known as the Kelian Desa Adat or the Bahan Duluan, in compliance with the provisions of the awig-awig, with these institutions responsible for all matters except those not regulated by customary law. Decisions are made on the basis of a process of consensus, known as Paruman Desa, which involves of the traditional all members community.





#### **GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION**

The role of the Tenganan Pegringsingan community as conservation actors has been recognized through the granting of a number of awards, including the Kalpataru Award in 1989 from the President. It recognized the sustainability of the customary forests in the areas around Tenganan Pegringsingan. In 2019, the Ministry of the Environment and Forestry issued a Customary Forest Decree, according to which an area of 583 hectares in Tenganan Pegringsingan is recognized as customary forest. Following the granting of this degree, we have submitted a number of requests to receive assistance and support through the Ministry's Center for Social Forestry and Environmental Partnership, including for livelihoods programs involving activities such as weaving, the production of candlenut oil, the collection of forest honey, and ecotourism. At present, the honey management group is still active. We have also applied for other forms of assistance, including for inputs such as planting seeds.

#### CHALLENGES

The challenges we face here are related to our customary forests, including the need for wider socialization among the broader community regarding the function and purpose of customary forests and the related regulatory aspects. In addition, to ensure the involvement of farmers operating in areas around customary forests, we need more intensive assistance, for capacity building to enable the community to participate in regional management and economic development plans and to enable us to manage, produce and market our products properly.

### 🚠 ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

For conservation and development initiatives to be sustainable, they must prioritize the participation and empowerment of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. If these two conditions are fulfilled, I am optimistic that we can achieve sustainability.



The Indigenous women of Tenganan Pegringsingan Copyright : WGII

The *tuak* (wine) ritual in Tenganan Pegringsingan community Copyright : Yayasan WISNU

## **14. BAYAN SASAK**



### **RADEN DEDI SETIAWAN**

INDIGENOUS YOUTH ACTIVIST North Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara



ALL MANAGEMENT RIGHTS THAT ARE CURRENTLY CONTROLLED BY FOREIGNERS AND THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE RETURNED TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES SO THAT CUSTOMARY PROTECTION OF NATURE CAN BE MAXIMIZED

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

The Indigenous Peoples are directly involved as conservation actors. In the Bayan indigenous community, we celebrate the Namain ritual out in the customary forests to express our gratitude for the bounties of nature, for the abundant agricultural products it provides us.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

In the traditional forests of Mandala and Bangkat Bayan, we conduct our own special conservation practices to ensure that the water springs never run dry and that the forest and the animals within it are protected and preserved. Anyone caught cutting down trees, or polluting the springs, or hunting illegally will be fined one buffalo, 4000 old copper coins, and coconuts and rice.

## 🐏 GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

The district government always says the right things about supporting us, but nothing is reflected in the official regulations. This has led to multiple interpretations by various stakeholders of our customary land. We know that licenses for industrial forest production have been granted for our land. But now the draft of a regulation to recognize and protect the indigenous community is up for discussion at the local legislative council. If the regulation goes through, we will propose a customary forest scheme.

#### CHALLENGES

There is an area of our customary land that overlaps with plantation forest concessions, protected forests, and the Mount Rinjani National Park, so there is uncertainty regarding the status of these customary lands. We are engaging to try to get management rights over those areas, because that's where we conduct our rituals. The customary areas within the National Park are also vulnerable due to the large number of visiting tourists. When they visit, we urge them to follow the customary laws for their conduct on the mountain.

We are losing some of *tanah pecatu* areas as a result of pressure from the clearing of private land in the area around the forest. For Indigenous Peoples in Lombok, *tanah pecatu* is part of customary rights and it is governed by customary law provisions. *Tanah pecatu* whose ownership comes from custom may not be traded, because its function is intended as income for village officials only while in office. However, some of *tanah pecatu* areas ownership has changed hands. That is a serious threat to us.

## ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

Local governments must consider the indigenous community as autonomous, capable of developing their own system to manage the community. The government should try to work with the indigenous community, in collaboration, building on each other's strengths. The district government's development initiatives should be planned so that they are in alignment with the community's aspirations.

The draft district regulation on the recognition of Indigenous Peoples is currently being discussed by the district government and the legislative Council. It will soon be ratified. When that happens, we will finally have some room to put our traditional conservation practices into application. The government and the foreign investors should return the rights to manage the land back to the indigenous community so that we can protect the natural environment in accordance with our traditions.



The *Menutu Pare* (rice pounding) tradition carried out by the Sasak woman in Bayan, Lombok Copyright: Renaldi

Bayan Sasak women performing the washing rice ritual (*basok menik*) Copyright: Andi Lekto - AMAN

## **15. GELARANG COLOL**



YOSEF DANUR CUSTOMARY LEADER East Manggarai, East Nusa Tenggara

THE COLOL INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY FOLLOWS A PHILOSOPHY CALLED GENDANG ONE LINGKO PEANG THAT REGULATES THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUMANS AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND THAT GUIDES US IN OUR CONSERVATION PRACTICES

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

For generations, the Colol Indigenous Peoples have highly valued the forests and the natural environment. Even in our ancestors' time, we had to conduct traditional rituals to ask permission before entering the forest to use the natural resources there. That was a form of conservation practice practiced by the Colol indigenous community.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

We implement our practice of conservation through a philosophy known as *Colol*, which regulates the relationship between humans and nature. We have a phrase that goes as follows: gendang one lingko peang. It means: There are customary villages and there are also customary lands. Our ancestors established a traditional village known as Golo. With these traditional villages and customary lands, the indigenous community have customary rights called lingko. These customary rights don't allow unrestricted access to the forest, because our ancestors set strict boundaries between the areas of land that the community could use and the areas that should be maintained as forest. These laws should not be violated. Before using any of the resources from the forests, members of the community must seek the permission of the customary leader (Tua Teno or Tua Golo). These



resources can only be used to meet an individual household's needs, not for sale. In areas around the places where the community lives, there is a forest that protects our sources of water, and it should not be disturbed. Anyone who causes any damage to these forests is subject to customary sanctions and fines.



#### **GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION**

We have been fighting to win recognition for the Colol indigenous community. The local government promulgated District Regulation No. 1 of 2018 for the Recognition of Protection and Empowerment of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. But for it to be implemented, the district head needs to issue another regulation. We are still waiting for him to do it. The Indigenous Law Community Committee has been established to identify, verify and validate our claims. The committee has been working on it, but their activities were disrupted by the covid pandemic, so they haven't been able to go back into the field.

#### CHALLENGES

There are 29 areas of *Lingko* land (areas of land that can be used

rice fields as plantations, and community settlements according to traditional law) that cover an area of approximately 1000 hectares and that are said to overlap with the Ruteng Nature Tourism Park (TWA). These customary lands have been reclassified according to a Three Pillar Joint Agreement (Lonto Leok) between the government, the Colol community, and the church. However, so far, no regulations have been issued to enforce this agreement.

### ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

We hope that the district head of East Manggarai will issue a regulation regarding the recognition and protection of the Colol indigenous community soon so that the central government's authority to determine the status of the *Lingko* land is returned to the Colol indigenous community.

We need to maintain a cooperative relationship with the government to enhance our conservation initiatives. Neither party should feel superior to the other or act against each other's interests.



## 16. RENDU



### **HERMINA MAWA**

INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S LEADER Nagekeo, East Nusa Tenggara



THE GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO COMMUNICATE WITH US AND LISTEN TO US SO WE CAN UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER AND WORK TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE DEVELOPMENT GOALS.

## INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

The Rendu Indigenous Peoples have always implemented conservation practices, but the younger generation isn't keeping up the tradition. The indigenous community has always been responsible for the protection of their own land and the land belonging to the community as a whole. You aren't allowed to cut trees anywhere near the water springs. But you are free to work your own garden. Those who violate these rules are sanctioned (*Boli*).

## CONSERVATION STORIES

In the past, if you violated the traditional laws, you would have to sacrifice a cow or buffalo. During the

rainy season, the Rendu Indigenous Peoples plant rice and corn, from December to January. If there is no rain by March, then we conduct a ritual to make it rain. The Indigenous Peoples are beginning to go back and develop their agricultural activities. We guard some of our areas of land for rituals related to building traditional houses.

The Rendu women, supported by AMAN (the Indigenous Peoples Alliance of the Archipelago) have returned to planting cotton because the community needs it for its rituals. We hope that the district government can help us to plant cotton and manage land for cotton plantations. One of the goals of the women is to resist the construction of a dam on our land.We are resisting the construction of the Lambo dam, because we fear it will flood the Rendu customary area. We enforce the prohibition against cutting down trees near the water springs.



In the district of Nagekeo, the government has formally acknowledge the existence of Indigenous Peoples. However, in practice, they still don't recognize our rights, our customary land rights. The government wants to stage tourist performances in our customary villages, in Rendu Ola and Situpada. They want to turn them into tourist attractions. That makes it difficult for us to come together as a community. At the village level, the administration is already familiar with us. They have started to support our traditional rituals. The young people in the Rendu community don't participate, they don't take part in the traditional rituals.

## ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

The government needs to communicate with us and listen to us so we understand each other and can work together to achieve development goals. The government must recognize the rights of the Indigenous Peoples.



### CHALLENGES

From one village to another in this area can be more than 10 kilometers.



## **17. NUA SAGA**



### **BELDIANA SALESTINA**

INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S LEADER Ende, East Nusa Tenggara



#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

The Saga Indigenous Peoples are conservation actors. If the customary laws forbid cutting down trees, then nobody would dare to do it. You can see that where there is a customary law to protect the forest, the forest is never cleared. It is our duty to guard the forest, so we guard it.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

Nobody is allowed to do anything that would damage the environment in areas around the water springs. The community still obeys the customary law. And even in a drought, our springs never run dry. Nua Saga is surrounded by hilly land and steep slopes that can be dangerous if there is erosion. So, we have laws that forbid the cutting down of trees near the water springs. The community follows those rules, so we never have landslides. If there was a landslide on the hill, the village of Saga could be completely swamped.



#### **GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION**

The relationship between the Saga people and the Kelimutu National Park (TNK) has improved. In the past, we used to fight like Tom and Jerry. Now they let us grow our coffee in our gardens there, so long as we don't expand the area under cultivation. The district government has already promulgated regulations to recognize the indigenous community. But



there needs to be implementing regulations and guidelines to give it force. The excuse is that there are no funds available, but if the government wants to hold big ceremonies, there's always funds for that.

### CHALLENGES

Some households can't repair their own houses because they are scared to collect wood from the forest. You can apply for permission, but it is very difficult, you have to go all over the place to get the permit. And the rules haven't been socialized clearly. In fact, the wood comes from our customary land, which has now been classified as part of the National Park. To build our houses according to the customary law, we have to use wood collected from the forest. We do it according to our customary code (wangsit). You don't need to repair the house every year. Perhaps you need to repair it once every five years or so, then you need to collect a bit of wood from the forest. You only really need to do a major renovation once every 50 years or so, if the house is beginning to fall apart.

In addition to the trouble we face collecting timber, the reeds that we use for roofing material no longer grow around here. Now most of the land is covered by *krinyu*, a kind of herbaceous plant.

### ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

We hope that the Kelimutu National Park administration introduces regulations benefit the that community. Don't try to manipulate our community by turning us against each other. For us, it would be better if nobody in the community got any benefits than only just a few people. Let us plant grass for weaving and local trees for timber trees to repair our houses. Let us cultivate some crops for our livelihoods. And please don't plant timber trees that suck all the water out of the ground. We are scared of droughts.

We hope that the district government will draw up implementation guidelines for the local regulations to recognize Indigenous Peoples so that our indigenous community has the power to protect our land. Customary site in Nua Saga territory, Ende, East Nusa Tenggara <sup>Copyright : Agung Wierawan</sup>

## **18. LAMAHOLOT**



**MARIA LORETHA** 

INDIGENOUS WOMAN LEADER East Flores, East Nusa Tenggara

INDONESIA IS NOT JUST JAVA. WE HAVE TO PROTECT LOCAL FOODS. IF YOU SUPPORT THE CULTIVATION OF LOCAL FOODS, INDONESIA WILL NEVER SUFFER SHORTAGES

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

The Lamaholotindigenous community revere Mother Earth, because we always conduct our rituals standing on the surface of the earth. It would be strange if anybody were to deny that indigenous community were conservation actors.

## CONSERVATION STORIES

One aspect of conservation that the community practices is the preservationoflocal seeds, particularly for waxy corn (*pulut*). Whenever we hold traditional ceremonies or rituals, it is mandatory to serve *jagung titi*, a type of corn cracker that is our traditional staple. The community has been quite successful at conserving our traditional seeds, we find it difficult to accept new seed stocks from outside. The community also works together to preserve the water springs and the sacred forest and beaches. The spring in our area in West Adonara has enough water to meet the needs of three villages. The forest and the beach are very sacred locations, and nobody should visit them except at special times of the year.



The local government itself is part of the indigenous community, so, in a way, they do not have to grant us formal recognition. The government actually obeys all aspects of the customary law.

### 🚺 CHALLENGES

With our efforts to preserve our traditional seed stocks, one of the greatest obstacles we face relates to the regulations for the Sustainable Cultivation System, which prohibits farmers from bringing seeds out of the district. It is difficult for the community to accept that they should grow paddy, corn, soybeans, given that in our area around 80 percent of the people use dry-land agriculture. Sometimes the landowners violate the customary laws, especially during the planting season. They feel that it is their own land, they can do whatever they want, without respecting the customary law.

