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The Controversy of Social Forestry Policy: Public Reaction on the Ministry of Environment and Forestry Decree No. 287/2022/KHDPK in Java, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Social forestry in Java, Indonesia, refers to policies and practices aimed at involving local communities in management and protection of forest areas. The study focuses on the controversy surrounding Decree No. 287/2022/KHDPK of the social forest policy which was rejected by local forest communities and public. The primary contribution of this research is to investigate the reasons behind the rejection on the Ministry of Environment and Forestry regarding Forest Areas with Special Management (KHDPK) policy, particularly the reduction in the forest area it entails. The main stakeholder involved in this controversy include Perum Perhutani, which has a vested interest in maintaining control of 2.4-million-hectare of forest land in Java. A qualitative research method was employed, using a case study approach applied for content analysis. Data were gathered from online newspapers and social media reports published between April 2022 and October 2022. The results indicates that the ongoing controversy reflects a disharmonious relationship between regulators and operators in implementing Agrarian Reform and Social Forestry policies on Java Island. The data suggest that the failure to manage the dialogue between stakeholders can create a challenging environment for the sustainability of both people and forests. Furthermore, involvement of stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of new environmental policies can foster better relationships. This study also highlights the critical role of dialogue and collaboration among regulators, operators, local communities, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders.

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1. Introduction

The Government of the Republic Indonesia and local communities are in disagreement over the management of forest areas, including teak forests in Java. These forests are not only viewed as static political zones but also as sites of political violence, settlement disputes, and conflicting claims. This matter has ramifications for the process of deforestation, the deterioration of natural resources, and the potential for disputes between members of the local community (Peluso 1992; Peluso 2011). The community's response to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry's Decree No. 287/2022/KHDPK, which addresses the special management of forest areas (KHDPK), has been controversial despite its intended role as a solution to the problem. The disagreement was characterized by strong

rejections on one side and explicit support on the other. The rejection was conveyed through various means, including conversations, declarations, petitions, rallies, and a lawsuit filed at the State Administrative Court (PTUN) in Jakarta under case registration number 275/G/2022/PTUN, seeking the repeal of the regulation (Imam 2022; Yusnir 2022). However, the Java Forest Restoration Coalition (KPH), consisting of agrarian reform activists, provided support for Decree No. 287/2022/KHDPK. They took measures to challenge the designation of forest area and submitted an "Amicus Curiae"¹ to the Jakarta District Court, urging it to dismiss the plaintiffs' claims (Jimmy 2022). The dispute arises from the discordant relationship between the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) as the regulator and the State Forestry Company (Perhutani) as the entity responsible for operations.

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Since the 1970s, the state has assigned *Perhutani* the responsibility of managing the forests in Java. The state has also made efforts to preserve the extent of *Perhutani*'s operational territory, which is a continuation of the forestry initiative established by the colonial authority. The dispute arises from the public response to the KHDPK policy, which has become a conflict between the regulators (Kemen LHK) and the operators (*Perhutani*) in managing forest areas in Java. The reasons behind the conflict were rooted in the implementation of the social forestry strategy in 2014. The Social Forestry policy has shifted the approach to forest area management from state-based to community-based through the implementation of an agrarian reform (AR) scheme (Pratama 2019). Meanwhile, the operators aim to establish a tradition of managing forest areas at the state level, building upon the management practices from the colonial era (Peluso 1991). The conflict between regulators and operators peaked with the implementation of the KHDPK regulation in 2022. The policy implemented by KHDPK became a source of controversy, with both acceptance and rejection. The purpose of this project is to discover new methods that promote effective communication in policy management within the field of land-based and social forestry. The current literature examining land-based social forestry in Java focuses on three main topics: (i) the legality of implementing institutions (Ginoga et al. 2007; Kurniasih et al. 2021; Agusti et al. 2020); (ii) land tenure traditions (Peluso 1993; Pratama 2019; Fisher et al. 2019) and (iii) relations between organizers and community members around the forest, particularly those involving non-*Perhutani* actors (Maryudi et al. 2016; Adib 2016; Sari et al. 2018; Fahroji 2019; Pujo et al. 2018; Nugroho et al. 2023). While prior studies have examined *Perhutani*'s land control practices in Java (Peluso 1993; Pratama 2019; Fisher et al. 2019), none have specifically addressed the diminution (or revocation) of jurisdiction over a significant portion of land, 46% or 1.1 million hectares (Men LHK 2021) by the government through policy Decree No. 287/2022/KHDPK (Men LHK 2022). The implementation of Social Forestry Policy in Indonesia, especially in areas managed by *Perhutani*, faces challenges and controversy. The recent Minister of Environment and Forestry, pointed out that regulation 39/2017 concerning Social Forestry Utilization Permit (IPHPS) was criticized for contradicting other regulations and limiting *Perhutani*'s role (Ramadhan & Amalia 2021). The transformation of forestry governance has led to the emergence of new actors, including government institutions, and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and community group facilitators, in promoting SP programs (Ramadhan et al. 2023). However, *Perhutani* has shown opposition to the implementation of IPHPS and expressed low confidence in the community's forest management capabilities (Ramadhan & Amalia 2021). The Joint Community Forest Management (PHBM) program by *Perhutani* was criticized by the public for not truly involving local communities in forest management (Ota 2019). These challenges highlight the need for fundamental changes in social forestry policy, prioritizing

social aspects and ensuring fair participation of local communities in forest management.

