

# Jurnal Ilmu Kehutanan

Journal of Forest Science  
<https://jurnal.ugm.ac.id/jikfkt>



## Creating New Forest Governance Structure for the 12.7 Million-Promise *Perlunya Tata Kelola Kehutanan Baru untuk Realisasi Janji 12,7 Juta Ha*

Ahmad Maryudi

Department of Forest Management, Faculty of Forestry, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Jl. Agro No.1, Bulaksumur, Sleman 55281  
E-mail : a-maryudi@ugm.ac.id

© Jurnal Ilmu Kehutanan Allright reserved

### Editorial

In the National Mid-Term Development Plan for 2014-2019, the Government of Indonesia has an ambitious plan to allocate 12.7 million ha of state forests for local communities and indigenous peoples through social forestry projects. Recently, President Joko Widodo has taken a strong step toward fulfilling the promise by handing of 13,000 ha to nine customary communities. He underlined that it is a beginning of the big thing. The policy is a strong political will; it is the first time that customary land rights are legally recognized. Over the years, uses of forest resources by local people were prevented (Maryudi 2011; Maryudi & Krott 2012a). Webb (2008: 26) argues that in many economically-developing countries, traditional forest uses are often labelled as illegal since the governments favour corporate-based/ industries forestry as development strategies.

The policy breakthrough is a result of long struggles to mainstreaming social forestry, nearly 50 years after Jack Westoby's anthropocentric views regarding forestry and forest management. Before his death, Westoby stated: "*a clear forest policy is one condition of a truly social forestry...all forestry should be social*". His thinking seemed to repudiate the idea of forest-based industrial development (Leslie 1989).

As he claimed, the enormous expansion in the utilisation of the tropical forests had limitedly done for the people that continued to live in chronic poverty. At the same time, the application of the industrial forestry in the developing world led to environmental crisis of rapid forest destruction (Westoby 1969).

Westoby's address to the 1978's World Forestry Congress further inspired forest policy makers across the globe, including in Indonesia, to formulate strategies that can tackle both problem in one single package of forest problem (Maryudi et al. 2012). We have since witnessed experiments and pilot projects translating the alternative thinking on the ground, also as manifestation of decentralization and devolution policy (Sahide et al. 2016a). In Indonesia, however, social forestry is often understood as only involvement of local people in forest management that generate subsistent livelihood (Maryudi & Krott 2012b). Numerous pilot projects and programs failed to address the central issue of power relations and decision-making authority (Maryudi 2014; Sahide et al. 2016b). In most cases, external actors remain powerful in shaping the programs; they try to skew the outcomes of decision-making processes in their direction (Schusser et al. 2015; Schusser et al. 2016; Mery et al. 2010). Local communities, who are

supposedly the core actors, remain peripheral; social forestry has yet to produce the intended outcomes as a result.

What does that mean in relation to the new promise by the Indonesian government to rural communities? Rights and access are two central keywords for social forestry. There might be arguments that in social forestry programs in Indonesia, local people have been granted with different types of rights so that they can benefit from the forest resources. Such is not always the case. Quite often, local communities are not able to benefit from the forests despite being given the rights (see Maryudi 2014). As such, conflicts persist even in forests where social forestry is implemented (see Maryudi et al. 2015). Ribot and Peluso (2003) distinguish access from property. To them, access is defined as “*a bundle of power*” whereas property is defined as “*a bundle of rights*”.

The new policy clearly needs new approach so that we do not repeat the same mistakes and consequences. New forest governance structure is needed. Local communities should have explicit mandate and legal authority (Krogman & Beckley 2002) and power “*to influence decisions regarding management of forests, including the rules of access and the disposition of products*” (McDermott & Schrekenberg 2009:158). Thus, genuine social forestry entails the following characteristics (Charnley & Poe 2007: 1) the degree of responsibility and authority for forest management is formally vested by the state to the local communities, 2) a central objective of forest management is to provide local communities with social and economic benefits from the forest, and 3) ecologically sustainable forest use is a central management goal, with forest communities taking some responsibility for maintaining and restoring forest health.

## References

- Charnley S, Poe MR. 2007. Community forestry in theory and practice: Where are we now? *Annual Review of Anthropology* 36:301-336
- Krogman N, Beckley T. 2002. Corporate “bail-outs” and local “buyouts”: Pathways to community forestry? *Society and Natural Resources* 15 (2):109-127.
- Leslie A. 1989. Obituary: Jack C. Westoby. *New Zealand Journal of Forestry* 34(2): 28.
- Maryudi A. 2014. An innovative policy for rural development? Rethinking barriers to rural communities earning their living from forests in Indonesia. *Jurnal Ilmu Kehutanan* 8 (1):50-64.
- Maryudi A. 2011. The contesting aspirations in the forests – Actors, interests and power in community forestry in Java, Indonesia. Goettingen University Press, Goettingen (Germany).
- Maryudi A, Krott M. 2012a. Local struggle for accessing state forest property in a montane forest village in Java, Indonesia. *Journal of Sustainable Development* 5(7):62-68.
- Maryudi A, Krott M. 2012b. Poverty alleviation efforts through a community forestry program in Java, Indonesia. *Journal of Sustainable Development* 5(2):43-53.
- Maryudi A, Citraningtyas ER, Purwanto RH, Sadono R, Suryanto P, Riyanto S, Siswoko BD. 2016. The emerging power of peasant farmers in the tenurial conflicts over the uses of state forestland in Central Java, Indonesia. *Forest Policy and Economics* 67:70-75.
- Maryudi A, Devkota RR, Schusser C, Yufanyi C, Rotchanaphatharawit R, Salla M, Aurenhammer H, Krott M. 2012. Back to Basic-Considerations in evaluating the outcomes of community forestry. *Forest Policy and Economics* 14: (1), 1-5
- McDermott MH, Schrekenberg K. 2009. Equity in community forestry: insights from North and South. *International Forestry Review* 11(2):157-170.
- Mery G, Katila P, Galloway G, Alfaro RI, Kanninen M, Lobovikov M, Varjo J. 2010. Forest and society—Responding to global drivers of change. IUFRO World Series Volume 25, Vienna.
- Ribot JC, Peluso NL. 2003. A theory of access. *Rural Sociology* 68 (2):153-181.
- Sahide MAK, Supratman S, Maryudi A, Kim Y-s, Giessen L. 2016a. Decentralisation policy as recentralisation strategy: forest management units and community forestry in Indonesia. *International Forestry Review* 18 (1):78-95
- Sahide MAK, Maryudi A, Supratman S, Giesen L. 2016b. Is Indonesia utilizing its international partners? The driving forces behind Forest Management Units. *Forest Policy and Economics* 69:11-20
- Schusser C, Krott M, Movuh MCY, Logmani J, Devkota RR, Maryudi A, Salla M. 2016. Comparing community forestry actors in Cameroon, Indonesia, Namibia, Nepal and Germany. *Forest Policy and Economics* 68:81-87

- Schusser C, Krott M, Yufanyi Movuh MC, Logmani, J, Devkota RR, Maryudi A, Salla M, Bach ND. 2015. Powerful stakeholders as drivers of community forestry —Results of an international study. *Forest Policy and Economics* 58: 92-101.
- Webb EL. 2008. Forest policy as a changing context in Asia. In Webb EL, Shivakoti GP, editors. Pages 21-43. *Decentralization, forests and rural communities: Policy outcomes in South and Southeast Asia*. SAGE Publication, New Delhi.