Another challenge relates to the encroachment by large-scale food farmers, who plant their crops on the mountain slopes and cut down a lot of trees.

### 😓 ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

The indigenous community already knowwhattheyhavetodotoprotectthe environment. The laws and regulations should be formulated in a manner that respects the community's needs. It is not appropriate to formulate rules to subjugate the Indigenous Peoples, because you could destroy our local community. Good development is development that respects the natural environment and the culture of the local community.



## **19. LAMALERA**



### **BONA BEDING**

CUSTOMARY LAMAFA (Harpoonist) Lembata, East Nusa Tenggara

FOR THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, CONSERVATION MEANS PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT BY USING ITS RESOURCES CAREFULLY TO MAKE BEST USE OF THEM. THESE RESOURCES WERE GRANTED TO US BY OUR ANCESTORS. WE ARE USING WHAT GOD GAVE US

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

We live according to the principle of one for all. What comes from the sea is for the benefit of everybody. The Indigenous Peoples of Lamalera understand that the natural resources don't just have an economic value, they also have a ritual and social value (tirakat). This includes whales, rays, and other marine creatures. People who live in the big cities think that our hunting practices go against the principles of conservation, but for the Lamalera people, taking these forms of life from the sea is based on principles of mutual respect. We don't think of it as hunting, we are taking what has been granted to us by our ancestors for our livelihoods (*kenato*). At the same time, there are rules to ensure that we don't take too much and that we distribute it fairly.

## CONSERVATION STORIES

Our conservation practices are guided by a calendar that defines the right time for activities at sea and the right time for activities on the shore. The fishing season (*lefanuang*) lasts from May to October. During the period when activities at sea are permitted, and the seas are friendly, the people can hunt whales and dolphins, taking only as much as needed. During this period, from July to August, the boats travel to the Pantar and Lewouran areas specifically to catch manta rays and to stay in touch with family members who live there.

Finally, the beliefs of the people of Lamalera regarding the sea are a living philosophy that unites the community, by defining our principles. The sea is an integral part of our lives. What does conservation really mean? The indigenous community doesn't exploit marine resources on a large scale. As we say: the sea provides a stern test of our morality and ethics. We recognize it as our mother.



### GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

The Director General for Intangible Cultural Heritage has issued an instruction acknowledging the community indigenous and its rights. Through the Ministry of Affairs Maritime and Fisheries. the government is in the process of conducting an inventory, after which a formal regulation will be issued to recognize and protect the indigenous community. We have received assistance from a few different agencies, but the programs were unsuitable and inappropriate for our community and didn't result in optimal empowerment.

#### CHALLENGES

The government actually intends to register indigenous communities and to recognize their local wisdom throughout the archipelago, but is hampered by lack of funds. So they issue policies that disrupt the lives of indigenous communities, requiring us to seek recognition at the provincial and district levels. This is actually a great burden for the community. According to the prevailing laws, it should be the government's task to identify these communities and register them.

🛃 ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

our We hope that indigenous community will be able to live according to our own beliefs and our own way of life, without interference from the government and its development programs and project. There needs to be a process to unite the interests of the government with the interests of the community, including indigenous communities. With our customary laws and values, conservation is an integral part of our culture. The government needs to learn from the community, to benefit from the Indigenous Peoples' understanding of conservation and community life throughout the archipelago, to develop concepts or models for state conservation, to enrich the character of this nation.

A young boy practicing his hunting skills Copyright : Bona Beding

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## **20. RUMPUN BARANUSA**



## SAMSUDIN LAARA

CUSTOMARY LEADER Alor, East Nusa Tenggara

WE STILL APPLY A SYSTEM OF LOCAL WISDOM THAT WAS PASSED DOWN TO US BY OUR PARENTS AND THEIR PARENTS BEFORE THEM, BACK TO WHEN THE *MULUNG* TRADITION BEGAN. ACCORDING TO THIS TRADITION, IT IS PROHIBITED TO HARVEST FISH OR OTHER MARINE PRODUCTS AT CERTAIN TIMES OF THE YEAR

## INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

In Baranusa, the people have practiced conservation from generation to generation since the time of the kings, our ancestors. We manage our customary lands according to the laws passed down by these ancestors, and we still follow them to this day.

## CONSERVATION STORIES

In the traditional lands of the Rumpun Baranusa, in the Alor district, we still apply a system of local wisdom that was passed down to us by our parents and their parents before them, back to when the *mulung* tradition began. According to this tradition, it is prohibited to harvest fish or other marine products at certain times of the year. This tradition applies on Batang and Lapang islands, with the Mulung rite being conducted once a year, when the Baranusa Rumpun Customary Council closes the sea (Hading Mulung), then another ritual when it is reopened (Hoba Mulung). When the sea is closed, no one in the community is permitted to collect or harvest marine life. This is done to protect the marine life, including the coral reefs, the fish, the sea cucumbers, the shrimp and so on. These days, many people come in from outside to harvest these products, often using destructive methods such a bombing, poisoning and so on. When the



Hading *Mulung* ritual takes place, the customary council performed special prayers so that the *Mulung* process goes smoothly. If anybody violates the customary law during the *Mulung* period, then they will be punished by bad luck and may even die. In addition, the customary council can impose sanctions by banning people from harvesting marine produce even when the sea is open. We are trying to strengthen the system of customary enforcement through collaboration with the village government and other stakeholders.



The Baranusa indigenous community has been recognized through the promulgation of District Regulation. Alor No. 4 of 2018 concerning Recognition and Empowerment of Customary Institutions. But after that, there has been no concrete follow-up or economic empowerment programs. We're still trying to find a more concrete form of legal recognition so that we can be recognized at the national level, although we can only rely on donations and contributions from the community for our funds.

### CHALLENGES

We still have problems with monitoring Mulung, because people from other provinces come to take marine produce in the closed areas at night, so nobody can see that they are using potassium and other poisons to kill the fish and coral. It makes the community desperate, because we are also very poor. We have tried to talk to the local government for support so that we can act, such as by providing us with a motorboat so that we can monitor the environment from the sea. We're still waiting for a response from them.



We hope that the central government recognizes the indigenous community, recognizes our rights to manage our own territories so that we can live better lives, send our children to school. Through the *Mulung* tradition, we can improve the standard of living of the people of Baranusa. We hope that the government will support us so that we can continue to implement these conservation practices on the two islands.

## 21. TIGA BATU TUNGKU (MOLO-AMANUBAN-AMANTUN)



#### ALETA KORNELIA BAUN INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S LEADER Timor Tengah Selatan, East Nusa Tenggara



THE GOVERNMENT HAS IGNORED OUR EFFORTS TO PROTECT THE NATIVE TREES AROUND THE SPRINGS. THE FORESTRY AGENCY ACTUALLY WANTED TO CUT THESE TREES DOWN AND REPLACE THEM WITH TEAK AND MAHOGANY TREES, WHICH ARE GREEDY FOR WATER. WE PROTESTED BUT THEY DIDN'T LISTEN TO US

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

Indigenous Peoples are conservation actors because their lives depend on their natural environment. Caring for nature is just part of everyday life. We care for the earth as if it were our own mother.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

We care for our water springs through a number of conservation measures. The springs provide all our water needs. The indigenous community doesn't just care for the village they live in, we also care for the forest surrounding it. We consciously plant trees such as *banyan* and bamboo in landslide prone areas. We succeeded in keeping mining operations out of our customary territory. And we continue to protect and care for the water springs, which have never run dry.

### GOV 🥌

### GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

The district government hasn't acknowledged us or provided us with any support whatsoever. We tried to conduct a participatory mapping process to define our boundaries and to assess the opportunities and threats to our customary territory. We should emphasize our local wisdom to protect the natural environment, rather than relying on government projects. The people conduct these environmental initiatives because they are aware and believe that they are part of the community.

### CHALLENGES

The biggest challenges relate to areas of overlap between our customary lands and the government's zones. Our traditional leaders and our community representatives were never involved in the government zoning process, by which they classified some land as protected forest, others as production forest, and others as customary forest. There were a lot of claims and counterclaims, but now we want to propose a customary forest scheme. The government has ignored our efforts to protect the native trees around the springs. The forestry agency actually wanted to cut these trees down and replace them with teak and mahogany trees, which are greedy for water. We protested but they didn't listen to us.

## ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

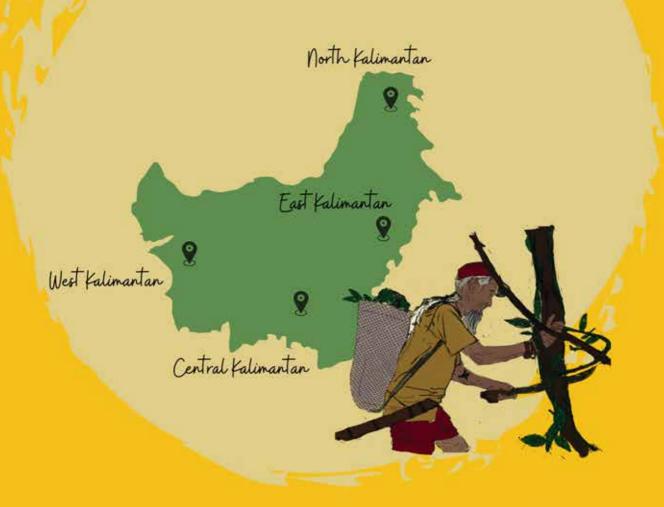
indigenous community The and the local government should work together, especially in the drafting of district regulations related to the protection of Indigenous Peoples. It is vital that the traditional leaders and community representatives participate. We need the government to recognize us. Then we could establish a good system of cooperation to implement conservation initiatives. We need to be able to sit down together to decide the direction of development.



The indigenous women of Tiga Batu Tungku prepare cotton fiber for weaving Copyright : INFIS

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# **KALIMANTAN**



## 22. DAYAK IBAN MENUA SUNGAI UTIK



## **KRISTIANA BANANG**

INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S LEADER Kapuas Hulu, West Kalimantan



WE HAVE NEVER EXPERIENCED DROUGHT OR LACK OF WATER. IN SUNGAI UTIK, WE STILL PROTECT THE FORESTS AND THEIR NATURAL RESOURCES. EVEN IF THE COVID PANDEMIC CONTINUES FOR A YEAR OR MORE, OUR RESERVES OF FOOD ARE ENOUGH TO ENABLE US TO MEET OUR NEEDS

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

You can say that the Indigenous Peoples are conservation actors because we work together to defend and protect our customary lands. We engage in these practices together, as a community, not just at an individual level. The community has been protecting the forest now for more than 1300 years, following in the footsteps of our ancestors. It's not just something that the current generation is doing.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

The community protects a number of areas of high biodiversity value, including *tembawang*, a former settlement that is maintained by the community because it has sacred, economic and social values. We also venerate the stone magpie, a sacred bird that is used as a symbol during traditional rituals related to farming and building longhouses and private houses. Hornbills are also protected by customary law. We also implement a customary system of forest zoning, with land divided into *taroh* (protected forest), *galoh* (reserved forest), and *endor kerja* (production forest), as follows:

- 1. *Taroh area* (protected forest): Nothing in this area should be damaged or disturbed.
- 2. Galoh area (reserved forest): This is forest that is reserved for the use of generations to come.

- 1. *Endor kerja* area (production Forest): This is an area where people can work.
- Utilization area (forest): This is land that can be used for farming and the cultivation of crops.

The body of customary law has been transcribed and written down in a book (Jalai Lintang Ketemenggungan customary rules book, 2018), with the Indigenous Peoples still adhering to these laws.



The Kapuas Hulu District Government has recognized the rights of the Indigenous Peoples through the promulgation of District Regulation No. 13 of 2018 concerning the Recognition and Protection of the People and Indigenous Territories of Sungai Utik, and, more recently, the Ministry of the Environment and Forestry issued a Customary Forest Decree. In 2019, the indigenous community was granted the Equator Prize by the UNDP for its role in successfully protecting the area from the threat of encroachment due to industrial logging expansion. After the formal recognition, we have

received more assistance and support from government agencies, both to develop the community's economic potential and to repair traditional houses.

### CHALLENGES

Even after the formal recognition of our rights to customary forests, we are still facing obstacles in developing our systems of forest product management. More training should be provided for Indigenous Peoples. We also need to develop a management system that involves all stakeholders in the plans drawn up by the Sungai Utik community.

## 🚴 ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

Indigenous territories must be preserved, protected and maintained from generation to generation. We also need outsiders to help us build our capacities, in cooperation with government agencies and NGOs. In my opinion, development initiatives should only be conducted in consultation with the community, to ensure that these initiatives meet our needs and aspirations.



Apai Kudi weaving rattan to make a *ladung* <sup>Copyright : BRWA</sup>

## **23. PASER ADANG MIGI RANGAN**



## **YURNI SADARIAH**

INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S LEADER Paser, East Kalimantan



THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD ALSO COMMUNICATE CLEARLY AND EFFECTIVELY BEFORE DECIDING ON POLICIES THAT AFFECT US. ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY, EVEN AT THE LOWEST LEVEL OF SOCIETY, SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE HEARD, NOT JUST MEMBERS OF THE ELITE

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

The Indigenous Peoples of Paser Migi Rangan can be described as conservation actors for a number of reasons, including their commitment to protecting the customary forests.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

We have submitted an application for our customary forests to be recognized by the district government. These forests cover a large area, stretching from the mountains down to the sea, to the mangrove swamps. With so many palm oil plantation companies, mining companies, and people migrating from elsewhere in Indonesia, the remaining area of customary forest is much smaller than it used to be. In the past, the customary forest was considered to be communal property, with the entire community taking part in its management. Now, however, land ownership certificates have been issued, so individuals can own plots of land. Quite a few areas of the forest have suffered damage because the land has been used for personal interests.