Historically, there has been no precedent or permission from Central government (KLHK) to various parties, such as the State Forestry Company (*Perhutani*), regional governments, private sector, local communities, to manage 2.4 million hectares of productive and protected forest areas in Java. This policy marks the first instance of such action taken by the government in the history of forest area management in Java. This study investigates Decree No. 287/2022/KHDPK, which has sparked significant public controversy (Himawan 2022; Widiarto 2022; Burama 2022). The five factors that triggered the controversy are related to (i) values and principles, (ii) facts and evidence, (iii) stakeholder involvement, (iv) the policy determination process, and (v) the impact on policy determination. Regarding stakeholder involvement in controversies, at least three stakeholder components are interested: (i) industry and business sector (Mark 1997), (ii) environmental activists (Arancibia et al. 2004), and (iii) the political bureaucracy (Howlett 2019). These three stakeholder components were utilized to analyse the controversy in response to the KHDPK policy in Java. The study integrates theoretical knowledge with practical application in the field of social forestry and environmental policy. This study presents empirical evidence that highlights the discrepancy between policy objectives and the outcomes observed in practice. A critical analysis of the social forestry policy controversies requires a deep understanding of the differing interpretations, values, and goals among the parties involved. It thoroughly examines the various factors that influence the success or failure of these policies.

The research employs a qualitative methodology, specifically a case study technique. The data for content analysis were gathered from recent publications, newspapers and social media platforms, focusing on the period from April 2022 to October 2022. The rationale for selecting case study method in this research was to conduct a comprehensive and meticulous scholarly analysis that captures the public reaction and narrative surrounding this controversy. A desk review approach was also applied. The reports from newspapers and social media (including WhatsApp and YouTube channels) were analysed and characterized by the issue. A descriptive and interpretive content analysis was conducted to examine the narratives of both supporters and opponents of KHDPK. Additionally, the interpretive analysis facilitated a deeper understanding of the underlying significance of the facts being examined.

2. Literature review

2.1. Historical perspectives

Indonesia is undergoing one of the most complex social forestry policy transformations in the world (Fisher et al. 2019). The Social Forestry Policy is categorized into two forms: the Recognition of Forestry Partnership Protection (Kulin KK) and the IPHPS. The Kulin KK

approach was implemented throughout Java and other regions, whereas IPHPS is limited to Java Island (Vania 2020). The IPHPS policy has elicited a heated response from the public, with some factions vehemently rejecting it and others loyally supporting it. Both groups have explicitly declared their stance as adversaries or advocates (Suharjito 2018). Groups opposing IPHPS express their ideas and arguments through various means, including news reporting, social media, and other platforms. They also engage in discussions in parliament and organize rallies to make their voices heard. They contend that KLHK Decree No. 39 of 2017 directly conflicts with Government Regulation No. 72 of 2010 concerning Perum Perhutani. The IPHPS program has caused tensions among local community organizations due to a discrepancy between the target group for the IPHPS program and the existing participants in PHBM program in the same forest region. Moreover, the IPHPS program has the potential to induce forest degradation as a result of social conflict (*ibid*).

The IPHPS support group argued that KLHK Decree Number 39 of 2017 does not conflict with Government Regulation No. 72 of 2010 because KLHK has the authority to grant forest utilization permits to individuals or groups even in Perum Perhutani forest areas especially in urgent conditions. They also argue that urgency of IPHPS includes the fact that Perum Perhutani has not managed forests properly, as indicated by forest cover of less than 5% and that local communities do not benefit from the surrounding forests, which have instead been controlled by outsiders or external parties. There is still no consensus between opposing and supporting groups. Opponents also submitted a judicial review of the policy to the Supreme Court of Indonesia. The court firmly rejected the proposed judicial review, stating the cases relevant to the issue are under trial in different courts at regional and national level. If steps to achieve consensus among groups are not taken, there is a possibility of continuous conflict at the local level in the future (*ibid*).

Ministerial Regulation no. 39/2017, which pertains to IPHPS and the State Forest Corporation (Perhutani), has outlined nine reasons for rejection. From a regulatory standpoint, the legislation is inconsistent with the prior regulations, namely PP No. 6/2007 in conjunction with PP No. 3/2008 regarding Forest Management and Preparation of Forest Management Plans, as well as PP No. 72/2010 regarding Perhutani (Ramadhan & Amalia 2021). Furthermore, the involvement of Perum Perhutani in the management of forest areas within its jurisdiction in Java was limited. The involved entities included the Central Government, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, and environmental activists from NGOs (Ramadhan et al. 2023). In a case study conducted in Kendal, Central Java Province, Perhutani displayed a noticeable antagonistic attitude and opposition towards the IPHPS plan (Ramadhan et al. 2023). Furthermore, Perhutani holds a negative view of the community's capacity to oversee forest regions (Ramadhan et al. 2023; Ota 2019).

