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Competition between Bureaucracies in the Forest and its Impacts: Lessons from Indonesia

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Introduction

The Indonesian Ministry of Forestry (MoF), a state agency traditionally responsible to manage around 128 million hectare or two-thirds of the country's land, is challenged to accommodate upcoming claims from both domestic and international levels, especially including political tasks relating to global climate change and REDD+ policy. These new forest-related tasks result in additional competition for competencies, staff and resources between the MoF and other established or newly created state agencies. Since powerful and legitimate actor is needed to govern forest area, it is interesting to know the changing power of the MoF and other related state agencies and impacts of these changings on forest. Hence, the aim of this paper is to analyze the power changing of relevant state agencies in forest-related policies influenced by domestic and international processes. In order to do so, we select the REDD+ Program and One Map Policy as recent political processes related to forest from global and national initiatives. We hypothesise that there has been a decrease and sharing in power of the MoF due to national and international influences, as it globally occurs to those responsible for the forest.

Analytical Framework and Data Collection

Theory of power and theory of bureaucratic politics are used to study above mentioned processes and to reveal the changing of power elements among the MoF and other state bureaucracies in the two selected cases. In this regard, we take *power* definition proposed by Krott *et al.* (2013), namely a social relationship in which Actor A alters the behaviour of Actor B without recognising B's will. According to them *power* has three elements, i.e. coercion, (dis)-incentive and dominant information. Each of or the three of them can be used to direct or to influence other actors' political option so that it corresponds to the wishes of the more powerful actor. *Actor* in this study refers to a governmental organization or state bureaucracy who involved in any political process within the two cases observed. Peters (2001) defines *bureaucracy* as any internal and external actors keen to influence domestic policy have to meet and deal with state officials. Niskanen (1974), further, explains that bureaucracies have dual goals: to serve public interest as mandated to them and to expand organizational interests like maximizing power, budget and staff. Based on this, we view the changing in power elements of any bureaucracy as a result of competition among bureaucracies in a specific issue.

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The data within this study were collected through semi-structured expert interviews and non-participant observations in some conferences held in Jakarta during June-September 2013. We also conducted qualitative content analysis of legal documents and actors position papers to get solid data and leave the questionable one.

Results and Discussion

The changes in power element of bureaucracies in the REDD+ Program and One Map Policy are outlined in Table 1 and Table 2, respectively. Both Tables briefly show that the power of the MoF has been declining and must now be shared with other agencies. Agencies gaining power at the cost of the MoF in both cases are the Presidential Delivery Unit for Development Monitoring and Oversight (UKP4), REDD+ Agency, the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), and the Ministry of Environment (MoE). The National Council on Climate Change (DNPI) and the National Development Planning Agency (BAPPENAS) slightly gain power through the REDD+ Program, while Geospatial Information Agency (BIG) and the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resource (MoEMR) gain through the One Map Initiative.

Indonesian REDD+ Program is a program resulted from the Norway-Indonesia cooperation agreed in 2010, which aims to help the government of Indonesia (GoI) in reducing its carbon emissions from deforestation, forest degradation and peatland conversion up to 41% below business as usual (BAU, without policy intervention) by 2020. In this partnership, the Kingdom of Norway pledged to provide One Billion USD financial assistance for establishment of Indonesia's REDD+ Strategy and for its implementation. To run this program, the president of Indonesia assigned UKP4 and DNPI (both are new state agencies) as leading agencies and thrown over the MoF and the MoA which traditionally responsible for forest and land managements. Through this political process, the REDD+ Program seems to be a symbolic policy since it has no powerful leading agency on the ground. In addition, to achieve 41% of emissions reduction is too ambitious goal in the midst of vary interests many economic sectors.

Table 1: Changes in power element of bureaucracies in REDD+ Program

Power element	Strategic task	MoF	UKP4	DNPI*	REDD+ Agency*	MoE	MoA	BAPPENAS	
Coercion	-								
(Dis)-incentive	Developing REDD+ national strategy		+						
	Shaping forest and peat moratorium policy		+						
	Improving REDD+ national strategy				+				
	Mainstreaming REDD+ in national development agenda				+			+	
	Managing REDD+ funding				+				
	Shaping Indonesia's position in international REDD+ fora				+				
	Supervising & evaluating implementation of REDD+ program				+				
	Forming national strategy on climate change			+					
	Coordinating activities related to climate change			+					
	Monitoring and evaluating implementation of climate change related-policy			+					
	Reviewing and adjusting RAN-GRK								+
	Developing guideline to RAD-GRK reporting								+
Dominant information	Representing Indonesia at the UNFCCC			+		-			
	Negotiate the Norway-Indonesia LoI			+					
	Establishing standard for emission measurement				+				
	Archiving implementation report for RAN-GRK & RAD-GRK							+	
	Conducting Green House Gases inventory			+		+			
	Providing staff on the ground		+					+	
	Providing concrete forest-related information		+						