## overnment recognition

The village government has already recognized our customary forests and our conservation practices. However, the district government of Paser is still going through the process of requesting the regulation's formal legalization.



There are a lot of complaints from the community regarding the zoning of our customary forests, particularly regarding the classification of these forests as protected forests that cannot be utilized. The government's transmigration program and the land certification process in the 1980s have led to the conversion of customary forest. It is illegal to use fire to clear the land, with this prohibition resulting in suboptimal crop yields. If the community does use fire to clear land, it has to watch out for the authorities. It takes time to ensure fertility of the soil unless through the use of fire to clear land.



#### ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

The community hopes that the government will recognize our existence and our traditional local wisdom. We also hope that the process of having our lands recognized as customary forest by the government isn't too complicated and doesn't take too long.

The community should pay more attention to preserving their ethnic traditions and local wisdom, which over time have become eroded. The government should also communicate clearly and effectively before deciding on policies that affect us. All members of the community, even at the lowest level of society, should have the right to be heard, not just members of the elite.



Indigenous Peoples of Rangan in Paser, East Kalimantan collects mangrove snails to supplement their diets Copyright INFIS/Khairul Abdi, Fahlevi

# **24. DAYAK TOMUN KINIPAN**



**EFFENDI BUHING** 

CUSTOMARY LEADER Lamandau, Central Kalimantan



WE NEED TO MAINTAIN OUR COMMITMENT TO DEFENDING THE CUSTOMARY AREA OF THE LAMAN KINIPAN COMMUNITY

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

Conservation is a term used at the national level. For the indigenous community, it is more about protecting the remaining forests and fields by practicing shifting agriculture and planting rubber and rattan, taking only as much wood as we need, to protect our hunting places and our water springs, as required by customary law.



#### **GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION**

Our indigenous community has not yet been recognized by the central, provincial, or district level government authorities. Only at the village level has our community been recognized. We have submitted a request to the district head, but there has been no response so far. We have also submitted a proposal for the recognition of Laman Kinipan's customary forest to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry.

#### CHALLENGES

The district head of Lamandau said that there should be a Regional Regulation (*Peraturan Daerah* or Perda) to support the indigenous community's request for customary forest recognition. Meanwhile, this regional regulation requires clear boundaries for customary territories, the Laman Kinipan community has not yet reached an agreement on



territorial boundaries with the people in Karang Taba village, a neighboring village directly adjacent to Laman Kinipan, because they – Karang Taba peoples--have already cleared the land area to support oil palm plantation. Some members of the community actually support the activities of the plantation companies. Because of that, we're worried that our land will be handed over little by little to the company, PT. Sawit Mandiri Lestari, which has more than 2000 hectares of land under cultivation in the customary area of the Laman Kinipan community.



# **25. DAYAK MA'ANYAN HARINGIN**



LILIS

INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S LEADER East Barito, Central Kalimantan



IF THE GOVERNMENT WANTS TO DEVELOP OUR TERRITORY, IT SHOULD CONSULT WITH THE COMMUNITY AND BE OPEN WITH US, FOR THE GOOD OF OUR SURVIVAL TOGETHER

# INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

Most of the Indigenous Peoples of the Haringin Dayak Ma'anyan community are conservation actors. They still take part in all the traditional rituals related to land clearing, harvesting, and other similar activities.

# CONSERVATION STORIES

Currently, the community's most important form of conservation activity involves the protected forests, in which all agricultural and land clearing activities are forbidden. The village government has already mapped the customary forest. The customary forest remains protected for the good of the community, as a source of water. However, with palm oil and coal mining companies coming onto our lands, the community lacks access to clean water, especially during the dry season.

### 🔆 GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

The district government has already issued a decree to recognize our customary rights, but it is still in the process of being implemented and it doesn't fully recognize the rights of the community to engage in their traditional practices, with prohibitions on the use of fire to clear land for fields. Neither government agencies nor the village administration have provided funds for the assistance and development of the Indigenous Peoples in Barito.



One of the biggest obstacles we face is that our traditional system of agriculture hasn't been recognized, with the community using fire to clear land and limiting the use of land to two hectares per household. There are many conflicts between the community and the government and the private sector, when they try to acquire our land for development purposes.



#### **ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES**

The community hopes that any government private or sector development initiative is discussed with the community first. The rights of the Indigenous Peoples should be respected, and the newcomers should



not be prioritized. The government should be transparent and open in processes related to land certification and land acquisition. To implement sustainable development, the government should be open and consult with the community, to ensure the survival of the Indigenous People



The slash-and-burn method, a traditional farming system of the Dayak Ma'anyan Indigenous Peoples Copyright : AMAN - Mareta Karunia

# **26. DAYAK NGAJU**



### **MARKO MAHIN**

CUSTOMARY LEADER Kapuas, Central Kalimantan



IF DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES ARE IMPLEMENTED, THEY SHOULD BE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY. IT SHOULD BE ABOUT CARING FOR NATURE, CARING FOR CULTURE, AND CARING FOR THE PEOPLE

# INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

The Ngaju Dayak people can be called conservation actors because of the way they apply local wisdom in their lives. The most commonly applied conservation practices include allocating some areas of land as sacred forests and using traditional cultivation methods on our lands.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

One form of local wisdom that we apply to agriculture is the rotational cultivation method, which is used to maintain the fertility of the soil. Through the practice of swidden rotation, the soil becomes fertile again. We also implement a planting method that uses tidal water to produce compost. It involves turning over the top soil and grass to stem the rising tides and to produce compost. One of the reasons we use this method is to maintain the healthy conditions of the peatlands so that they are not damaged or degraded.



The government provides some support, but not much. Many of our sacred forests have still not been recognized as customary forests. In a number of other districts, similar forests have already been recognized. The government has provided assistance in the form of seed stock for planting, but many of these seeds were unsuitable for fir this type of land, because the land Kalimantan isn't very fertile, unlike in Java.

#### CHALLENGES

The government has criminalized many of the practices associated with the traditional rotational system of agriculture because they think it results in the destruction of land and forest fires. But the community never does it on a large scale, they only apply it to a small area that is used to fulfill their needs.

Many corrupt village officials claimed that the customary forests are Village Forests and permit timber to be harvested from the forest, under the pretext that it is for a traditional ritual.

These days, a lot of the indigenous community no longer care about the customary forests, because of the emergence of new religious beliefs that have no emotional connection or ties with the customary forests. The government tends to develop and strengthen food estates without applying our local wisdom. This may benefit the plantation company, but it doesn't benefit the local community much.



We want recognition and protection for the system of forest management that we have applied for generations. We hope that the government doesn't apply development policies that are unsuitable for the land conditions in Kalimantan. We hope that the use of local seed varieties is encouraged to meet the food needs of local communities.

We hope that the indigenous communities can maintain solidarity and protect their institutions so that they can play a role when development and other policies that undermine the communities, their territories and ways of life are imposed.



# 27. DAYAK NGAJU MANTANGAI



### **NORHADIE KARBEN**

INDIGENOUS YOUTH ACTIVIST Kapuas, Central Kalimantan



IN THE FUTURE, WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO REAP BENEFITS FROM OUR CUSTOMARY FORESTS BY SELLING ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, WHICH WE WOULD IMPLEMENT IN COMPLIANCE WITH OUR CUSTOMARY LAW.

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

The Ngaju Dayak Indigenous Peoples have engaged in efforts to protect the natural environment in their customary areas for generations. We have guarded the *Pukung Pawanan* customary forest since time immemorial, and it is still a source of fresh water. We are well aware of the role of the forest in our lives.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

The manner in which we protect the natural environment is based on our customary laws. For example, we plant tree seedlings in the customary forest areas, including shorea, *jelutong* (*Dyera costulata*) and rubber trees. For us, the forest is a source of livelihood where we hunt animals and collect honey. Conservation is something we do not just to protect the life cycle of the community, but all forms of life, so that we can continue to live together sustainably.



#### GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

So far, the government has not acknowledged our existence. Our customary institutions have tried to lobby the local government to make district level regulations to recognize our indigenous community, but so far there has been no response.

#### CHALLENGES

There is an area in which our customary forest overlaps with the state protected forest. The younger generation is also less interested in learning and understanding our customs due to the encroaching influence of outsiders. We are worried that someday soon, the younger generation will not remember our customary territories.



#### **ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES**

We hope that to ensure the sustainability of the forest, the community will not overuse forest products, particularly wood. We hope that the government and other parties involve us in conservation initiatives. We don't want just to be spectators. There needs to be clear and mutually beneficial cooperation between our indigenous community, the government, and other agencies and NGOs to engage in joint conservation work in our customary areas. In the future, we hope that we will be able to reap benefits from our customary forests by selling environmental services, which we would implement in compliance with our customary law. Indigenous Peoples must be involved in every stage of any development initiative in their customary territories, from planning to implementation and maintenance. We should be involved in all decision-making processes.



### 28. DAYAK NGAJU TANJUNG PUSAKA VILLAGE



SINO

INDIGENOUS ACTIVIST Pulang Pisau, Central Kalimantan



WE STILL USE TRADITIONAL EQUIPMENT AND METHODS TO CATCH FISH. WITH THIS EQUIPMENT, WE ONLY CATCH BIG FISH, LEAVING THE SMALL FISH A CHANCE TO GROW

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

All the activities in our indigenous community are part of our efforts to conserve the natural environment. For generations, the community has managed and protected these resources.

# CONSERVATION STORIES

We still use traditional equipment and methods to catch fish, including fishing lines and nets, as well as tools called *banjur, rawai*, *bubu, rempa, kalang, temprai, sauk*, and *hantai*. With this equipment, we only catch big fish and hence giving the small fish a chance to grow. This is a very effective means of sustaining the fish population without damaging the environment.

Since December 2019, we have built fishponds (*beje*) around the Lake Bagantung. We use these ponds as fish traps, and the community can use them when they need them. Our traditional fishing methods have been passed down from generation to generation, together with the tradition of cleaning the river every year.



We haven't received any support from the government. We built the *beje* fish ponds with private support. We have drawn up a village regulation for recognition the traditional knowledge, but it is still being processed by the district government.



#### CHALLENGES

It's difficult to build the fishponds because the ground is wet and we only use manual tools.

Part of our customary forest overlaps with the state protected forest and land designated for other uses. We have trouble accessing these areas to conduct surveillance in our customary forest.

Some members of the community use destructive measures to catch fish, including dynamite, potassium, and gauze nets. These methods damage the environment and disrupt the local community economy, which is dependent on fishing.



#### **ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES**

We hope that we will be able to build more fishponds to support the community economy. We also hopes to plant trees to preserve the environment around Begantung Lake. We need to ensure the sustainability of the lake and forests and build the capacity of our river management groups. We also need equipment to monitor our customary forest areas.

Our efforts to protect and safeguard the natural environment against the elements that threaten them need to be reinforced by the issuance of *Bunting* formal rules from the village government. All development initiatives should involve the local community in the area, including efforts to sustain and protect the Indigenous Peoples lands.





### 29. DAYAK SIMPAKNG Community of Kampong Banjur, Karap, and Lawe



### **YULIUS YOGI**

INDIGENOUS YOUTH ACTIVIST Ketapang, West Kalimantan



SO FAR, IT IS THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE WHO PROTECT THE FOREST AND THE ENVIRONMENT FROM DESTRUCTION AND LAND GRABBING BY CORPORATIONS. THIS IS WHY THE FOREST IS MAINTAINED AND PROTECTED UNTIL THE PRESENT DAY

# INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

The Dayak Simpakng community of Kampong Banjur, Karap, and Lawe in Mekar Raya Village is aware of the necessity to protect their territory, particularly communal areas like tembawang and keramat (sacred/ holy) areas. Genuine acts and efforts have been taken to defend the area against the intrusion of outsiders. The ancestors of Dayak Simpakng have instilled in the community the sense of responsibility to preserve their land to ensure the survival of future generations . Furthermore, the Dayak Simpakng community values biodiversity, as evidenced by the customary law that regulates the protection of flora and fauna in these areas.

# CONSERVATION STORIES

The Dayak Simpakng who live in Mekar Raya Village, Ketapang Regency, West Kalimantan, have long protected their territory. They used to move their settelements and practice traditional shifting cultivation. Once they moved, the former settlement would be converted into a forest known as Tembawang. The area is preserved to provide a source of livelihood for the community. Itis collectively owned and passed down from generation to generation. *Tembawang* areas have abundant local fruit varieties, including durian, *temberanang*, *rosak*, *kamayo*, tamarind, *rambutan*, and many others.

Regarding utilization of the tembawang, there is a customary law that states, "you may plant a tree, but you cannot cut it." This order, previously transmitted orally throughout generations, has been written into a customary law book in 2016: The Customary Law of Dayak Simpakng. The book contains ngalayorelated rules (cutting down the tree without customary permission or destroying the area on purpose). For this infringement, the heirs of tamawang/tembawang have the right to sanction the perpetrator.