Additionally, the local people are vulnerable to being influenced by Perhutani to sustain the PHBM

approach (Ragandhi et al. 2021). Similarly, the IPHPS initiative faced opposition from villagers and forest farming groups who had profited from the forest and believed they had a role in the sustainable management of the forest, working along with Perum Perhutani (Suharjito 2018; Octavia et al. 2022). The Social Forestry Policy in Indonesia and Java pertains to the implementation of social forestry policies in Java from 1995 to 2024. The government assumed control of the social forestry policy in 2014 by merging the Ministry of Forestry into the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (2014-2024).

2.2. Controversy over Social Forestry Policy

Controversy arises when there are different interpretations, beliefs, values, or aims among the parties involved, whether they are individuals or groups within society (Zielinski et al. 2018; Tarka 2018). These differences often arise in response to the establishment of regulations (Shakil 2021) and are expressed through opinions (Hussenot 2014). These expressions often result from miscommunication and misconception between parties. This leads to arguments in numerous domains, which in turn give rise to concerns about responsibility and decision-making (Nguyen & Catalan-Matamoros 2020). Arguments can be expressed through a sequence of spoken or written phrases or through various speech activities. Public discourse often acknowledges Jürgen Habermas' concept of the public sphere (Saputra et al. 2022; Saud 2020).

Regarding stakeholder involvement in controversies, at least three stakeholder components are often involved: those from the industry and business (Mark 1997), environmental activists (Hasfi & Aminuddin 2022), and politics (Howlett 2019). Within this particular framework, disagreement often arises due to the companies' focus on financial gains and losses resulting from the implementation of these policies. Meanwhile, environmental disputes are fueled by the interests of environmental sustainability groups and researchers who are concerned about environment. In the political setting, conflict often arises due to the involvement of political parties or interest groups in shaping policies based on their interests. As a result, these conflicts are often perceived as unfavorable, but the controversies serve as a reminder of the importance of change in driving growth, particularly in encouraging innovation and coping with challenges.

2.3. Agrarian Reform, Social Forestry, and KHDPK in Java Island

Agrarian reform, also known as asset reform and access reform, refers to the process of redistributing or allocating land in forest regions to the population as property rights. The Social Forestry policy allows communities to obtain forest management permits for the purpose of managing forest areas (Raharjo et al. 2020; Hastanti et al. 2021). Agrarian Reform is a program of Social Forestry it is considered a breakthrough

government policy that has become very popular with the public (Pambudi 2020). This policy breakthrough continues one of the *NawaCita*² outlined in the 2014-2019 development plan. This policy aims to provide legal certainty over land ownership by communities in forest areas, resolving tenure disputes and conflicts (Aldillah 2020). The *Tenurial* conflict resolution aims to preserve and restore barren forests, improve public welfare, and guarantee access to community rights (Herawati et al. 2019). The AR policy is implemented through regulatory reform, asset reform and access reform (Nugroho et al. 2019).

Social Forestry serves as an implementation of the agrarian reform policy. The strengthening of this policy has been undertaken as part of a national strategic project plan since 2014 and continues from 2020 to 2024 (DJPSKLa 2020; Himawan 2022). The AR policy was implemented by redistributing 9 million hectares of land and Social Forestry covering an area of 12.7 million hectares (Nurdin, 2017). Social Forestry was first mentioned in Indonesian law under article 29A of UUCK 21/2020 (Presiden Republik Indonesia 2020). Social Forestry studies on forest land have focused on at least three major topics: (i) the legality of implementation institutions (Ginoga et al. 2007; Kurniasih et al. 2021; Agusti et al. 2020); (ii) land tenure traditions (Peluso 1993; Pratama 2019) and (iii) interactions between government officials and community members in the forest, involving individuals who are not affiliated with Perhutani (Maryudi et al. 2016; Pratama 2019; Sanudin et al. 2023).

Consequently, there is a gap in previous studies, as they did not examine the disputes over property ownership related to the implementation of KHDPK policy. Currently, there is a lack of research on KHDPK, both as a recently implemented policy and as a consequence of agrarian reforms and social forestry regulations in Java. Further, social forestry is designated as one of the six interests, with an allotment of 922,769 hectares out of a total forest area of 1.103 million hectares (83.6%) across all provinces in Java, excluding the Yogyakarta Special Region (DJPSKLa 2023).

