



The emerging power of peasant farmers in the tenurial conflicts over the uses of state forestland in Central Java, Indonesia



Ahmad Maryudi^{a,*}, Erlita R. Citraningtyas^b, Ris H. Purwanto^a, Ronggo Sadono^a, Priyono Suryanto^a, Slamet Riyanto^a, Bowo D. Siswoko^a

^a Faculty of Forestry, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia

^b Balai Pemantapan Kawasan Hutan (BPKH) XI Region Java and Madura, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 26 December 2014

Received in revised form 23 July 2015

Accepted 17 September 2015

Available online 1 October 2015

Keywords:

Tenurial conflicts

State forestland

Occupation

Peasant farmers

Power

ABSTRACT

There has been an increasing occurrence of spontaneous and organized movements and struggles demanding access to state forestland in Indonesia over the past few years. A sizeable body of literature has explained the driving factors of the land movement but most of them focus on processes at the national level, principally on the changing socio-political landscapes, and the overlapping land use policy and regulations. In contrast, this paper attempts to find explanation of the dynamics of the land movement, and tries to explain the emerging power of peasant farmers at the field. The research was conducted in the forest of the state company of Perhutani Sub-Forest District (BKPH) Kalibodri, Forest District (KPH) Kendal, Central Java, where nearly two-fifths of the forestland is illegally occupied by peasant farmers for agricultural cropping. This paper borrows actor-centred power (ACP) of Krott et al. (2014), which offers an analytical approach to understand the empirical power resources of actors in social-political relationships. It finds the prolonged occupation of the state forestland is due to the combination of the weakened power of the state apparatus and the more consolidated power of peasant farmers. The state apparatus is weakened by its diminishing coercive power. It is also unable to provide concrete incentives that would otherwise alter the behavior of the peasant farmers. At the same time, the peasant farmers accumulate support from a wider society, from local to national level. Even international actors also play a part so that significantly affect how the state company deals with the peasant farmers.

© 2015 Elsevier B.V. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Forest policy in Indonesia is generally based on models of state's ownership of and control on forestland and the resources. Since 1970s, the government has gazetted roughly two-thirds of the country's land as state's forestland, which is strongly controlled and authorized under the jurisdiction of its Ministry of Environment and Forestry (Barr et al., 2006; Maryudi, 2015). Over the past few years, forest land-use and allocations in the country have been curtailed by conflicting interests and innumerable uncertainties and complexities (Maryudi, 2015; Sahide and Giessen, 2015). There has been an increasing occurrence of spontaneous and organized landless movements and struggles demanding access to state forestland (Adi et al., 2004; Wulan et al., 2004; Afiff et al., 2005; Nomura, 2008; Marwa et al., 2010; Peluso, 2011; Maryudi and Krott, 2012; Lounela, 2012). These include occupation of the state forestland for agricultural cropping by peasant farmers

(Peluso, 2011; Maryudi and Krott, 2012) and even growing demand for agrarian reform (Afiff et al., 2005; Nurrochmat et al., 2014). Some groups of local people have also attempted to claim ownership rights over some parts of the forests (Lounela, 2012; Maryudi and Krott, 2012).

A sizeable body of literature has explained the driving factors of land movement in Indonesia but most of them focus on processes at the national level principally on the changing socio-political landscapes at the end of 1990s (Moniaga, 1993; McCarthy, 2000; Colfer and Resosudarmo, 2002; Thorburn, 2004; Barr et al., 2006; Nurrochmat et al., 2012) and the overlapping land use policy and regulations (Casson, 2001; Santoso, 2003; Contreras-Hermosilla and Fay, 2005; Brockhaus et al., 2012; Indrarto et al., 2012; Maryudi, 2015; Sahide and Giessen, 2015). While all of this provides important insights and explains factors that encourage the land movement, the literatures give insufficient answers on the dynamics at the local or micro level. More importantly, how the power of peasant farmers is relatively strengthened manifested in prolonged occupation of state forestland restricted for them remains understudied.

Using the case of the forestland of Perhutani, a parastatal forest enterprise mandated to administer and manage nearly all of production

* Corresponding author at: Faculty of Forestry, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Jln. Agro No.1, Bulaksumur, Yogyakarta 55281, Indonesia.

E-mail address: maryudi76@yahoo.com (A. Maryudi).

and protection forests in Java and Madura Islands, this paper attempts to explain of the local dynamics of the land movement. It specifically tries to find the empirical evidence of the emerging power of peasant farmers at the field. This will provide a better picture on the struggles over uses and access over forestland in Indonesia, complementing the existing literatures. To explain that, our research borrows the theory of actor-centred power (ACP) developed by Krott et al. (2014). ACP has been intensively tested in a number of studies (Devkota, 2010; Maryudi, 2011; Yufanyi Movuh and Schusser, 2012) and has been widely used in research (Schusser, 2013; Yufanyi Movuh, 2012; Chen et al., 2013; Schusser et al., 2015) that focuses on understanding the empirical power resources of actors in social-political relationships.

2. The theoretical framework: actor-centred power (ACP)

The development of ACP departs from the fact that diverse actors are interested in forestry issues. Each actor may have different priorities and conflicting interests on the resources that may eventually suggest them to influence the formulation and implementation of forest policies, congruent to their respective interests (Krott, 2005). With this regard, their respective power is said to be decisive in shaping the outcomes of a particular forest policy (Krott, 2005; Giessen et al., 2009; Maryudi, 2011; Brockhaus et al., 2012). However, Krott et al. (2014) note the limited use of power concepts in forest policy analysis. They argue that analyzing the actors' power "could provide a scientifically sound knowledge" and "political research can help identify the capabilities specific actors" that eventually shape specific forest policy issues (Krott et al., 2014: 35).