Table 2: Changes in power element of bureaucracies in One Map Policy

Power element	Strategic task							
		MoF	UKP4*	BIG	REDD+ Agency*	MoE	MoA	MoEMR
Coercion	Postponing business licence over primary forest & peat land	-	+					
	Taking responsibility for primary forest and peat land within moratorium map	-				+		
(Dis)-incentive	Employing own staff for One Map Policy	-	+	-	+			-
	Acting as leading agency on One Map Policy		+					
	Acting as coordinator of technical aspects	-		+				
	Spending much of budget for thematic maps		+					
Dominant information	Joint updating of moratorium map twice per year	+		+				
	Producing thematic maps	+		+		+	+	+
	Taking responsibility for public feedback on the moratorium map	+						

Note:

(*) Newly created state agency (+) Gaining power (-) Loosing power

BAPPENAS National Development Planning Agency

BIG Geospatial Information Agency

DNPI National Council on Climate Change

LoI Letter of Intent

MoA Ministry of Agriculture

MoE Ministry of Environment

MoEMR Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resource

MoF Ministry of Forestry

RAD-GRK Regional Action Plan for Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction

RAN-GRK National Action Plan for Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction

REDD+ Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation plus

UKP4 The Presidential Delivery Unit for Development Monitoring and Oversight

As mentioned at the beginning, each bureaucracy tries to augment its power by striving for more tasks, budget and staff, and competitions among them are inevitable. It is very risky if conceptual framing, planning and implementation of the REDD+ program are shaped by only a few national agencies. Creating new state agencies to oversee climate change issues –including emission reductions through the REDD+ program– will raise crucial bureaucratic conflicts such as difficulties in coordination, lack of capacity, low budget, risk of corruption and uncertain policy direction. Moeliono *et al.* (2014) find that most influential actors in REDD+ programs in Indonesia tend not to seek information from other actors, and that information exchange between them is weak, only in limited clusters and in a top-down direction. This dearth of information exchange indicates that each bureaucracy does not want to open its agenda regarding policy formulation, and will only expose it to the public when it is complete. Each limits others' space to intervene in such planning. On the other hand, asking for dominant information from the opponent bureaucracies will raise their bargaining position and give them material to prepare a counter agenda, one likely harmful to one's own agenda. This is a problem whenever there are many bureaucracies with similar assignments and balanced levels of power, as well as an explanation as to why any bureaucracy might abruptly issue an unpredicted decision without consulting others. Bureaucratic constraint is a serious problem in the REDD+ program and will become more complex as it is implemented. In addition, diverse local forest-related political actors in an environment heavy with corruption and self-serving interests could be a serious challenge in implementing the REDD+ program.

In the second case, the idea to make one standardized map for all Indonesia came from the president after UKP4 presented the different maps produced by the MoF and the MoE in the Cabinet Meeting, December 2010. In 2011 the president instructed for the postponement of issuance of new licences in primary natural forest and peatland (logging moratorium) and ordered

the MoE to improve business governance within forests and peatland areas under associated maps. In its implementation, UKP4 together with MoF, BIG, MoA, MoE and REDD+ Agency invite public input for half-yearly update of moratorium map. They also formulate many thematic maps (such as: forest cover, peatland area, watershed area, etc.) and gradually try to reduce overlapping area in such updated maps.

Although the aim of the One Map Policy is technically achievable, but it is facing severe conflicts of interests from local governments and sectorial state agencies involved. The maps integration process, later, will be the most crucial phase and need to be synchronised through a national consensus. The synchronisation process will confront the production-oriented sectors, e.g., logging, plantation and mining, with the conservation oriented sectors, including protected forests, conservation forests, and high conservation value forests. Based on long-term experience, the production-oriented sector usually prevails over its adversary because there are many unclear, inconsistent and contradictory regulations that could be exploited before the law. In addition, it has strong supporting bureaucracies and involves big-conglomerate private actors. Extractive regimes that characterise recent Indonesian local development and politics could also be a real challenge in realising green (pro-environmental) development programs proclaimed by central government. However, the MoF can also clog this process by not granting approval to spatial planning proposals submitted by provinces and municipalities. Hence, although it seems to be simple, the One Map Policy which was expected to be the base and reference of multi-sector development planning is obviously riddled with multiple sectoral conflicts of interest.

Conclusions and Outlook

Our study shows that power of the MoF has been decreasing and has to be shared to others (i.e. UKP4, DNPI and REDD+ Agency). The MoF loses much power regarding coercive and incentive elements, but still holds much in information. The involvement of other state agencies in forest governance, along with the decrease in deforestation and forest degradation rate seems to support the conjecture that the fundamental Indonesian forestry problems have their origin in inappropriate and inaccurate policies issued by the MoF. Other bureaucracies find that this new balance is better for forest governance and they try to keep it stable. However, forestry problems surrounding REDD+ activities and the One Map policy, e.g., forestland conflicts, benefit distribution from REDD+ activities, and loss of biodiversity should be addressed by a strong state bureaucracy, and so far, these new agencies have not made any remarkable progress on this. The policies designed to weaken the MoF could hamper the improvement process on the ground, where the powerful state bureaucracies are absent. Given that there is no strong bureaucracy present in policy formulation and implementation, the REDD+ Program is likely to fail and the One Map policy will be biased towards dominant interests/actors from the production-orientated side.

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