The KHDPK is a specific policy designed for managing forests on Java Island. "The KHDPK emphasizes social engagement actively participating in the exploitation and management of these forests" (Aggarwal et al. 2021; Pistorius et al. 2017; Thompson et al. 2013). The third ruling of the KHDPK includes six specific interests (Men LHK 2022): (i) social forestry; (ii) arrangement of forest areas to gazette forest areas; (iii) the use of forest areas; (iv) forest rehabilitation (v) forest protection; and (vi) the utilization of environmental services. In this context, Senoaji et al. (2021) found that KHDPK areas are designated by the government for public interests such as research and development, education and training, as well as religion and culture. The KHDPK was established with the aim of enhancing forest area management by optimizing land utilization, focusing on the sustainable use of natural resources and the production of forest products,

including timber, non-timber products, and environmental services (Soriano et al. 2021). The concept of forest areas with special management can be utilized as a land productivity strategy to improve land quality and productivity (Boedhihartono 2017).

According to Akbar (2022), KHDPK can provide opportunities and access for the community through the Social Forestry scheme by maximizing the management of barren land and forests. The role of effective and efficient governance on environmental management must be implemented alongside this framework. The KLHK administration is anticipated to address the issues and oversee the operations of KHDPK (Casalegno et al. 2010; Rossi 2013; Ruete et al. 2017). In Indonesia, KHDPK emphasizes rehabilitation, which is implemented on 46% of critical land on Java Island (Pratama 2019). Despite supporting actions, the policy of establishing KHDPK has faced resistance from various parties. The reason behind this rejection is belief that policy could harm the ecology and conservation of forest areas, leading to further degradation rather than improving community welfare (Redi et al. 2019).

The two main parties involved in the environmental management of forest areas in Java are regulators and operators (Hupe et al. 2014; Porro et al. 2015). The role of government as the 'regulator' in managing forest areas is led by the KHLK sector. The Ministry of Environment and Forestry's in determination of the KHDPK policy (2022) is based on the CK Law Number (2020) and Government Regulation Number 23/2021 on Forest Management. Perhutani, a State-Owned Enterprise in the forestry sector after the reform, is responsible for the sustainability of forests in Java. This mandate is outlined in PP No. 72/2010 by State Forestry Public Companies (Perum), and its implementation is governed by PP no. 23/2021. During the Forestry Partnership Social Forestry Era (2016-2018), several regulations were implemented including Ministry of Environment and Forestry Decree No. 83 of 2016, which recognized Kulin KK.

Additionally, regulation regarding IPHPS were introduced in 2017 (Pujo et al. 2018), followed by a 2018 regulation by the Director General of Natural Resources and Ecosystem Conservation (Perditjen KSDAE) No. 6/2018, which focused on Conservation Partnerships. Forest management is decentralized, including Sustainable Forestry and the Kehati-Hutan Desa Partnership Program (KHDPK). As the regulator, the Ministry has the authority to establish policies and standards related to the management and supervision of forest areas. The article identifies gaps in the current understanding of social forestry policies and public reactions, setting the stage for future research. This paper offers an in-depth analysis of the ongoing dispute between regulators and operators, as well as those who oppose and support the policy. It outlines areas for further investigation, encouraging scholars to delve deeper into the nuances of forestry management, stakeholder engagement, and the socio-economic implications of environmental policies.

3. Material and Method

3.1. Research design

This study employed a qualitative research methodology, specifically utilizing a case study approach and content analysis to examine the phenomenon of controversy as a reaction to social forestry policy. The dispute phenomenon manifested through descriptive, narrative, and non-empirical data. Descriptive data is used to comprehend the perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors of the public and various groups regarding the policy. This research specifically examines case studies that are directly relevant to the response to the Decree No. 287/2022/KHDPK. The rationale for selecting this policy as a case study is to conduct a comprehensive and complete analysis that serves as a true representation of the issue. KLHK policy No. 287/2022 has engaged four parties with varied interests and perspectives. The case studies enable academics to provide a more comprehensive analysis of the issues by examining them from three distinct perspectives: positive, negative, and neutral. The author(s) examined the direct effects of these policies on environmental, social, economic, and political factors. It is crucial to evaluate whether the policy is both efficient and sustainable. The purpose of this case study technique is to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the intricacies of the dispute surrounding Decree No. 287/2022/KHDPK. This can help in developing more suitable and empirically supported recommendations or solutions. Utilizing the case study approach can serve as an effective and appropriate method for scrutinizing the contentious nature of this strategy.

The study analysed the content of public reaction to Decree No. 287/2022/KHDPK from news, and social

media sources which were categorized and coded to identify specific categories and themes. The selection criteria for these contents were based on their endorsement or opposition to the policy. The unit of analysis comprises news posts that include keywords, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, photos, and documents. The three data sources consist of newspapers and social media platforms. These sources were chosen based on their relevance to the issue and the availability of photos, images, actors, content, media writers, editors, and publicly accessible links. These data source was organized into 1 to 3 tables. Additionally, several reports regarding the public response to KHDPK were excluded from this data due to their failure to meet the defined criteria.

3.2. Research location

This research was conducted in forests regions across four provinces on Java Island: Banten, West Java, Central Java, and East Java (Men LHK 2022) (refer to figure 1). The Perhutani Public Company (Perum), a State-Owned Enterprise (BUMN) in the forestry sector, was responsible for managing the state forest area in Java, covering these four provinces.