The community also possesses sacred and protected ancestral sites in addition to Tembawang. Among these are the Keramat Tanikng forest, Tanikng River, Bejangkar River, and Amuntuda River, as well as Semugo hill where, according to our mythology, our tiger ancestor used to lives. All of these are exceptionally sacred and holy and the shaman or pemangku has responsibility for its protection. These are the places where traditional rituals are performed, typically for the treatment of ailments and purification of the village (kampong) from disruptions of the balance. Additionally, the Berugak forest. Senibung forest, and Mount Maria provide clean water for the community and are protected by the community. People are forbidden from farming, chopping or cutting trees, harming animals, or even taking anything from these sacred and protected areas as the customary restrictions are strictly enforced. As a result, this area has a high level of biodiversity and serves as a habitat for a diverse range of wild creatures like tajak and ivory hornbill, kuko hornbill, bear. *kelasi* (red langur), deer, pelanduk (mouse deer), kesiduk (skunk), nek uban (white mouse), klempiao (gibbon), tiger, the orangutan. Also can be found there various species of fish, such as uceng, nyalian, banta, wader cakul, catfish, hampala, sili, tilan/sili batik fish, kiontong fish, anak aruan fish, baung, and many others. This variability demonstrates that the community, in its own unique way, is capable of sustained conservation.

### SOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

The village authority provides formal acknowledgment for the practice of Dayak Simpakng local wisdom through the Mekar Raya Village Regulation (Peraturan Desa, Perdes) No. 3 of 2022. However, this is considered insufficient in light of the threat posed by investment permits in area of Mekar Raya Village and , thus the territory of Dayak Simpakng. The community needs recognition and protection of their territorial rights and conservation practices. Although the Ketapang Regional Regulation (Peraturan Daerah, Perda) No. 8 of 2020 pertaining to the Recognition and Protection of Indigenous People has been issued by the local government, it must be strengthened by a Regent Decree (Surat Keputusan Bupati) before it can become a prerequisite for registering a Customary Forest (*Hutan Hak*).



CHALLENGES

Urgent recognition of the rights of the Dayak Simpakng community is necessary since this region is currently surrounded by private corporations, while easy investment permits will continue to pose a threat in the future. Palm oil corporations have taken over many community lands around Mekar Raya Village, converting numerous forest areas into monoculture plantations.

Initially, this palm oil corporation enticed the locals with the promise of profit, but what actually happened was that the locals lost their forests, water sources, and means of subsistence, leaving them impoverished. This condition prompted the Dayak Simpakng to resist the Mitra Karya Sentosa Company (PT. MKS) in 2013 when it attempted to lay claim to and carry out forest clearing in sacred areas. A The community also rejected in 2020 an Industrial Forest Plantation (*Hutan Tanaman Industri*, *HTI*) company, PT. MAS when they performed socialization for their business operation plan in the vicinity of Mekar Raya Village.



The government must immediately recognize the rights of the Simpakng Dayak Indigenous Peoples so that the community can have sovereignty over the territory and natural resources. Only with this acknowledgment can our traditional territory and conservation practices be preserved, allowing future generations to reap the benefits of security and sustainability. The community also needs government support of community's conservation efforts through empowerment and economic development.



# **30. DAYAK KENYAH BAHAU HULU**



### **ANDRIS SALO**

INDIGENOUS YOUTH ACTIVIST AND MEMBER OF FoMMA Malinau, North Kalimantan



WITH THE DISTRICT HEAD'S DECREE TO RECOGNIZE THE BAHAU HULU CUSTOMARY AREA IN 2019, THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE FINALLY FREE TO LIVE IN SECURITY ON THEIR OWN LAND.

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

As I see it, the Indigenous Peoples are conservation actors because all of their sources of life are derived from the forest, but they only take what they need. They also harvest forest products to enable their children to go to school and to meet their economic needs. But they recognize that they can damage the natural environment if they hunt or use forest products on a large scale. In the forest, they can collect food, they can hunt, they can earn a little money by selling forest products. There are some young troublemakers who come home from school in the city, where the way of life

is very different, and they bring their new ways with them. They are very influential in the village because they are considered educated, especially if they have an academic title.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

The community protects the forest and its natural resources through their daily practices, as well as through formal regulations. For example, it is forbidden to clear land where certain species of rattan grow, or to fell trees without a specific purpose, or to cut down fruit trees in the forest. Those who violate these laws can be fined. The fine is in the form of a machete, household item, an old vase or monetary. But the regulations need to be strengthened and supplemented. Clearing land for cultivation has to be done in a way that does not cause damage to the forest, with specific rules to ensure sustainability. For example, a single plot of land cannot be cleared two years in a row because this makes the land barren. Our ancestors knew this from time immemorial. Thus, when land is cleared for cultivation, it is left to return to the forest in the following year.

In Bahau Hulu, certain areas have been set aside to ensure the continuity of the supply of clean water for the irrigation of rice fields, backed up by customary regulations, such as in the areas around the Alango and Arai rivers. It used to be a large farming area, but that is no longer permitted. However, these areas are not classified as *tana' ulen*, because *tana' ulen* are the a result of a historical and political process.



#### GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

The District Head issued a decree to recognize the Bahau Hulu customary territory in 2019. The late Pak Anye (Customary Chief of the Bahau Hulu) received the environmental Kalpataru award for his role in protecting the tana' ulen several years ago. official recognition is very The important for Indigenous Peoples. It acknowledges that they have rights to the land they occupy, so they are protected, and free to live on their own land. Requests for the recognition of customary forests are submitted to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry.

#### CHALLENGES

The granting of forest concessions is a significant threat to the community and their territory. A few members of the community support these concessions. Usually they are those with higher education, and can be



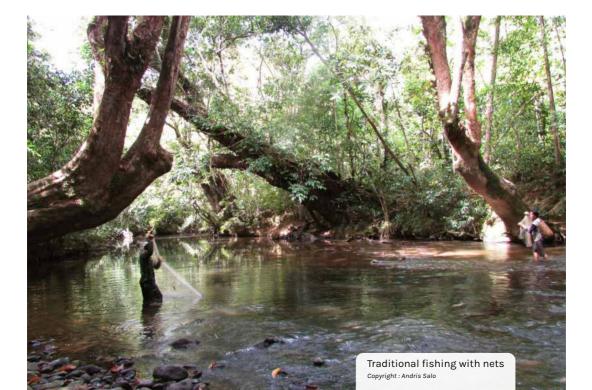
influential in the community. The shift in values and patterns of life is a threat. Threats related to the forest concessions always come from the central government and the district government. No member of the community wants to see bare mountains. We need to improve the communication between the community and the government so that we can negotiate better to ensure that development initiatives are well planned and well implemented, with minimal impact on the natural environment.



#### ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

The way I see it, the government should provide support for Indigenous Peoples to manage and protect their customary forests and territories and to build their self-esteem. They should also consider alternatives to standard development initiatives, such as funding for conservation management and carbon sequestration schemes. The community would be able to reduce the area of land used for the cultivation of crops if there were alternative financial schemes to compensate them for protecting the forest. In Long Alango, the community support the expansion of rice fields around the village to improve their livelihoods. It would also reduce costs, because there would be no need for households to build a new hut every year.

The custodians of the customary law need to have frequent meetings with all members of the community to strengthen adherence to the law and to build solidarity within the community. Customary leaders must be provided with the appropriate guidance to enable them to deal with new issues that are not covered by the customary laws, but in accordance with the traditions of the community.



# **31. DAYAK KENYAH BAHAU HULU**



### NJAU ANAU

CUSTOMARY LEADER AND DEPUTY CHAIR OF FOMMA Malinau, North Kalimantan



THE BEST SOLUTION WOULD BE TO DEVISE A COLLABORATIVE MANAGEMENT SCHEME, IN WHICH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES JOINTLY SHARE RESPONSIBILITY TO MANAGE THE FOREST AREAS THAT ARE THE SOURCE OF OUR LIVELIHOODS.

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

Indigenous Peoples can be regarded as conservation actors because their lives and deaths are completely dependent on the natural environment in which they live. Nature is the source of all life, so it must be protected, maintained, managed and used wisely and carefully. One example of community conservation practices is found in tana' ulen, a term used to describe an area of forest land that is rich in natural resources and located along the banks of the river. The community protects and guards this area according to strict customary laws.

# CONSERVATION STORIES

The Indigenous Peoples in Bahau Hulu continue to implement customary conservation practices in the tana' ulen, following in the footsteps of their ancestors, with the code first defined by the Great Customary Leader, Apui Njau, who was followed by his son Anyi Apui. The Indigenous Peoples in Long Alango and the other villages in the Bahau Hulu sub-district continue to maintain the tradition of guarding and protecting their tana' ulen. Our ancestors knew this from time immemorial. Thus, when land is cleared for cultivation, it is left to return to the forest in the following year.



#### GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

The community's conservation practices in *tana' ulen* have been recognized and supported by the government, as shown by the *Kalpataru* Award to the Bahau Hulu Customary Chief in 2008. The Indigenous Peoples of Bahau Hulu and their rights to their customary area have also been recognized and acknowledged by the Malinau District Government through the promulgation of a district-level decree.

#### CHALLENGES

The Indigenous Peoples continue to practice their traditional way of life following their ancestral ways. All we need to do is strengthen the community's understanding by ensuring that local wisdom is passed down from generation to generation and that Customary institutions at both the village and regional levels continue to manage their forests.

Most of the challenges we face relate to outsiders entering the *tana' ulen* 

areas without permission from either the community or the customary institutions to look for agarwood. Sections of the *tana' ulen* areas in the Bahau Hulu and Pujungan customary areas are included in the Kayan Mentarang National Park. The community is concerned that conflicts may arise between the official conservation regulation of the park and our traditional way of managing the *tana' ulen*, even though ultimately our goals are the same, to preserve the forest. The community is worried about this.

#### 🛃 ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

We hope that the *tana' ulen* and our othercustomarylandswillbemanaged in a way that is consistent with the principles of the government's policy of protecting Indigenous People. The best solution would be to devise a collaborative management scheme, in which government agencies and the Indigenous Peoples jointly share responsibility to manage the forest areas that are the source of our livelihoods.



Natural Forest of Kalimantan Copyright Kynan Tegar

### 32. DAYAK LUNDAYEH MENTARANG



### **DOLVINA DAMUS**

INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S LEADER AND CHAIR OF FOMMA Malinau, North Kalimantan

# G

#### THAT'S WHAT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES CALL CONSERVATION: IT'S A PART OF OUR DAILY LIVES, A PART OF OUR CULTURE.

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

Indigenous Peoples guard and protect the land upon which they live through their daily activities, through the way they live their lives. For our community, the customary lands are a granary and a bank, the source of our livelihoods. We will always guard and protect the source of our livelihoods, because we live in harmony with our natural environment. This is the true meaning of conservation. Conservation is a practical part of our lives, part of our culture. For example, when the Dayak Indigenous People engage in hunting, they conserve the salt licks that the animals of the forest use, so that the animals return there. We always take particular care to protect water springs and rivers, so

that upstream water sources remain pure. When the people harvest forest products, they refrain from taking in excess. In our farming traditions, we use the term Ara' Mefetamat, which means 'the supply must remain uninterrupted.' This term is used to describe our planting practices, which are designed to ensure that strains of seeds do not become extinct. So, farmers plant seeds at the edge of their fields, or leave some seeds with another farmer who is not opening a field that year, or we swap seeds with someone else. The Dayak people are conservation actors through the way they farm, protect local seeds and varieties. The women play a particularly important role in ensuring the sustainability of local seeds. The Indigenous Peoples serve

as the guardians of the forest on their customary lands. If conservation is about protecting and preserving the forest, then Dayak Indigenous Peoples are indeed conservation actors.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

The Lundayeh Dayak Peoples always protect the forest by dividing it into different zones: one zone is known as tana' ulung (an area of the forest where traditional rituals are held), which includes specific forest areas, such as Tana' Ulung Buayeh, Ulung Darung and Ulung Agung, all of which form part of the Lundayeh Dayak community. In other areas, other Dayak groups have a similar zoning system, such as tana' ulen (Dayak Kenyah) and tana' ang (Dayak Kayan). In all of these protected forests, natural resources can only be used in compliance with customary laws. There are other areas where great disasters or misfortunes occurred in the past. These areas should not be disturbed, out of respect for the families of those who were affected by the disaster (in Lundayeh = tana' nebalun).

I'm proud that the younger generation continues to learn and honor the and traditions customs of our ancestors. The Lundayeh Dayak community celebrates Aco Lundayeh, a celebration that is held once every two years, when the entire community returns to their village. At this celebration, the arts and culture of the Dayak Lundayeh are performed and displayed, with renditions of our oral literature, Bada' Ulun, which are a rich depository of our cultural heritage. This enables the younger generation to learn and understand from the wisdom of their ancestors. Through these performances, they come to passionately love and respect the cultural wisdom of the Dayak Lundayeh community and to appreciate the ways of their ancestors. That's how we preserve our customs and culture and pass them on to our children.

### i GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

The local government has recognized the Dayak Lundayeh as Indigenous financial Peoples. providing assistance and support for activities such as participatory mapping process in a number of our customary areas. The local government has provided support to preserve and maintain the traditions of Indigenous Peoples in the district of Malinau. We have a District Regulation to Protect the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. However, the community is less sure regarding the commitment of the central government to recognize and accommodate the rights of Indigenous Peoples in their customary areas. particularly when our customary areas fall within formally designated protected areas. When it comes to conservation policies, the central government agencies are in charge of conservation. The communities feel that these agencies do not trust communities to manage their customary land responsibly.



#### CHALLENGES

Our biggest challenge relates to maintaining building and trust between all stakeholders. We need to develop a shared commitment to collaboration as a means to safeguard the customary forest areas and all the natural resources that they contain, particularly in areas where the customary land overlaps with the Kayan Mentarang National Park. For the community to see this as fair, it is important to balance the need to protect the forest with the rights of the community to utilize its resources. For this, development initiatives need to be designed so that the community is involved and empowered to play an active role and to receive benefits as a result of their participation.



