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Political ecology analyses on national park management (a case study of Tanjung Puting, central Kalimantan)

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This lecture analyses national park management from the viewpoint of political ecology which emphasizes stakeholders' perception. The role of national park is very significant as the last resort of natural forest existence. Because it has strategic functions as water catchments, hydrology, watersheds, micro climate, carbon sink production eco-tourism, educational discourses to study biodiversity, eco-tourism, etc. There are three main purposes for national park management: (1) the protection of ecological process in order to guarantee sustainable its function and role as ensuring systemic life; (2) to preserve various of natural resources and its ecosystem in order to maintain genetic preservations; (3) and to generate sustainable benefits for improvement social welfare for society who live in and around national park particularly and society at large in general. But, currently the real condition of national park Tanjung Puting is in a threat because of two factors: namely illegal logging activities which have been carried out by wood traders and illegal mining which eventually affected of water contamination in the upstream. Therefore to anticipate these critical problems the affirmative action such as collaborative management on reforestation program, law enforcement, hard sanction and empowering socio-economic of local people must be carried out by stakeholders (central and local government and NGOs) in order to implement sustainable forest management on national park in the long run.

It was occurred conflict of interest between central and local government on natural forest resources particularly on national park management. The central government argues based on the Law number 5/1990 article 14, which 'highlights national park as natural forest preservation that owns ecosystem life and managed with specific zone (core, forest and for research activities). The authority of management belongs to central government and the main mission is to defense national park for its preservation, protection and utilization for research in the buffer. In contrast, local government's argues that the existence of national park in her district could be utilized natural resource to extent as original income for local government (PAD), for infrastructure building and society as large purposes, especially in autonomy era. In line with local government's mission, local people also see 'national park' from viewpoint of direct economic values. Therefore, the excess of illegal logging and mining occurred in Tanjung Puting national park which subsequently affect on deforestation. In this context, both conflict of interest between two actors of stakeholder (central and local as well) are fascinating to be elaborated.

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