3.3. Data sources

The primary data sources for this research consisted of textual materials and manuscripts obtained from online newspaper articles, social media platforms, and YouTube channels were active and shared content between April and October 2022 were selected. A total of twenty-one sources were collected from online

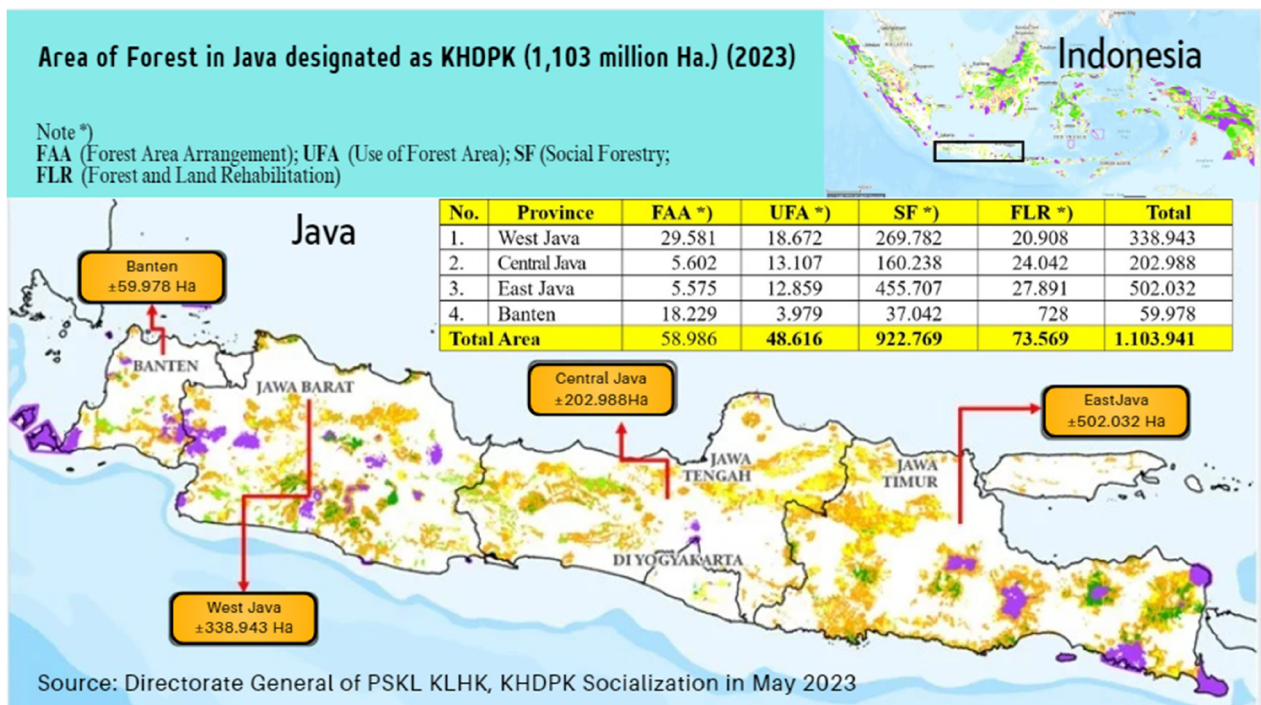


Figure 1. Social Forestry Area in Java designed as KHDPK (1,1.3 million Ha.) Year 2022

publications, including both mainstream and alternative media. The text also incorporated the narratives of various actors, which were identified as additional sources of information. Furthermore, social media and YouTube served as platforms for accessing insights from numerous specialists on KHDPK. The YouTube channels were also analyzed, and the narratives from their videos and interviews were compiled.

3.4. Data collection

Data collection was conducted using a desk-review method, wherein the primary information was gathered from news sources or online newspaper. The selection of online newspaper was based on criteria such as accessibility, comprehensiveness of information, availability of specific link addresses, and the credibility of author or editor. These parameters were selected to ensure the quality of the news material. Additionally, social media platforms, WhatsApp Messenger and YouTube channels were utilized to gather pertinent information on the subjects explored in the study. These three sources were easily accessible, and often utilized as data sources. Multiple photographs related to KHDPK were posted and uploaded by social activists, including members of the community, government and environmental groups.

3.5. Data analysis

The analysis primarily focused on descriptive and interpretive aspects. The descriptive analysis involved a systematic and concise examination and summarization of narratives or posts from both opponents and supporters of KHDPK. The summary comprises the primary arguments that arise from the facts in the content and interpretive analysis. The purpose of this analysis is to identify patterns, establish relationships with the issue, and determine the views present in the data. Moreover, the viewpoints about the dispute surrounding KHDPK policies were divided into groups that either express opposition or offer endorsement.