#### **ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES**

We have managed our customary areas in accordance with the local wisdom that has been passed down through the generations from our ancestors. The customary forest contains a wealth of natural resources, it is the place where we take refuge in times of difficulty or when a disaster occurs. We will continue to strive to protect and maintain the inheritance we have received from our ancestors so that we can pass it on to generations to come. We hope that the government listens to the Indigenous Peoples when it formulates its development initiatives. We are grateful that the District Government has supported community recognizing by our our customary land through the promulgation Reagent's Decree. We hope that the central government also recognizes our rights. We acknowledge that Indigenous Peoples are now formally part of the collaborative management of the Kayan Mentarang National Park, which includes eleven of our customary territories. However, hope that this collaborative we arrangement is actually implemented on the ground rather than merely being a formal arrangement. would like to quote the words of our traditional elder, the Great Customary Chief of Krayan Hulu, Taman Lewi Gala Paru', who said that while the eleven customary areas are recognized and accepted as formal conservation zones of National Park, they should be recognized as Customary Parks. It is our customs and traditions that have protected our lands. We hope that the Indigenous Peoples are recognized as the masters of the land that we have inherited from our ancestors.



Traditional foods in Krayan Highlands <sup>Copyright Ellias Yesaya</sup>

# **33. DAYAK KENYAH PUJUNGAN**



**YU TANG BAWAN** 

MEMBER OF THE PUJUNGAN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES'ORGANIZATION Malinau, North Kalimantan



IF THE COMMUNITY HAS AGREED UPON CUSTOMARY REGULATIONS, THOSE REGULATIONS SHOULD BE RESPECTED, BECAUSE THEY CAME FROM OUR ANCESTORS TO HELP US PROTECT THE FORESTS.

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

Indigenous peoples are conservation actors. You can see that by looking at how well they manage the *tana' ulen* area. There are wild animals there, it's full of natural resources. The indigenous system supports conservation. From ancient times, we've had a management system and rules of conduct. There is a practice we call *nuba sungai*, which governs the way we collectively fish for community rituals.

The people are free to take rattan for weaving, but you have to cut it at least two *depa* (local unit of measure corresponding to about 80-90cm) from the ground. You aren't allowed to take it all from one plant. The people still follow these rules. They are described in a body of customary law which has now been written down.



In the village of Ketaman, the community owns a *tana ulen* in the upper reaches of the Kaleng River. It is a good place to hunt but also far away. Recently, the community decided to establish a new *tana' ulen* on the Ketunai River, so location would be closer to the village. The regulations that were in force in the *tana' ulen* area on the Ketaman River are now also applied in the area on the Ketunai

river: the forest cannot be cleared to open rice fields, rattan is only taken for the use of the entire community, hunting for personal purposes is prohibited, and it is only allowed for community ceremonies. The new tana' ulen was established to protect water sources for the new hydropower generation plant (PLTA).



### **GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION**

The subdistrict and village governments have been very supportive. At the district level, it it is not so clear. The Indigenous Peoples in the Pujungan customary area are still waiting for the District Head's decree. The Indigenous Peoples will have some certainty regarding their customary rights, so they will to protect the tana' ulen more confidently.

### CHALLENGES

Sometimes the government's development plans are not consistent with our way of thinking. For example, the community wanted to open a path from Ketaman to Long Jelet, a footpath for tourists. The government turned it into a big project and built a large road. It has already been damaged by landslides. Cars couldn't pass and motorbikes could only get as far as the Liten River. To give another example, some years ago a few of the traditional leaders gave a private company logging rights to the area around tana' ulen on the Ahan River. The company was driven out by demonstrations of young activists. Currently, the areas around the Ahan and Peliran rivers are safe again. The timber companies

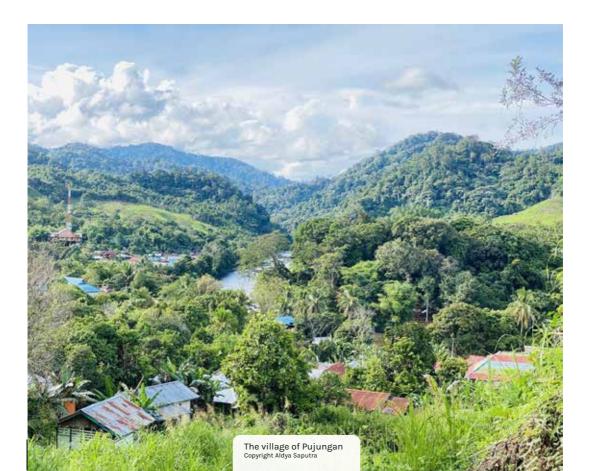
have left. But we've heard that in the area around the Bahau estuary, some new companies have been allowed to enter. The Indigenous Peoples are worried that this means that timber companies will be allowed back into the area, including agarwood collectors.

The agarwood (gaharu) collectors are outsiders, they work with people who have longboats and come to Long Pujungan from far away, from the downstream area. The way they collect agarwood is completely different from the traditional way. The Indigenous Peoples don't know anything about their movements, we only see signs and traces of them in the forest. The huts they build are completely different from those built by locals and they cut down trees. The agarwood collectors pay a lot of money to the longboat owners. In 2019, we had a big meeting about this and decided to write a letter of protest to all the agarwood collectors along the Kayan river.

### ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

We have hopes for the future, we plan to set up a farmers' group in Long Pujungan to establish a sang palm (Licuaria species) small plantation, owned by the village and for the use of its people. A lot of people are enthusiastic about the idea, particularly the women. The women use the leaves of the sang palm, but they have to walk a long way to collect them. The women are good at collecting the leaves, they take them carefully and without damaging the

palm so that the leaves grow back. If men collect the leaves, they often damage the plant. The sang plants will be planted under shade trees to protect them. Looking to the future, we hope that we will be able to continue to protect the forest. The Kenyah people can't live apart from the forest, we want to continue to learn how to protect and conserve the forest. Our way of life is completely dependent on the forest and the plants and animals it contains. We hope that the district government issues a decree to recognize our customary law, so that our children and grandchildren will be able to continue to benefit from the forest. The staff of the Kayan Mentarang National Park now support the customary law, sometimes even more than we do ourselves. At the village meeting, they told us that they wouldn't dare to make any rules that contravened our customary law. So why is it still not recognized officially? This is what the Indigenous Peoples want to tell the world. If our ancestors established regulations to protect the forest, those regulations should be respected. Regarding the Covid-19 pandemic, no one in our community near the forest got sick. I feel safe. because the virus can't be strong in the forest. It is healthy with clean rivers. In the heart of Borneo, no one has contracted the disease except in the cities in the downstream areas. We have traditional herbal medicines and cures. like *madem*, a saunalike practice that uses wild ginger and other medicinal plants. It's very effective for curing various diseases traditionally.



# **34. DAYAK SA'BAN KRAYAN HULU**



### **GAT KHALEB**

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ORGANIZATION SECRETARY KRAYAN HULU Nunukan, North Kalimantan



THE COMMUNITY STILL IMPLEMENTS CONSERVATION PRACTICES THROUGHOUT THEIR DAILY LIVES WITH FULL COMMITMENT AND AWARENESS THAT OUR LIVES ARE DEPENDENT ON NATURE.

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

Indigenous Peoples can be described as conservation actors. Almost all of the customary areas under our management are still sustainable to this day. In places where the traditional social structures of the Indigenous Peoples are still strong, the forests are always green and in excellent condition. The Indigenous Peoples are drivers of conservation.

# CONSERVATION STORIES

The people still implement conservation practices in the Kayan Mentarang National Park area. They plant fruit trees in the areas around

rice fields and gardens. When they use the natural resources, they pay careful attention to the manner in which they collect rattan and other plants. In all our daily activities, we demonstrate our commitment to conservation and our awareness that our lives and livelihoods are dependent on nature. Over the past 10 years, a number companies of plantation have approached the government to open the lands for palm oil. The community rejected this. There was also a plan to establish some kind of Japanese retirement home, but the community rejected that too. The community continues to believe that these kinds of development projects won't benefit the entire community, maybe only

a few people. We still continue to practice traditional, ecosystem-based organic farming.



### **GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION**

In 2004, the District Government of Nunukan issued a regulation to recognize and protect the Indigenous Peoples. However, the Indigenous Peoples of Krayan have not yet taken advantage of the opportunities regulation. We created by the haven't completed the mapping of our customary areas. In one new customary area, Krayan Barat, the boundaries aren't clear, but we've reached an agreement that the sub-district boundaries also define the boundaries of the customary area. In our discussions with the management of the Kayan Mentarang National Park (TNKM), the key issue is always collaboration. At first glance, it sounds good, a win/win solution, but in practice it hasn't worked. A new entity known as the Collaborative Management Board of Trustees and Controllers (DP3K) has been set up, but it isn't functioning well. Customary leadres are not always invited. The community isn't fully involved, and communication hasn't been smooth. The community objected strongly when they sent 40 officials to map the area, without providing any information to the community. There has been no significant change in the management of the National Park. There are meetings, but we aren't involved in decision-making and management processes.

### CHALLENGES

The indigenous communities don't care about the National Park, they just know that this is our customary land, our territory. Under the National Park system, Indigenous Peoples are not actors, they aren't permitted to manage the forest according to their own customs and traditions, they are regarded as passive objects. We want to have the right to manage our own land, to continue to implement our conservation practices in the National Park, for the benefit of our community. If we continue to be treated as passive objects, we will move ahead on our own, without paying any attention to their rules and systems. In the past, the management of the forest depended on the customary leaders, the traditional village head. If the Indigenous Peoples feel that the forest belongs to the government rather than to the community, then



they will begin to feel that they can do what they want with it. That would be a cause for concern. Malaysia is no threat to us, unless there are political changes at the national level. The Krayan Highlands is a strategic national border area: this helps the community, because it means that the government pays attention to us (the President visited Krayan in 2019). It is okay to develop our area, as long as everything is done in accordance with the aspirations of the Indigenous Peoples, including initiatives to build implement sustainable roads, to development, to develop organic agriculture, and to preserve our culture.



#### **ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES**

We hope that the central government will introduce regulations that

support sustainable development at the village level, with the appropriate law enforcement and implementation. In the past, the customary law was sufficient. Now we need formal legal instruments. The government should also pay attention to the issue of recognizing Indigenous Peoples and their rights to the forests and other community assets. Under the national regulations, Indigenous lands in the forest areas can be recognized as a customary forest. The National Park budget could be used to channel funds to the Indigenous Peoples so that the forests are managed sustainably. At the moment, it's in the hands of the older generation, but when it's time for a transition, the younger generation will be ready to continue to implement the traditional system of forest management.



# **35. DAYAK BENUAQ MUARA TAE**



### MASRANI

CUSTOMARY LEADER West Kutai, East Kalimantan



#### WE HAVE LONG TRADITION OF PROTECTING OUR LAND AND THE FOREST

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

Indigenous Peoples are conservation actors because they have a long tradition of protecting their lands and the forest and other natural resources within them. The Indigenous Peoples, including the community in Muara Tae, place great value on these resources and manage the forest by protecting



Harvesting Kertongan Fruit in the Utaq Melinau Customary Forest, Muara Tae, East Kalimantan Copyright AMAN KALTIM

high-value areas. For example, the customary forest that we call *utaq melinau* is protected to prevent damage. For generations, we have also protected another area, which we call *simpunq*, to ensure the sustainability of supplies of fruit, honey, freshwater and other valuable natural resources.

The community also protects their territory against outside encroachment, especially from palm oil companies, mining companies business and operators, whose activities often cause great damage to the environment in our customary areas. The agribusiness and extractive companies that operate in our areas include PT. Munte Waniq Jaya Perkasa, PT. Borneo Surya Mining

Jaya, PT. London Sumatera, and Tambang PT. Gunung Bayan Pertama Coal. PT. Gunung Bayan Cool, the East Kalimantan Provincial Government, and West Kutai district Government handed over around 5000 hectares of Muara Tae customary lands for use as a military training base.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

The Muara Tae indigenous community was awarded the Equator Prize in 2015, but the government hasn't given us any recognition or support. In fact, the district government has been engaged in propaganda to support the palm oil companies in their efforts to grab the land in the Muara Tae customary area. In the past, when I was serving as the village head, I was dishonorably dismissed by the district head of West Kutai because I resisted the palm oil companies whose activities would clearly cause great damage to the Muara Tae customary area that we have protected from generation to generation.

### GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

We submitted a request for the communal rights and customary law of Muara Tae for recognition by the government, but we haven't received any respons.

### CHALLENGES

the biggest One of problems facing the community today is the government's lack of recognition for our indigenous community. The government's failure to recognize the indigenous community's rights to its land has resulted in conflicts, with the government drafting its own land zoning system without consulting or involving us. For generations, we have lived on this land, but the government designed the system without any community participation.



The bulldozer used by the company to clear customary forest in Muara Tae, West Kutai, East Kalimantan Copyright Margaretha Beraan

granting of licenses The and permits to palm oil companies without consultation and without the agreement of the community has made it harder for us to win recognition of our customary land. Some members of the community welcome the company's activities, because they don't understand how damaging their impact will be. Those who support the company's presence have been seduced by its lies.



#### **ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES**

The government must recognize indigenous the presence of the community, together with their customary laws and territories. Most of the Muara Tae traditional land already been concession to the plantation companies. There is no way that we can conserve and protect the land if the government hands it over to these companies and abandons

us. So, this conflict must be resolved. There should be some designated agency, some regulation, to resolve the conflicts that affect the Muara Tae customary area. If this issue remains unresolved, there will be major problems, particularly regarding the boundaries between the areas. The government should recognize our customary laws, not only the laws that it makes itself.

