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## Inter-Village Differences in Formal and Informal Institutions Governing Access to Land and Natural Resources in Central Sulawesi (Indonesia)

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### Abstract

Of high conservation interest are the mountain forests of the Indonesian province of Central Sulawesi that include conservation core areas of the global Wallacea biodiversity ‘hotspot’. The investigation was prompted by the observation that deforestation rates appeared to differ more strongly between villages around Central Sulawesi’s Lore Lindu National Park (LLNP) than could be explained by differences in the individual characteristics of the village households as assessed by quantitative village censuses. Our results are abstracted from 3\*10 semi-structured, qualitative interviews with key informants from the leading groups of autochthonous and migrant households.

Village A is characterised by powerful local institutions, mainly controlled by the Council of Traditional Leaders (Lembaga Adat). The council is responsible for land allocation in the community forest which is completely located inside LLNP. The formal village leadership had successfully negotiated “traditional” - i.e. restrictive - use rights from the LLNP administration for the community forest. The Lembaga Adat grants permissions for the extraction of timber and NTFP such as rattan. Immigration by members of other ethnic groups is strictly discouraged, e.g. by restricting land purchases.

In migration dominated village C, Buginese from South Sulawesi are, on average, substantially more prosperous than the autochthonous households mainly due to more effective cacao cropping. Autochthonous as well as Buginese interviewees agree that a widespread laissez-faire attitude on natural resource use prevails. Each household is regarded as responsible for itself. Virtually without institutional restrictions, Buginese migrants as well as some better-off local households acquire land via purchase from poorer, local households. The land-stripped local households, in turn, acquire new land by - technically illegal - clearing of primary forest inside LLNP.

Village B is to some degree similar to village A. The Lembaga Adat regulates access to the community forest (here: outside LLNP) which is granted only to autochthonous households. In contrast to village A, land transactions are not restricted, however. Therefore, similarly to village C, Buginese migrants and better-off local households tend to acquire land via purchase from poorer, local households. Groups of autochthonous, partly land-stripped households prepare new agricultural land via conversion of uphill community forest.

**Keywords:** Deforestation, Indonesia, migration, open access resources, qualitative analysis, village institutions