4. Results

The public controversy regarding the issuance of Decree No. 287/2022/KHDPK of Java Island from April 2022 to October 2022 was investigated to understand the perception of rejection and support for this policy. The rejection various forms, including dialogue, rallies, demonstrations, and a lawsuit filed in the PTUN to challenge and revise decision. The measures taken to enforce the policy included rallies, forest area control actions, and counter-lawsuits. The result section includes a thematic analysis of public rejection on KHDPK policies, public narratives, protests, demonstrations and lawsuits, and support through agrarian reform activists in response to Decree No. 287/2022/KHDPK. Furthermore, the manuscript also focuses on the discussion of the rejection, the conflict between

operators and regulators, and the implications for agrarian reform and social forestry.





4.1. The public reaction on decree No. 287/2022/KHDPK

The public reaction to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry's Decree No. 287/2022/KHDPK was observed through four methods: regional meeting recommendations, petition rejections, support for the petition, and legislative actions. The rejection began in April 2022 and continued through May 2022, and it was interpreted from different perspectives. The Regional Leadership Council of the Perhutani Trade Union (DPW Sekar) in Central Java established conclusions and recommendations during the First Work Meeting (Raker) in Semarang. The DPW Sekar in Central Java strongly recommended that the Central Leadership Council (Sekar DPP) promptly reject KHDPK (Table 1). The preparation of statements and petitions for rejection was arranged at the Gedung Indonesia Menggugat (GIM) in Bandung by environmental and forest activists affiliated with the Java Forest Rescue Forum (FPHJ). Furthermore, the KHDPK petition was received and also endorsement from Minaqu Indonesia (see Table 1). Additionally, the expression of refusal also originated from the delegates of the Indonesian People's Consultative Assembly (DPR RI) Commission IV, which focuses on agriculture, food, environment, forestry, and maritime affairs. The Deputy Chairman of Commission IV urged the government to nullify the Decree for the determination of KHDPK (Table 1). Therefore, based on the four components outlined in the Table 1, the implementation of the policy elicited a public response characterized the case of rejection that is different from the expectations of policymakers. Ahmad Arief Subarna, CEO, DPW Sekar Perhutani in Central Java, spoke at the DPW Sekar Central Java working meeting on April 12, 2022:

'Perhutani employees are opposing the issuance of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry's Decree that establishes Forest Areas with Special Management (KHDPK) in certain state forests located in production and protected forest areas on the islands of Java and Madura. Consequently, they plan to refuse its implementation. DPW Sekar Perhutani Central Java is evaluating the legal validity of the Minister of Environment and Forestry decree 287/MENLHK/SETJEN/PLA.2/4/2022 dated 5 April 2022, which pertains to the designation of KHDPK in certain State Forests situated within the Production Forest and Protected Forest Areas of Central Java Province, East Java Province, West Java Province, and Banten Province' (St, 2022).

The Central Java DPW Sekar Perhutani led the rejection of the KHDPK policy during a working meeting in April 2023, which took place shortly after the public release of the KHDPK decree. During the working meeting, it was announced that the KHDPK policy, which pertains to the sustainability of forest areas and the potential job losses of thousands of employees, was categorically rejected. The ongoing discussion is centered around the initiation of legal

Table 1. Public Rejection of KHDPK Policies in April and May 2022

No.	Picture	Actor	Content/Narrative	Location/Time	Reference/Source
1.		Regional Leadership Council of Employees' Union (DPW Sekar) in Perhutani Central Java	Recommendation for the Sekar Central Leadership Council (DPP) to reject the KHDPK	Working Meeting Semarang, April 2022.	(St 2022); (Insetyonoto 2022)
2.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Java Forest Rescue Forum (FPHJ) Environmental and Forest Activists 	Declaration / Send a Petition to Joko Widodo, Governors, and DPRD throughout Java Regarding Rejection - Asking for the KHDPK Decree to be Revoked	Gedung Indonesia Menggugat (GIM) Bandung City, Mei 2022.	(Ridwan 2022); (Razak 2022); (Prilatama 2022); (Wijaya, 2022)
3.		CEO of Minaqu Indonesia (ADW-right) Together with Er (left)	Support the Petition to Save Forest in Java	Bogor, West Java Province, May 2022.	(Awaludin 2022)
4.		DeMu, Deputy Chair of Commission IV DPR RI	Commission IV DPR RI asks the Government to Revoke the Decree Determining KHDPK	at the DPR RI Building, April, 2022.	(Khumaini 2022)

proceedings with the PTUN within a strict timeframe of 90 days following the issuance of the decree (Insetyonoto 2022). FPHJ also expressed approval of the discussion around the impending litigation. In May, they submitted a petition to President Joko Widodo, governors, and DPRD officials in Java, opposing KHDPK and urging the revocation of the decree. Further, the Java Forest Rescue Forum (FPHJ) and environmental and forest activists, including Eka Santosa, spoke in Bandung on 23 May 2022;

‘We believe that the implementation of this policy will pose a significant risk to the existence and environment of Java Island by fragmenting its forests. We express our objection that the forest, which has a protective function for balance and has been proven by the Forest Village Community Institute (LMDH) to improve the welfare of the people, will be subject to a policy of conversion and taken over by certain parties whose program commitment has not been tested. We, FPHJ, demand that the government revoke all policies that lead to further destruction of Java Island's forests’ (Ridwan 2022) (Razak 2022); (Prilatama 2022); (Wijaya 2022).