То develop the economy in а sustainable development way, initiatives should be conducted to benefit the community. So far, socalled sustainable development only benefits the companies and doesn't benefit us, we still live in poverty. It's not sustainable development if it only benefits one side. It will only be sustainable development if the community is fully involved and the government acts in good faith with the community.



# **SULAWESI**



### 36. WANUA TAMPOLORE (TO BADA)



**VIKTOR AGUS TOHAMA** 

CUSTOMARY LEADER Poso, Central Sulawesi



WE HAVE BEEN ENGAGED IN CONSERVATION SINCE THE TIME OF OUR ANCESTORS. IT'S PART OF A CULTURAL TRADITION PASSED DOWN FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

Indigenous Peoples will never change. The Indigenous Peoples of Tampolore always say that we have been working to preserve the natural environment since the time of our ancestors. It is part of a cultural tradition that has been passed down from generation to generation.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

From times past, there has always been one immutable prohibition that forbids anyone from causing any damage or destruction to areas of steeply sloped land, water sources, and river junctions. These rules are still in effect, with everyone in the Tampolore indigenous community adhering to them. If you visit the Tampolore customary land, you will see natural spaces surrounding the villagers and gardens with various types of trees and natural water sources. We always have enough water to meet our needs, there are never any shortages.

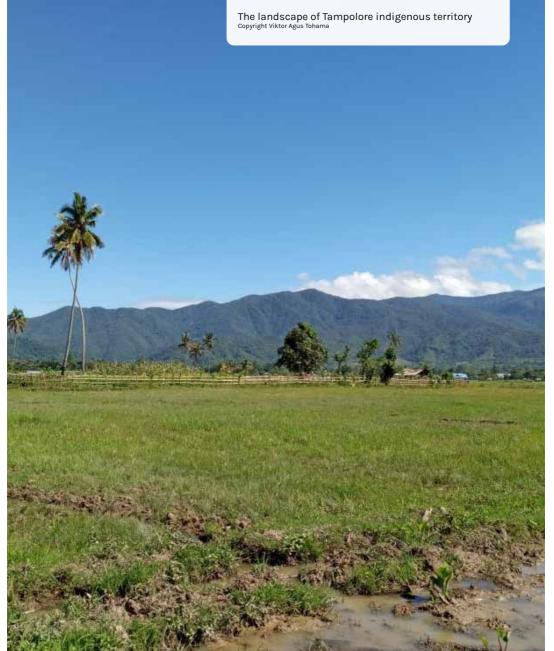


#### **GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION**

The Tampolore Indigenous Community has formulated its own set of regulations. We are still waiting for the Poso district government to recognize these regulations.

#### CHALLENGES

We face a number of challenges. The Tampolore customary lands are located within the Lore Lindu National



Park area. However, we are trying to resolve this issue in a manner that benefits all parties.



#### **ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES**

The settlements of the Tampolore Indigenous Peoples in West Lore, especially in Kageroa, are located in the foothills in the National Park area. We hope that there will not be too many restrictions on the use of natural resources especially rattan and bamboo. Most of us depend on those two raw materials to produce our handicrafts. We hope that the community will be able to achieve good livelihoods, with programs to develop the community skills. We should be involved in all development initiatives that affect our customary lands.

# **37. NGATA TORO (TO KULAWI)**



RUKMINI TOHEKE INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S LEADER Sigi, Central Sulawesi

WE LIVE OUR LIVES ACCORDING TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF TALUHI KATUWUA, THE THREE PILLARS OF LIFE. TOPEHOI REFERS TO MAINTAINING A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CREATOR OF THE EARTH AND ALL THAT IS UPON IT. KATUVUA REFERS TO GOOD RELATIONS WITH NATURE, WHILE HINTUWU REFERS TO GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN HUMANS

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

The Indigenous Peoples are the most important conservation actors. You can see that from the way that we apply our traditional knowledge for the sustainable use of gardens, rice fields and forest resources. The Ngata Toro community were listed as finalists for the UNDP Equator Prize in 2004. We have always served as guardians of natural resources and biodiversity. We keep up our traditions because we believe that they are essential for sustaining humanity.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

All the Ngata Toro lands are managed according to rules that are maintained

and passed down from generation to generation. Land that is classified as *wana ngkiki* (natural forest) cannot be cleared for planting crops. The only land that can be used for that purpose is *pangale* (production forest), which can be cleared to create *pampa* (gardens/fields). *Taiko* refers to riverbanks, and that also can't be touched, so it is called *taolo*.

We apply local wisdom when we cultivate rice. We determine the best time for planting according to the stars and then we complete the work in one stretch. If we use the land for five consecutive years and the yields begin to decline, we let the rice field lie fallow to rest. In our language, we call that *pakawoli*. We let the land

lie for one year without planting anything, then one year later, we can plant rice there again. If we follow rules, the traditional system keeps the community alive.



The government hasn't acknowledged our efforts to apply local wisdom to the use of natural resources. However, the Sigi district government has recognized our identity as an Indigenous Peoples and our claims to our territories. We have always advocated for our rights and our claims are supported by sustainable the practices we implement in our villages. local wisdom to the management of natural resources. The mandate for the protection of the natural environment lies with *Tondo Ngata* (Guardian of Customary Areas). It is difficult to ensure the sustainability of these resources and to cultivate conservation practices amongst the community without formal recognition and support.

### ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

We hope that our claims are recognized and acknowledged to enable us to become more autonomous in the management of the natural environment to ensure sustainability.



#### CHALLENGES

Our challenge is that we want to set a good example to the government regarding the importance of applying



### 38. TOMBULU TINELENG WANUA KOHA



**NEDINE HELENA SULU** 

INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S LEADER Minahasa, North Sulawesi



#### WE EXPECT THAT THE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY IS INVOLVED IN ALL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

The indigenous community has played a role in conservation in Minahasa for a long time. Our conservation efforts include all aspects of the natural environment, including gardens, forests and the sea. We protect the natural environment out of an awareness that it is essential for the survival of the community.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

These days, the community's commitment to our ritual activities is weakening. In the past, there were always rituals for all our activities, for the planting season and the harvest season. But the community still maintains areas of forest where agricultural activity is forbidden, we still protect the water springs and the ancestral burial sites. We need to mobilize to educate the younger generation, so that our traditions are not lost.

### SOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

We are in the process of seeking recognition for our indigenous community. The community supports all initiatives to introduce holistic customary regulations that protect the rights of the Indigenous Peoples. A district regulation has been passed to recognize our culture. The community supports these measures, but further regulations are required to cover rights related to the land, forest, and water.



#### CHALLENGES

Some members of the community have become more self-centered, they don't care about our traditions anymore. Also, the government has development implemented many initiatives that result in encroachment and the annexation of our customary territories, including the construction of a military base for training and military exercises. With the emergence of modern religious movements, people are beginning to see our customs and traditions as less relevant to their lives. Many national infrastructure development programs, including programs for the construction of dams and toll roads, pass through the lands of the Indigenous Peoples without respect for their rights.

### ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

We hope that in all development initiatives, the indigenous community is involved, from top to bottom. The government should provide space the community to express their opinions and to build collaboration, particularly when it comes to determining regional policies.



# **39. TO CEREKENG**



**USMAN SIABENG** 

CUSTOMARY LEADER East Luwu, South Sulawesi



#### I HOPE THAT THE COMMUNITY'S RIGHTS TO OUR CUSTOMARY FOREST ARE ACKNOWLEDGED.

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

The Indigenous Peoples of To Cerekeng have been recognized as conservation actors since the time of our ancestors. Amongst other practices, we customary forests. These customary forest range from the mountains all the way down to the coastal areas where there are mangrove swamps.

# CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

The Indigenous Peoples have implemented conservation measures since ancient times. By maintaining our customary forests, we maintain the natural environment so that the forest remain healthy and serve as a source of water and protect us from natural disasters. The community places great value on the protection of the customary forests. If any member of the community takes even one log from the forest, he or she can be sanctioned, even expelled from the customary area.

### 🙀 GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

The district government has recognized our community with the promulgation of a regulation related to Local Wisdom Decree. However, so far, no related district regulations have been promulgated to recognize the To Cerekang community's rights to its customary forest. To prepare for the process, the government has provided us with some assistance to map our customary areas to delineate boundaries, and so on.



#### CHALLENGES

The biggest obstacle facing the community relates to the large number of illegal loggers who extract timber from our customary forest. If the violator comes from one of the villages, he or she can be sanctioned according to customary law. However, outsiders can not be punished by customary law.

#### ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

The То Cerekeng community's customary forest must be recognized immediately to provide the community with a solid legal basis. We hope that the government recognizes our land rights and protects the To Cerekang community and its forest. For the future, good development initiatives should respect the indigenous community and recognize their local wisdom.



Medicinal plants used by Cerekang community to produce herbal medicine Copyright Kasmita Widodo To Cerekang indigenous youth showing the sign "Caution! Boundaries of Protected Cerekang Customary Forest" Copyright Perkumpulan Wallacea

# PERHATIAN ! BATAS HUTAN ADAT CEREKANG YANG DILINDUNGI

5 .

# **40. AMMATOA KAJANG**



RAMLAH

INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S LEADER Bulukumba, South Sulawesi



ACCORDING TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE KAJANG PEOPLE, THE FOREST PLAYS A VITAL ROLE. THE FOREST IS THE BLANKET THAT COVERS THE SURFACE OF THE EARTH.

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

The Indigenous Peoples of Kajang are conservation actors, because they are strongly motivated to protect the natural resources in their lands according to a management model based on customary rules and local wisdom.

# CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

The Kajang Indigenous Peoples still adhere to customary law in their management of the forest and natural resources. The customary law is known as *pasang ri kajang*, and is based on an oral tradition. The ancestors issued instructions to the community to: take care of the earth and all it contains, just as you take care of humans, the sky and the forest. The indigenous community in Kajang still adheres closely to these customary laws. If there is a violation, the *amatoa* (customary leader) and his assistant, the *Gala*, immediately implement the law, so the violation is rarely handled according to the formal legal process.

Examples of the Kajang people's conservation practices include the zoning of certain areas as forbidden or sacred forests, that have never been touched by human hands. There are four rules that apply to these forests: first, *tabang kaju*, where it is forbidden to cut down trees; second, *pata uhe*, where it is forbidden to c

cut or collect rattan; third, tulubani, where it is forbidden to collect honey; fourth, rao doang, it is forbidden to collect prawns. Other areas of the forest are designated for the use of the community, so they can benefit from the forest's natural resources. They still have to ask for permission from the amatoa if they want to collect medicinal plants or plants to make natural dyes for weaving. In the Kajang community, the forest is our most important space. If there are any violations of the customary law that affect it, those violations will be processed in accordance with that law. In addition, if the community is collecting wood from the forest to meet needs that comply with the customary law, the logs should not be dragged because that would damage the plants and small trees on the ground. The community has to carry the log off the ground.



### **GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION**

The government has recognized the Kajang customary area through the promulgationoftheDistrictRegulation for the Recognition of the Amatoa Indigenous Community Kajang and through a degree issued by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry. The Ministerial Decree for the Kajang Customary Forest, recognizes an area of 313.99 hectares as customary land. This recognition has resulted in many positive benefits for the community, with the prioritization of our needs at the district level. For example, the district government assists us in the registration process for identity cards, which we never used to have. In addition, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry provided assistance to procure yarn for weaving and to buy traditional looms. They have also assisted with the supply of tree seeds, such as candlenut trees. We have also received assistance from the Department of Agriculture and other agencies.

#### CHALLENGES

Since the recognition of our customary forests, we haven't faced any significant obstacles. As a challenge such as climate change, so far it hasn't had a major impact, although there might have been some slight changes. But the forest here is still very well preserved.

### A A

#### **ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES**

We hope that we will be able to continue to implement the existing forest management model so we can pass down the responsibility for the forest to our children and grandchildren. Also, we hope that in the future, the government's sustainable development initiatives are in line with community values.



Ammatoa Kajang Customary Ritual <sup>Copyright Ramlah</sup>

# **41. AMMATOA KAJANG**



### **ANDI BUYUNG SAPUTRA**

CUSTOMARY LEADER Bulukumba, South Sulawesi

IF WE FIND ANY FALLEN TREES IN THE FOREST, WE PLANT NEW ONES. IF A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY TAKES A SINGLE TREE FROM THE FOREST, THEY MUST PLANT TWO NEW TREES TO REPLACE IT. THERE ARE STRICT SANCTIONS FOR THOSE WHO TAKE TREES FROM THE FOREST WITHOUT PERMISSION FROM THE CUSTOMARY LEADERS, THE VIOLATOR MAY EVEN BE BANISHED FROM THE CUSTOMARY LANDS.

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

Long before the term "conservation" even existed, Indigenous Peoples implemented conservation practices on the ground. We care for and preserve the natural environment, recognizing it as a source of water, a source of livelihoods, and the source of the identity of the Indigenous Peoples. The strong relationship between Indigenous Peoples and the environment in which they live resulted in a mutually beneficial relationship, later codified in straightforward, firm, and binding customary laws.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

If we find any fallen trees in the forest, we plant new ones. If a member of

the community takes a single tree from the forest, they must plant two new trees to replace it. There are strict sanctions for those who take trees in the forest without permission from the customary leaders, the violator may even be banished from the customary lands. Through this system, the forest is maintained in good condition, ensuring the availability of water that flows through the fields and that provides for all our household needs.



