



Absolute and relative power gains among state agencies in forest-related land use politics: The Ministry of Forestry and its competitors in the REDD+ Programme and the One Map Policy in Indonesia



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ABSTRACT

More than ever, state agencies responsible for forest issues are required to balance the social, economic and environmental demands on forests in domestic and international spheres. New and often cross-cutting issues may threaten the position and power of traditional forest bureaucracies through, e.g., a redistribution of power among a number of other land-use-related state agencies. This paper analyzes the absolute and relative power of the Ministry of Forestry (MoF) in two selected policy processes originating on the international and domestic levels, namely the REDD+ Programme and the One Map Policy. Building on a behavioralist conception of power and bureaucratic politics theories, we study these processes to reveal the power dynamics between the MoF and other state bureaucracies, based mainly on documents on tasks assigned to these bureaucracies. Our results show a clear decline in the relative power of the MoF, most notably in the case of incentive and coercive power, though we also show a continuation of power resulting from dominant information. However, due to political intervention from the new president, traditional forest bureaucracy is now reclaiming most of relative power elements in these cases. We discuss the core findings and conclude that both REDD+ and the One Map Policy are likely to become effective policies only if the bureaucratic, sectoral and multi-level conflicts of interest we examine are addressed and fewer leading agencies (or one) assume responsibility for policy formulation and implementation.

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Abbreviations: BAPPENAS, Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional (National Development Planning Agency); BIG, Badan Informasi Geospasial (Geospatial Information Agency); BPN, Badan Pertanahan Nasional (National Land Agency); DNPI, Dewan Nasional Perubahan Iklim (National Council on Climate Change); GtCO₂e, Giga metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent; Inpres, Instruksi Presiden (Presidential Instruction); Kepres, Keputusan Presiden (Presidential Decree); MoA, Ministry of Agriculture; MoDA, Ministry of Domestic Affairs; MoE, Ministry of Environment; MoEF, Ministry of Environment and Forestry; MoEMR, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resource; MoF, Ministry of Forestry; MoFi, Ministry of Finance; MoLHR, Ministry of Law and Human Rights; MoPW, Ministry of Public Works; MoSE, Ministry of State Enterprises; MoT, Ministry of Trade; Perpres, Peraturan Presiden (Presidential Regulation); RAN-GRK, Rencana Aksi Nasional-Penurunan Gas Rumah Kaca (National Action Plan for Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction); RAD-GRK, Rencana Aksi Daerah-Penurunan Gas Rumah Kaca (Regional Action Plan for Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction); UKP4, Unit Kerja Presiden Bidang Pengawasan dan Pengendalian Pembangunan (Presidential Delivery Unit for Development Monitoring and Oversight); UNFCCC, United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change.

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1. Introduction

More than ever, state agencies responsible for forest issues are required to balance the social, economic and environmental demands on forests in domestic and international spheres (Sayer and Collins, 2012; Mwangi and Wardell, 2012; Maryudi, 2012; Giessen, 2012; Giessen and Krott, 2009). These new and often cross-cutting issues may threaten traditional forest bureaucracies through, e.g., a redistribution of power among a number of land-use-related state agencies. Fundamentally, state agencies, as bureaucratic politics and related literature reveal (e.g., Krott, 2005; Olsen, 2006; Peters, 2001; Giessen et al., 2014; Buijs et al., 2014; Kumar and Kant, 2005; Bennett et al., 2012, 2013), compete for power in the form of formal mandates to pursue policies in these emerging issue areas and to acquire staff and budgets. This competition for power has been identified as an important factor in land use and forest politics (Pedersen, 2010; Krott et al., 2014; Aurenhammer, 2011, 2012; Ojha et al., 2014; Ongolo, 2015). In this competition, the agencies use both domestic and international

issues to strengthen their negotiation positions vis-à-vis competing agencies. They do this by framing and taking up issues, discourses and rules to legitimize their roles and by finding domestic and/or international coalition partners (Bernstein and Cashore, 2012; Giessen, 2011, 2013).

Indonesia is affected by multiple claims from various national and international groups regarding the utilization and conservation of forests (Brockhaus et al., 2012). These claims include forest certification, land tenure, forest biodiversity, forest carbon sequestration and REDD+, as well as the One Map Policy on competing land uses (see Wicke et al., 2011; Wibowo and Giessen, 2015; McDermott, 2014; Sahide and Giessen, 2015). These cross-cutting and forest-related claims have the potential to challenge and change the power of the Ministry of Forestry (hereafter MoF), the traditional bureaucracy in charge of forest issues (similar Burns and Giessen, 2015). Additionally, stakeholders have long been disappointed with the MoF, which is often associated with corruption, a lack of openness of data and information, and a disregard for crimes taking place in forests. These concerns have led to vast domestic and international criticism and an effort to reduce the MoF's power over forest governance, in favor of competing state agencies (Brown, 1999; Palmer, 2001; Barr, 2006; Singer, 2008).