The public perception of rejection through the petition was recorded with 5,509 signatories from across Indonesia (Wijaya 2022). The petition also received support from businessmen (Awaludin 2022) and the DPR RI Commission IV has proposed that the government revoke the KHDPK determination (Khumaini 2022). Moreover, this policy was introduced and developed without adequate participation from the public consultations, stakeholders, and the broader community, and it was not in line with the anticipated impact and desired outcomes. Therefore, the lack of transparency and inclusivity in the decision-making process

has been noted, often leading to public discontent and eventual rejection.

4.2. Protests, Demonstrations and Lawsuits

The protests, demonstrations, and lawsuits in response to the notification of the KHDPK policy were carried out by Sekar in Java. These actions demonstrate a high level of disagreement with the policies implemented by the regulator in forest area management. Perhutani employees also expressed their disagreement with the issuance of Decree No. 287/2022/KHDPK in two ways: (i) two waves of demonstrations and (ii) lawsuit action against the PTUN. Firstly, a demonstration by Perhutani employees was also recorded at the “Monas Monument” in Jakarta on May 18, 2022, it was mentioned that;

“Those who claim to care about our forests cannot possibly provide policies like this (Rojab 2022). What will be the fate of Perhutani employees, as the decree is not yet clear? Currently, land management conflicts have emerged in protected forest areas (Suryo 2022).”

Understanding the public reaction involves viewing its multiple aspects. Initially, a demonstration was carried out by five thousand Perhutani employees from various regions in Java at the Jakarta Farmer's Statue on May 18, 2022. These demonstrators wore headband reading “Save the Forest” marched, displayed banners, and speeches. This action was in response to conflicts in forest area management, including in Garut Regency, Java (Suryo 2022). The demonstration by Perhutani employees and other environmental groups on July 20, 2022, further stated;

'After the second peaceful action to Save the Java Forest, it is still possible to hold similar actions for the third time and beyond if this controversial policy continues to be enforced. They believe this decree has the potential to reduce the sustainability of Java's forest areas, which currently cover only 16% of the ideal area of 30% forest area standard for the sustainability of the ecosystem on island' (Widyartono 2022).

In response to this decree, the protestors displayed their concerns through multiple banners in the streets;

'One banner at the protest read *"Uproot Monster 287 for the future of the world"*. The abbreviation KHDPK was displayed as: "Forest Area Divided among Cronies. *Ajuuur Summmmm* (destroyed, Sum)". Other banners read: "KHDPK: Forest Destruction Impact of Policy Influence." "Forests are springs. Not a Fountain of Tears, and 'My pitiful Forest is on the Verge of Destruction Because of KHDPK.' The hashtag used were #REPEAL_SK287, #287_PRODUCT FAILURE, and #Revoke SK287 (as detailed in the table 2).

In July 2022, the second round of protests took place at the Arjuna Wiwaha Statue in Jakarta. Following these protests, there were multiple threats to engage in further demonstrations in the third phase (Table 2). Secondly, a lawsuit against the PTUN was filed by Din from the Indrayana Centre for Government, Constitution, and Society, a Law Firm, in August 2022 (Table 2). Din is the legal representative of the Alliance to Save Java Forests (ASHJ), whose members include the United Perhutani Union and environmental Activists. They sued the Ministry of Environment and Forestry to revoke Decree No.287/2022/KHDPK, claiming it is a problematic policy with multiple defects, including, authority defects, procedural defects, and substance defects. The lawsuit was submitted to the PTUN with reference No. 275/G/2022/

PTUN.JKT. On August 10, 2022, Mochamad Ikhsan, a representative of one of the claimants from the ASHJ, along with Attorney Denny Indrayana from the Integrity Law Firm, stated:

'Forests and nature are not a legacy from our ancestors but are entrusted to our children and grandchildren. That philosophy is one of the reasons why we reject the KHDPK policy. We believe that Java's forest management is already good and should be maintained to remain sustainable. Because of this, we decided to fight for Javanese forests by filing a lawsuit at the PTUN to cancel decree 287/KHDPK, which was registered at the Jakarta PTUN Registrar's Office on August 10 2022' (Burama, 2022).