#### **GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION**

The government has recognized our rights to our traditional lands through the issuance of a Customary Forest Decree by the Ministry for the Environment and Forestry, in December 2016. Prior to that, it was



categorized as a Limited Production Forest. Now it is a Protected Forest, protected both by custom and by law. The Kajang indigenous community also collaborates with the forest police, routinely conducting joint patrols to protect the forest.

#### CHALLENGES

Our biggest challenges come from within the indigenous community itself. No matter how strong our customary law is, the power of globalization is even stronger. Many people can see the economic potential of our forest, so they engage in illegal logging. Even though there aren't many of them, they prosecuted according to traditional law.



**ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES** 

We hope that our efforts to care for

and protect the natural environment serve as a role model to others. We hope that the government continues to support the Indigenous Peoples' efforts to maintain their local wisdom as a philosophy of life that has been passed down to them from their ancestors.

Let us return to our original identity. Indonesian society is made up of Indigenous Peoples. By returning to our original identities, we will generate the social capital required to achieve sustainable and equitable development. The customary laws are not absolute, but they are part of the community's identity. Development initiatives should be conducted in line with the aspirations of the Indigenous Peoples

Ammatoa Kajang Customary Ritual <sup>Copyright Andi Buyung Saputra</sup>

## 42. TORAYA



### **ROMBA' MARANNU SOMBOLINGGI'**

INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S LEADER Tana Toraja - North Toraja, South Sulawesi



TALLU LOLONA, A'PA' TAUNINNA (CREATOR, GODS, SPIRITS AND ANCESTORS ARE ALL IN HARMONY) IS THE LIFE CONCEPT OF THE TORAYA INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

The Indigenous Peoples of Toraya can be described as conservation actors. From ancient times, the community has maintained a comprehensive philosophy of life that defines a system of governance based on local wisdom. The community still adheres to this philosophy of life.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

The Toraya people's conservation practices are based on a traditional zoning system, according to which lands are zoned as *pangngala* (forest), *kombong tongtonan* (forest around settlements), irrigated land for rice, gardens, settlements, *rante* (traditional ceremony areas), cemeteries and grazing areas. Anyone who violates the customary laws will face traditional sanctions and be required to conduct rituals to make reparation.

As part of our local wisdom, the Toraya Indigenous Peoples establish a solid foundation for a harmonious relationship with the three pillars of life (tallu lolona), so that the Creator, gods, spirits and ancestors are all in harmony. It ensures harmonious relations between human beings and the natural environment. It also contains sukaran aluk (religious teachings) to maintain and manage the relations among the various elements of the cosmos. with aluk rituals, pemali (prohibitions), sangka' (general teachings) and

salunna (maintaining things in the appropriate place). The management of the three fundamental forces is regulated through the *tallu lolona a'pa' tauninna*, a ceremony involving the three shoots of life and four *tembuni. Aluk tallu lolona* consists of *aluk tau* (a ceremony involving humans), *aluk tana'nan* (a ceremony involving plants), and *aluk patuoan* (a ceremony involving animals).

According to our creation myths, the three forces were created as brothers, so they are responsible for caring for each other and supporting each other. The myth describes the relationship between the Toraya people, a system co-responsibility known of as sikananaran. All these relationships are integrated according to the pa'kabalaran law of reciprocity. In addition to the three ceremonies, we also conduct a fourth ceremony (a'pa tauninna) known as suru' pengkalossoran, if anything occurs to create disharmony due to people's violations of the pemali or aluk. Tongkonan is central to managing the harmonious relations among the three pillars of life and the four tembuni.



Thegovernmenthas begunto adopt the community's local wisdom through the promulgation of regulations. The North Toraja district government has issued some regulations that recognize the rights of the Toraja indigenous community, with the Tana Toraja district government now drafting similar regulations.

#### CHALLENGES

The central government imposes a number of regulations on the Toraya indigenous community to discourage the use of local seeds. The government instead promotes the use of seeds, trees and food crops, supplied from outside through governmen. These regulations have been imposed upon us. In drafting these regulations, the government doesn't seem to pay attention to our aspirations or to our local wisdom.

With the emergence of new religious movements in the Toraja region, the Indigenous Peoples are stigmatized as heathens, which has resulted in an erosion of our local wisdom. Climate change has also had an impact on the Toraya people's agricultural conditions and growing seasons.



Lo'ko' (stone grave) of Toraya Indigenous Peoples



# **43. BARATA KAHEDUPA**



LA BELORO

CUSTOMARY LEADER Wakatobi, Southeast Sulawesi



LOOKING AT THE DYNAMICS OF GOVERNMENT POLICIES TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND THE FAILURE OF THESE POLICIES TO MEET EXPECTATIONS, IT IS CLEAR THAT SCIENTISTS MUST WORK WITH THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES TO SAVE THE EARTH

# INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

The way I see it is that at the community level, it is the Indigenous Peoples who are conservation actors, both at sea and on the land. Indigenous peoples across Indonesia, including in Kahedupa, adhere to a system of prohibitions and taboos called pamali, according to which it is forbidden to enter, cultivate or exploit certain areas. The community establishes the system on the basis of their local knowledge and wisdom. Almost all of these areas are areas of high biodiversity value. This system is based entirely on community initiatives and values.



Kaledupa Island includes nine

customary areas, which are managed by the Bonto council, an alliance of customary leaders headed by the Sara Barata Kahedupa and collectively referred to as the Barata Kahedupa. According to the Kaledupa principles of conservation, it is forbidden to cultivate riverbanks, because it could result in erosion. To take another example, some families are prohibited from eating certain types of fish. For example, family A cannot eat fish type B, and family B cannot eat fish type A, because they are pamali to those families. The people believe that if these laws are violated, they could suffer from a burning or itching sensation. In reality, these rules apply to maintain the sustainability of the fish and to ensure that they do not become depleted or extinct.



If there are violations of the law, the situation must be redressed through a ritual in a place called paransangia, a small area on the beach surrounded by mangrove swamps. One of the locations of these sites is in Peropa, which is where we conduct the customary rituals to heal people who have fallen sick from eating forbidden fish. We also have a number of sites that are protected and where entry is forbidden. These sacred sites include the highlands and the lagoons (namo nu sara, ou nu sara). Nobody is permitted to exploit the natural resources in these areas, unless it is specifically for some purpose outlined in the traditional law. There are other conservation practices. including kaombo. The community still believes in and practices these laws. In fact, they are becoming stronger and stronger.



In Wakatobi, the district government has issued the District Head Regulation No. 44 of 2018 to recognize and acknowledge the existence of the Indigenous Peoples. However, since the promulgation of the regulation, the district government hasn't followed up optimally.

#### CHALLENGES

Following up from the recognition of the Indigenous Peoples, the community needs assistance and support to build their capacities to conduct monitoring, inventory and so on. The community needs to be empowered to enable them to assist the government to monitor conservation areas. That would be much more effective than individual initiatives, which often trigger problems at the grassroot level. Official policies are still only barely implemented because the local government doesn't understand the implications of existing policies to recognize Indigenous Peoples.

### ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

For the future, conservation and development initiatives must recognize that the Indigenous Peoples and their customary law have equal authority with that of the state. There should be no clashes between the community's local wisdom and state policy. Indigenous peoples must move forward by working in collaboration with the owners and managers of the other customary areas to ensure that they are on the same legal footing as other parties, including investors.

# MALUKU, PAPUA



### 44. PAGU ISAM



### **AFRIDA ERNA NGATO**

INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S LEADER North Halmahera, North Maluku



WHEN WE GO TO SEA, WE ARE GUIDED BY THE NATURAL CALENDAR. WHEN THE TIDE IS LOW AND THE MOON IS BRIGHT, WE ARE PROHIBITED FROM GOING TO SEA, AND CATCH MARINE LIFE BECAUSE THAT IS THE TIME FOR MARINE LIFE TO RECOVER

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

We never do anything to damage the natural environment. As Indigenous Peoples, we follow strict rules when we utilize natural resources, we never take them carelessly. There is a time for everything, there are rules we must follow. For example, when we cut down trees for wood in the forest, we express our gratitude and our sense of obligation to the forest by planting trees. When we use natural resources, we balance our actions to ensure sustainability.

# CONSERVATION STORIES

We clear plots of land in the forest to plant crops such as nutmeg, cloves,

coconut, and fruits like langsat and matoa. This is for the benefit of both people in the community and the animals in the forest. Life goes on, and the natural balance is maintained. There is also a special time for hunting. We do not hunt birds while they are hatching their eggs, and so on. By timing our hunting activities, we give the game opportunities to breed. When we go to sea, we are guided by the seasonal calendar. We only go out to sea twice a month. When the tide is low and the moon is bright, we are forbidden from going to sea. We are also forbidden from catching fish and other marine life on the coast. The time of the low tide and the full moon is the time during which marine life can recover.



#### **GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION**

The district government has provided no support, recognition or protection to the Indigenous Peoples of Isam Pagu. Without regulations to protect us, outsiders can come in and treat the forest recklessly. We have tried to work together, to build alliances, particularly at politically significant times. But to no avail.

#### 🚺 CHALLENGES

Some government policies clash with the way of life of Indigenous Peoples. For example, the government has granted mining licenses in the area where we plant our gardens. Some of our garden areas have also been designated for other uses. We still claim it as indigenous territory that belongs to the community. We try to enforce our rights by planting nutmeg and cloves there.



#### **ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES**

The government must do more to protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples. We are not against

development, but the government should not just give permission to people whose activities damage the environment within the customary territories that we protect. For example, the government grants rights to our lands for mining and transmigration projects. They should conduct a feasibility study first, and consult with us for our input. The development vision should be to have a positive impact on the indigenous community and to strengthen their role. We need stronger regulations. The district officials decisions should be in alignment with the indigenous community and its local wisdom, and not just decide from the perspective of national development. We are able to survive because we have always conserved our environment and found our livelihoods from nature. Food security and sustainable livelihoods are in the hands of the indigenous community.



### **45. NEGRI HARUKU** (HARU-UKUI PELASONA NANUROKO)



### **ELIZA M KISSYA**

CUSTOMARY LEADER Central Maluku, Maluku



WE WANT TO BE INDEPENDENT IN OUR OWN INDIGENOUS NATION. WE HOLD THE CUSTOMARY LANDS IN TRUST, TO PASS ON TO FUTURE GENERATIONS. IT IS OUR DUTY TO PROTECT AND PRESERVE IT FOR ALL TIME

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

Everybody would have to agree that the Kewang Negeri Haruku indigenous community are conservation actors. You can see it from the body of customary law, known as *sasi*, which means to maintain, manage, and preserve the natural environment and all its resources. According to those laws, it is the duty of the *kewang* to serve as guardians of the natural environment. It came down to us through our ancestors, who have lived in this area since the 1600s. Sasi still applies today.

# CONSERVATION STORIES

People apply the laws of *sasi* by practicing measures to preserve the natural environment. The community

still adheres to sasi, which applies to four domains: the river, the sea. the village, and the forest. Every year, the indigenous community performs a ritual that we call sasi lompa. The purpose of the ritual is to call the lompa fish that live in the sea, so that they come into the river and allow themselves to be caught. Sometimes we can harvest up to 40 tons of fish. The indigenous community is involved in a lot of other conservation initiatives, such as hatching turtle eggs to be released back into the sea, preserving the coral reefs by using coconut shells as a tool, planting mangroves in the swampy areas, and protecting the maleo birds.



In 1985, the community received



the *Kalpataru* award. But up until now, the district government hasn't granted recognition or provided protection to the community. In fact, the community already registered its claims to their customary lands, in the colonial period, in 1818 and 1823.

#### CHALLENGES

A gold mining company once just marched into our customary land to set up their operations, without seeking permission from the indigenous community. Even though they had been granted permits and rights by agencies at the central, provincial, district, and even the subdistrict levels, we didn't care. We drove them off our customary land. The other threat is people using bombs to catch fish. We took legal action against them, and eventually they were locked up in prison. Our island is small. There is no such thing as state land here. If they wanted to turn our island into state land so that they could exploit the natural resources, then why did the government give us the *Kalpataru* award?

Within the community, we also have some challenges, but they aren't too significant. Some members of the indigenous community think that the mining company's operations will improve the economy for everyone. But in reality, at the best, people from the indigenous community will be hired as unskilled manual laborers and paid a pittance.

#### ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

We want to be independent on our own land in our own country. We don't expect help from anyone, we just want to be allowed to harvest the natural resources according to our traditions. The indigenous community must be prepared to fight for their rights and for those of future generations. We hold the customary lands in trust, to pass it on to future generations. It is our duty to protect and preserve it for all time.

### **46. ELSENG**



**PIETER DANTRU** 

CHAIR OF THE CUSTOMARY COUNCIL Jayapura, Papua



OUR COMMUNITY SHOULD BE ABLE TO DEVELOP OUR VILLAGE INDEPENDENTLY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH OUR OWN ASPIRATIONS. THE GOVERNMENT HERE JUST HAS TO ISSUE REGULATIONS THAT RECOGNIZE WHAT THE COMMUNITY IS ALREADY DOING.

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

In our community, we are conservation actors because we strongly resist the encroachments of private business interests. The customary leaders strictly forbid any member of the community from selling their land to them. We do this to maintain the condition of the forest ecosystem upon which we depend for our lives.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

The community protects a number of specially designated areas, including forests of high economic value and sources of water. No member of the indigenous community would clear land for gardens carelessly. They wouldn't do it in an area that is prone to landslides. If someone wants to open land to cultivate crops, they need to hold a ritual ceremony first to ask permission from those who provide us with these resources. And they have to plant the seeds carefully, to preserve the condition of the soil.



#### GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

The district government, particularly with our current district head, is very supportive of the indigenous communities. In fact, he has issued instructions that all of the customary villages should be ready to map their territories. This is so that their rights to the land can be recognized and protected. But the legal process for the recognition of customary forests is under the higher authority of the Ministry.

#### CHALLENGES

The biggest issue we face at the moment relates to who will be the next district head, whether the next district head will continue to pay attention to the rights of the Indigenous Peoples. Within the government and within the community itself, there are those who support the idea of recognition for the traditional villages, and those who are opposed. The community also complains a lot about how long and complicated to read are the regulations related to the recognition of the traditional villages.



#### ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

We hope that the indigenous community will be recognized, that the process will be completed quickly. We hope that the next district head continues in the footsteps of his predecessor in the area of rights for the Indigenous Peoples.

Regarding the achievement of sustainable development, the community should be able to develop their village independently, in accordance with their own aspirations. The government here just has to issue regulations that recognize what the community is already doing.



# **47. KEMTUIK**



### **NAOMI MARASIAN**

INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S LEADER Jayapura, Papua



ACCORDING TO OUR PHILOSOPHY, THE EARTH IS OUR MOTHER. IF WE TAKE CARE OF OUR MOTHER, THEN SHE WILL SUPPORT AND PROTECT HER CHILDREN

# INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

The Indigenous Peoples are the conservation real actors. Their conservation practices are reflected in the way they live and the values they hold. The system of land ownership and the delineation of boundaries is very clear, because it is regulated by the clan, which in the Kemtuik language we call tang, which serves as a customary village government system. The ondoafi is responsible for the regulation of the customarv territories, with tribal leaders from each Tang holding ownership and management rights over the land. This pattern of spatial organization is part of our social system, which regulates the relationship between humans and nature. The most important responsibility is to guard the ancestral lands and forests and to pass them on down to our children and grandchildren. Many of us have received messages from the ancestors like this in our dreams.

# CONSERVATION STORIES

Don't take more from nature than you need. In the current circumstances, when the whole world is afflicted by the Covid pandemic, our indigenous community can still survive and prosper, with abundant reserves of food available from nature. In fact, the Indigenous Peoples have become even more focused on their forests and sago plantations since the pandemic hit. Nature can provide everything we need, now and into the future.



#### **GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION**

The district of Jayapura has already promulgated District Regulation No. 8, 2018, concerning the Recognition, Protection and Empowerment of the Indigenous Peoples. Before that, the district issued Regulation No. 18, 2016, concerning the Traditional Village Government in Jayapura. And before that, on October 24, 2014, the district issued Decree No. 319, 2014, based on the 2012 MK-35 decision, from the Ministry of Home Affairs Regulation No. 52 of 2014. Actually, according to Special Regional Regulation (Perdasus) 21, 2018; Perdasus 22, 2018; and Perdasus 23, 2018, city districts in Papua Province are required to formally identify Papua's Indigenous Peoples through district regulations. Perdasus 22, 2018, regulated the criteria and procedures for this sort of determination. However, very few of the district and city governments in Papua have done it. On the contrary, they disrespect the rights of indigenous communities and strip them of their assets, their natural resources, which provide them with their only hope for continuing to live on the lands of their ancestors.

#### CHALLENGES

Current regulations and policies do not meet the Indigenous Peoples' aspirations for the management of their natural resources. The government seems to have seized control for the responsibility of conservation, which has always been the responsibility of the Indigenous Peoples. Now, it is illegal for us to conduct our conservation efforts. So far, the government hasn't given the indigenous community any rights to utilize or manage their forests through social forestry schemes or anything like that. In fact, the customary forest system has been exploited by plantation companies. The central government hasn't responded to our proposal for the establishment of customary forests. The Ministry of Environment and Forestry should have followed up by sending a verification team to confirm the status of the customary forest. There is a clash between the boundaries of our customary forest and the state protected forest. Those who are trying to get their hands on the natural resources don't go through the proper channels. For example, some outsiders who are interested in the community's customary land don't even bother to consult with the traditional decision-makers, with the ondoafi. They don't sit down with the traditional leaders and discuss it.

### ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

hope indigenous We that our community will be able to continue to live our lives on our customary lands without being threatened by investors. Appreciate the Indigenous Peoples. Appreciate the richness of our culture and our local wisdom. that provide us with a code to protect the relationship between humanity and nature. According to our philosophy, the Earth is our mother. If we take care of our mother, then she will support and protect her children. The government must respect the

rights of the indigenous community. The Indigenous Peoples shouldn't be treated as passive spectators, they should be actors in the development process, so they can drive both development and conservation at the same time



# **48. NAMBLUONG**



### **ROSITA TECUARI**

INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S LEADER Jayapura, Papua

# 6

ACCORDING TO THE CUSTOMARY LAW, WE ARE ALSO REQUIRED TO PLANT SAGO TREES. WE CUT DOWN THE SAGO TREES WHEN WE NEED THEM TO PROCESS THEM INTO FLOUR TO MAKE OUR TRADITIONAL STAPLE FOOD

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

The Namblong Indigenous Peoples are indeed conservation actors. We depend on the forest. We try to protect the forest we live in.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

The Indigenous Peoples plant trees in areas they have previously cleared, so that the logged forests can continue to provide benefits. We plant different types of trees and plants, including the god's crown tree and the *gnetum* tree. We use the bark from these trees to make *noken* (string bags), we sell the leaves and use them for our own consumption. In addition, according to the customary law, we are also required to plant sago trees. We cut down the sago trees when we need them to process them into flour to make our traditional staple foods. The women from the indigenous community of Nambluong continue this practice.

### GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

The district government hasn't acknowledged the existence of the Indigenous People, because we haven't pushed them into doing it. At present, we are trying to formulate strong regulations. After we've done that, we'll ask the district government formalize them through the to promulgation of a district regulation. In our customary lands, there is no



overlap between the state forest area and the customary forest. Papua's Special Autonomy arrangements give the Indigenous Peoples the rights to regulate their customary land.

#### 🚺 CHALLENGES

The main obstacles face we come from within the indigenous community itself. For example, some outside investors come into our customary lands with the assistance of members of the indigenous community. In addition to cutting themselves. down trees these outsiders also encourage members of the community to also cut down trees. It creates problems for our work in the field. It also creates problems for our customary zoning system. Our customary land hasn't been properly zoned according to the traditional law. We need to make it clear which parts of the forest can be used to plant sago trees, which can be used for settlements, and so on. We haven't established a system that conforms with customary law yet.

### logical Aspirations and hopes

The Nambluong Indigenous Peoples hope that our customary area can be designated as a green economy area. Even though it is in the forest, we hope we can continue to live here and develop our community, making the necessary changes within our customary lands. We need help from allies on the outside, including from within the government, to support our efforts.



### 49. YEI I'MAN'



**PASIFIKUS ANGGOJAI** 

VILLAGE HEAD Merauke, Papua



THE CULTURE OF THE PAPUAN PEOPLE IS CLOSELY LINKED WITH THEIR CUSTOMARY LANDS. WE HOPE THAT AS POLICY MAKERS, THE GOVERNMENT RESPECTS THIS

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

Maybe the Yei people can be described as conservation actors, maybe not. The problem is that many of the traditional leaders also support the activities of destructive companies in the hope of improving the economy of the Yei tribe. However, when problems arise, they are also prepared to take legal action against the companies.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

The Yei tribe has practiced conservation for a long time. We have many practices to protect the environment. For example, some areas are designated as customary forest. But many of these forests have been degraded due to the activities of palm oil plantations.

### SOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

There are no signs whatsoever of support from the district government. No regulations have been issued to recognize the existence of the Indigenous Peoples of their rights.

#### CHALLENGES

The community doesn't know whom to turn to for help with the problems it faces.Lastyear,thegovernmentinvited some members of the indigenous community to the official opening ceremony for a factory. The community asked whether the factory had built an appropriate waste disposal unit. However, the waste disposal facilities were clearly inadequate. as a result, in the rainy season, there are spills and overflows into the river that damages the ecosystem and kills the fish.



#### **ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES**

We hope that in the future, any business that tries to conduct activities here first looks at our map of our customary lands. We hope that people within the community refrain from selling their land, especially to palm oil plantations. We hope that the company's production of palm oil will stop doing so much damage to the community.

Development initiatives should be conducted with due consideration to the way of life of the local community. The culture of the Papuan people is closely linked with their customary lands. We hope that as policy makers, the government respects this, rather than just building whatever they like and letting the investors come in to destroy our lands.



# **50. WAROPEN KAI**



#### JONI NIKODEMUS IMBIRI INDIGENOUS YOUTH ACTIVIST Waropen, Papua

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DEVELOPMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE COMMUNITY, BUT IT MUST BE BASED ON A WELL-INFORMED STRATEGY THAT COMES FROM THE COMMUNITY ITSELF. WE NEED RECOGNITION SO THAT IN THE FUTURE WE WON'T HAVE CONFLICTS AND OTHER PROBLEMS DUE TO DEVELOPMENT

# INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE CONSERVATION ACTORS

Indigenous Peoples can be described as conservation actors because they actively manage their own customary territory, including the protected areas within it.

#### CONSERVATION STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY

There are three main tribes in Waropen, the Waropen Ambomi, the Waropen Ronari and the Waropen Kai. The Waropen Kai community consists of seven traditional villages, Waren, Sanggei, Paradoi, Numbuai, Mambui, Risesayati and Wonti. The Indigenous Peoples of Waropen have always been committed to the conservation of their lands, but this commitment has been eroded over time. One reason for this is because of the influx of food aid. For example, in the past, the people usually consumed sago as their staple food, but now they have come to depend on rice, which is distributed by the government. So, the aid provided by the government has a negative impact on our efforts to conserve the environment.

However, in some areas, including in the area around the village of Segha, which is in the Waropen Kai territory, and now in some other customary areas as well, the community has

made efforts to revitalize their conservation efforts by protecting and managing the mangrove swamps. Some villages have begun with the process of formulating regulations about this, although they have not been officially ratified yet due to a change in village heads. But the people have started to move in that direction. They are conducting these efforts to protect the marine resources, and to protect their villages from erosion and other disasters. The community will receive economic benefits from these activities, because they will be able to sell forest products and earn profits from it.



#### **GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION**

So far, there has been no form of official recognition for our community, except for the law on Papua's Special Autonomy. The district Fisheries Agency has provided some support in the form of motorbikes, boats, and so on, but they didn't build any capacity, so the community wasn't able to use these contributions optimally.

#### CHALLENGES

Actually, while the indigenous community is becoming aware of the importance of a spatial plan for its dealings with the government and their development initiatives, the government does not have a plan for the next five or 10 years. Every time a new district head is appointed, he makes a new spatial plan that is not aligned with the previous plan, so implementation in the field changes direction.

### 🚴 ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES

In my opinion, we must work to conserve our environment to the greatest extent possible, with good management systems. Members of the community should be actor in this initiative, so that the community receives economic benefits to make us more resilient in the face of any future disasters, such as the Covid pandemic. All development initiatives should involve the participation of the indigenous community so that these initiatives support the achievement of our aspirations.



Indigenous youth of Papua Copyright Kynan Tegar

# List of Abbreviations

1	ICCAs	Territories and areas conserved by Indigenous Peoples and local communities
2	BKSDA	Balai Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam (Nature Conservation Agency).
3	BUPSHA	Badan Usaha perhutanan Sosial Hutan Adat
4	DP3K	Dewan Pembina dan Pengendali Pengelolaan Kolaboratif (Board of Trustees and Collaborative Management Controller)
5	КОМРАК	Komunitas Pemuda Adat Kasepuhan Pasir Eurih (Kasepuhan Pasir Eurih Indigenous Youth Community)
6	KSPPM	Kelompok Studi dan Pengembang Prakarsa Masyarakat (Development of Community Initiatives)
7	MADT	Masyarakat Adat Dalem Tamblingan (Dalem Tamblingan Indigenous Peoples)
8	Perdasus	Peraturan Daerah Khusus (Special Regional Regulation)
9	РКТНА	Pengaduan Konflik, Tenurial dan Hutan Adat (Directorate of Tenure Conflict Management and Customary Forests)
10	PLTA	Pembangkit Listrik Tenaga Air (Electrical Power Generation Plants)
11	TNBD	Taman Nasional Bukit Dua Belas (Bukit Dua Belas National Park)
12	TNK	Taman Nasional Kelimutu (Kelimutu National Park)
13	ТNКМ	Taman Nasional Kayan Mentrang (Kayan Mentarang National Park)
14	TPL	Toba Pulp Lestari
15	TWA	Taman Wisata Alam (Nature Tourism Park)
16	UNDP	Uninted Nation Development Programme



The Working Group ICCAs Indonesia (WGII) has been supporting and advocating for ICCAs for the last ten years. WGII was established in 2011 to promote the documentation and recognition of ICCAs.

It gathers 10 (ten) of the most important actors of civil society in Indonesia such as AMAN (Alliance of Indigenous Peoples of the Archipelago), BRWA (Ancestral Domain Registration Agency), JKPP (Participatory Mapping Network), Perkumpulan HuMa, KIARA (Peoples Coalition for Fisheries Justice), NTFP-EP (Non-Timber Forest Products-Exchange Programme - Indonesia), Yayasan Pusaka, Sawit Watch, WALHI (Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia), and WWF Indonesia.

These members are active in conservation issues, mapping, community land use, tenure rights, and Indigenous peoples' rights.



