



Tropentag, September 17-19, 2014, Prague, Czech Republic

“Bridging the gap between increasing knowledge and decreasing resources”

The Power Dynamics among Indonesian State Agencies: Examples from the REDD+ Program and the One Map Initiative

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Abstract

The Indonesian Ministry of Forestry, a state agency traditionally responsible to manage around 130 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 Ministry of Forestry and other established or newly created state agencies. We hypothesise that there has been a decrease in power of the Ministry of Forestry due to national and international influences. The theory of power and the theory of bureaucratic politics are used to study these processes and to reveal the power dynamics among the Ministry of Forestry and other state bureaucracies in two selected cases, viz. the REDD+ Program and One Map Initiative. The results show, first, the power of the Ministry of Forestry has been declining and must now be shared with other agencies. Agencies gaining power at the cost of the Ministry of Forestry in both cases are the Presidential Delivery Unit for Development Monitoring and Oversight (UKP4), REDD+ Agency, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Ministry of Environment. The National Council on Climate Change (DNPI) and the National Planning Agency (BAPPENAS) slightly gain power through the REDD+ Program, while Geospatial Information Agency (BIG) and the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resource gain through the One Map Initiative. Second, the REDD+ Program seems to be a symbolic policy since the goals are too ambitious and hard to be implemented on the ground, no leading agency responsible to succeed them, and the policy is constructed on a weak legal base. Third, the aim of the One Map Initiative is technically achievable, but facing severe conflicts of interests from local governments and sectorial state agencies involved. Production oriented state agencies will gain much benefit whereas conservation interest will be defeated. Fourth, implementation of both policies is facing heavy challenges since the Ministry of Forestry who embraces long-term information on forests and has experienced staff on the ground is not involved in agenda-setting and formulation of both policies.

Keywords: Coercion, incentives, information, one map initiative, power dynamics, REDD+ program, state agencies