This paper analyzes the power dynamics of the Ministry of Forestry (MoF) vis-à-vis its competitor bureaucracies in two selected policy processes originating from international and domestic levels, namely the REDD+ Programme and the One Map Policy. In particular, we analyze the means of power these bureaucracies have at hand and changes in the equipment of these power resources. We argue that individual policy processes can increase or decrease the MoF's equipment of these power resources, mainly due to policy tasks being assigned to an agency. It is possible that in one case, the MoF may both lose and gain power resources such as dominant information, (dis-)incentives and coercive power. We hypothesize that the cases in which the observed specific power resources of the MoF are eroded are mainly due to it now sharing responsibilities with other agencies, which often are new to the field of forest policy.

In the following sections, we introduce bureaucratic politics and power theory as our main analytical tools and describe some of our major methodological choices in detail. Section 3 then explores the power dynamics between the bureaucracies involved in the two policy processes mentioned above, with special attention given to the particular power elements bureaucracies may lose or gain and to the bureaucracies that gain at the expense of others. We then discuss both the increase and decrease in the power elements of the MoF in the selected cases in light of the indicators for power gains in other fields, before presenting our conclusions.

2. Methodology

2.1. Analytical framework

2.1.1. Bureaucratic politics theory

Any internal and external actors¹ keen to influence domestic policy have to meet and deal with the state's official system, known as the "bureaucracy" (Peters, 2001; Biermann et al., 2009). Bureaucracies have a formal goal in serving the public interest and an informal goal in surviving and expanding organizational interests, like maximizing power, budget and staff. Those organizational interests are prioritized if formal and informal goals

cannot be achieved simultaneously (Niskanen, 1974; Krott, 1990; Giessen and Krott, 2009; Giessen et al., 2014). Although this seems to be logical, the behavior of a bureaucracy, as noted above, is not homogenous because it depends on the capability of each bureaucracy to achieve its own benefits (Blais and Dion, 1990). To pursue those dual goals, bureaucracies can act as political institutions and administrative bodies (Krott, 2005). As political institutions, they are equipped with legitimacy, public mandate, financial resources and competent staffs, and as administrative bodies, bureaucracies have expertise and information, administrative ideology, decision-making power, alliances, permanent positions, and a disregard for politics.

Whether and how international or domestic actors affect policy change, however, are greatly influenced by the openness of local bureaucracies to such policy change, as well as by their interests (informal goals) and formal tasks. Whether a given situation is one in which a significant policy change might also influences this process. These processes of changes are frequently transferred by intentional actors, such as international bureaucracies, global corporations and science networks (Biermann and Pattberg, 2012), and by local actors, such as veto players and ruling political parties, before being captured by local bureaucracies through policy learning, ideas and discourses, the internationalization of global issues, policy networks, bureaucratic reform, and institutional change (Giessen et al., 2014). However, those external interests should go through five stages of policy cycle, namely agenda setting, policy formulation, decision making, policy implementation and policy evaluation (Howlett and Ramesh, 1995), before coming into force. The absence of external actors, the implantation process of their interests and the policy process to respond to these interests will ensure no changes in public policy and that the bureaucracy tends to be stable or pro status quo.

2.1.2. Power theory

The power of actors has long been discussed by sociology, psychology, communications, management and political scholars. A more advanced and influential concept of the power of actors was delivered by Lukes (2005) in his *three dimensions of power*. According to Lukes (2005, p.29), power can be exercised in three dimensions, namely (i) power over decisions, (ii) power over non-decisions, and (iii) power over political agendas. Power over decisions explains how powerful actors influence other actors and control the decision-making process through its resources, such as budget, knowledge, and sanction mechanisms. Power over non-decisions is mainly used by actors equipped with a complete understanding of the decision-making process and knowledge about the inability or limitations of other actors involved in such processes. Powerful actors block others' involvements through, e.g., hiding the meeting agenda, arranging meetings at conflicting times for competitors and dismissing minutes from meeting invitations. Therefore, this second dimension is also called agenda setting. The third dimension of power is potentially used by knowledgeable actors to alter other' interests or even to restrain other' interests as options by creating myths or offering judgments that certain behavior should (not) be preserved (McCabe, 2013). Lukes' three dimensions of power and previous works in which he criticized, e.g., Dahl (1957) and Bachrach and Baratz (1962), are focused on power as *domination*, widely known as *power over* (Haugaard, 2012), which may be identified from observable (overt and covert) and latent conflicts (Lukes, 2005: 29). Lukes, however, gives little attention to *power to*, which refers to power as property, such as power to do something (McCabe, 2013: 52), regardless of whether this power is used.

To fill this hole as well as to address the need for an analytical framework for assessing bureaucratic obstacles in succeeding forestry program, Krott et al. (2014) offer the actor-centered

¹ Actor is defined as an individual, a group of people or an organization with the capacity and legitimacy to exercise power, where legitimacy is achieved by obtaining, formally or informally, the consent of the governed (Biermann, 2010 c.f. Brockhaus et al., 2014).

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