In developing their ACP, Krott et al. (2014) acknowledge critiques by a number of political scholars (e.g. Lukes, 1974; Bachrach and Baratz, 1977; Arts and van Tatenhove, 2004) that actor-oriented approach overlooks the structural power that is based in the rules, discourses or settings at a societal level. They argue however "power is directly linked to specific actors" and is not part of the structure, and eventually assume that "power as the capability of an actor to influence other actors" (Krott et al., 2014:35). ACP does not completely ignore structures, but treats them from the point of view of the actor that "a position in arrangements as described in rules cannot be power in and of itself, but rather a power source for an actor" (Krott et al., 2014: 36).

ACP is eventually defined as "a social relationship in which actor A alters the behaviour of actor B without recognising B's will" (Krott et al., 2014: 37). However, Krott et al. (2014) note that sources of power are often invisible and many occur in the imagination of the actors; they are therefore interested in observing the empirical evidence why a particular actor is powerful. ACP was developed in an attempt to provide an analytical tool to identify power sources or instruments used by a particular actor to accumulate their power. Relying on the conceptions by several political scholars (e.g. Weber, 2000; Etzioni, 1975; Bemelmans-Videc et al., 1998) on typology of power (namely regulations, economic means, and information), ACP buys the conception of "sticks and carrots" in order to alter the behavior of other actor(s). With regard to information, Krott et al. (2014) are more cautious. They argue that not all information may become a source of power, as in some cases it support the will of another actors, informational means should therefore be treated carefully. In fact, existing information is often as asymmetric, only a certain type and quality of information may have impacts on policy processes (Ekayani et al., 2015, also Krott, 2005: 28).

Krott et al. (2014) in their ACP thus classify three sources of power, i.e.: coercion, incentives/disincentives, and dominant information. For them, coercion builds on the power source of force and is defined as "altering the behaviour of the subordinate by force" in the forms of regulations, physical and psychological forces. Creating disadvantages and giving advantages (disincentives-incentives) are also seen as a source of power as they can alter the behaviour of other actor(s). Further, Krott et al. (2014) argue that information is seen as a source of power when it is unverified by other actor(s), which eventually make a

decision based on it. They buy the conception on unverified information by Simon (1981) that such information mirrors a "blind trust", which represent power relations. When an actor uses information from another actor and does not check it fully, the former has become dependent on the latter (Krott et al., 2014).

3. Overview of administration and management of forestland in Java

Approximately 2.5 million ha of forestland in Java and Madura is administered and managed by Perhutani the parastatal forest company of Perhutani. The forestland was gazetted during the time of Dutch colonial as 'permanent forest estates', which was distinguished from agricultural land of private ownership (Peluso, 2011). According the Government Regulation No. 72/2010, Perhutani is mandated to directly regulate the uses the forestland, while it also determines forest management, exploitation, marketing as well as protection (Maryudi, 2011). It functions an autonomous state apparatus with a dual role of administration and management. The forests are divided in several forest management units, locally referred as *Kesatuan Pemangkuan Hutan/KPH*. A chief of KPH is tasked with the dual role, mirrored in its designation as *Administrator* for the administration tasks, and *Kepala KPH* (KKPH) for the management operations.

Over the years, Perhutani has adopted the colonial model of exclusionary policy toward rural people. Peluso (1992) argues that Perhutani even exerted "more stringent control" on the activities of rural people its forestland. It had an armed forest police, complementing the managerial and technical lines (Peluso, 1992; Peluso and Poffenberger, 1989). The autonomous company prohibited local communities' access to forest resources. The only legal access was the short-term use of forestland -usually two years during the reforestation period- for agricultural cropping (Bratamihardja et al., 2005).

Amidst the country's economic and political turmoil in the end of 1990s, Perhutani considered to change its approach toward local people. In 2001, Perhutani's national office launched *Pengelolaan Hutan Bersama Masyarakat* (PHBM), a joint management approach with a registered farmer organization at the village level (Rosyadi et al., 2005). Through PHBM, Perhutani and the village organization share roles in decision making and implementation of forestry activities (Perhutani, 2001). The village organizations are entitled to receive a fraction from the company's profits in the form of "benefit sharing scheme" (Maryudi, 2011). Besides this, short-term access by peasant farmers to use forestland for agricultural cropping remains in place. Through the formal agreement, the members of the farmer organization are obliged to obey the agreed rules, including the short-term access (Maryudi, 2012).

With regard to management operations, over the past two decades Perhutani has strived toward voluntary certification of sustainable forestry to raise its profiles in international markets. It is also lured by the promises of improved market access and premium prices. In 1990, the whole forest under its administration and management was certified by Rainforest Alliance through its Smartwood program. However, due to complaints from many international observers concerned with persistent conflicts and serious violence to local people in many parts of the forests (see Ardana and Fuad, 2000, Astraatmaja et al., 2002, Inoguchi et al., 2005), the certification was later suspended by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)¹ in 2002. In the following year, Perhutani prepared the partial certification for all of its KPHs.² Several KPHs were selected by the national office as the first batch of FSC certification; they were eventually awarded with an FSC sustainable certification.

¹ Rainforest Alliance is an FSC's certification body.

² Due the change in FSC Policy that certification will be made at KPH level, instead of the whole forest of Java.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/91103>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/91103>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)