The demonstrations mentioned above were carried out by Sekar Perhutani in May 2022 and July 2022, involving thousands of people across Indonesia. The demonstration was followed by a lawsuit in August 2022 against the PTUN. The lawsuit represents a formal form of resistance executed by state forestry company operators against the regulators. The resistance takes the form of a lawsuit challenging the determination of a public policy indicating the seriousness of the intention to cancel the public policy. The public policy was legally challenged and rejected by operator elements directly affected by the policy through a lawsuit against the PTUN. The rejection of this policy was not only seen as legally flawed but also as a threat to the livelihood of Perhutani employees (Sup 2022). The lawsuit demanded that the government revoke Decree No. 287/2022/KHDPK and reconsider the management of forest areas in the Perhutani working area in Java. Understanding the above aspects provides a comprehensive view of rejection by multiple stakeholders

Table 2. Protests, Demonstrations, and Lawsuits for the Revocation of SK 287/2022 concerning KHDPK to PUTN Jakarta by Perum Perhutani Employees in May-August 2022

No.	Picture	Actor	Content/Narrative	Location/Time	Reference / Source
1.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sekar (Perhutani Employees Union) LMDH (Forest Village Community Institution) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "KHDPK threatened us with massive layoffs". "Revoke KHDPK" 	Office of KPH Randublatung, Blora Regency, Central Java Province. Preparations for departure to Jakarta, May 2022.	(Arf 2022)
2.		Perhutani Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "KHDPK: Forest Areas Divided to Cronies" "SAVE Perhutani Employees" "287: Product Failure" #Revoke SK 287 	Protest in Jakarta with the Background of "Monas Monument", May 2022.	(Rojab 2022) (Suryo 2022)
3.		Perhutani Employees Union	Thousands of Perhutani Employees Demonstrate Again Against KHDPK, Threaten There Will Be a Third Volume	Demonstration in the Arjuna Wiwaha Statue/Horse Statue Area Jakarta, July 2022.	(Widyartono R 2022)
4.		Din, (Integrity Law Firm), Legal Counsel for the Alliance to Save Java Forests (ASHJ)	SK 287/KHDPK, a policy that is problematic and multi-flawed: flawed authority, flawed procedure, and flawed substance.	At the Jakarta PTUN the lawsuit is registered number 275/G/2022 /PTUN.JKT, August 2022.	(Burama 2022) (Imam 2022)

highlighting the public controversy and the nature of public reaction.

4.3. Support Action by Agrarian Reform Activists





The agrarian reform activists supported the decree due to its provisions for land redistribution, support for small farmers, and promotion of sustainable agriculture practices, raising their voices against inequalities. The KHDPK decree was supported by AR activists who believed it aligned with the goal of saving forest areas on Java Island. The solidarity actions included rallies, occupation of forest areas, and a counter-case filed with the PTUN to invalidate the KHDPK policy. The forest farmer said that:

'At least 1200 forest farmers, who are part of the South Blora Forest Farmers Group Association (GKTHBS), rallied in support of the establishment of the South Blora Forest Development Policy (KHDPK). The demanded the immediate release of an official map of the of Perhutani land area in Blora, which has been designated as KHDPK. This decision needs to be communicated to communities whose villages are located in forest areas. If this decision is not revised, misinformation at the grassroots level could become uncontrollable. Additionally, the KHDPK support action coordinator, Eksi Wijaya, at the DPRD Building, Blora Regency, Central Java Province, on 20 July 2022, added that we will inform our colleagues who are awaiting the results of this hearing. We also hope that the government can conduct proper reach out about KHDPK' (Saputro 2022); (Aribowo 2022).

In June 2022, the Indramayu Agrarian Reform Enforcement Committee (KPRA) organized a demonstration where hundreds of people demanded that the Regent and Chair of the DPRD of Indramayu Regency, West Java Province, implement the Agrarian Reform Task Force (GTRA) (Table 3). The GTRA was established by the Regent of Indramayu through Decree No. 590.05/Kep.114/DKPP/2021, in accordance with Presidential Regulation (Perpres) No.86/2018. This KPRA action demanded the implementation of agrarian reform (AR) in Indramayu (Jan 2022). In July 2022, a large number of forest farmers, who are part of the GKTHBS, held a protest at the DPRD Building in Blora Regency, located in the Central Java Province (Table 3). The forest farmers advocated for the implementation of the KHDPK policy by urging prompt disclosure of a map encompassing the forest area in Blora, as stipulated in the policy (Aribowo 2022).

The action was executed by the Karawang Farmers Union (Sepetak) in Karawang Regency, West Java Province, in June 2022 (Table 3). Setepak implemented actions within the GTRA framework as outlined in the Decree of the Regent of Karawang No. 800.22/Kep.210-huk/2022. The operation involved the occupation of forest lands in Mulyosari and Mulyasejati villages, located in South Karawang (Willy 2022). In response to the lawsuit filed by the ASHJ, the Java KPH submitted an "Amicus Curiae" document to the Jakarta PTUN. This document, based on lawsuit

Table 3. Actions and "Amicus Curiae" of Agrarian Reform Activists Supporting KHDPK Policy in June – October 2022

No.	Picture	Actor	Content/Narrative	Location/Time	Reference / Source
1.		Forest Farmers	Thousands of forest farmers in Blora took to Jalan Sukung KHDPK	in the courtyard of the DPRD Building, Blora Regency, Central Java Province, July 2022.	(Saputro 2022); (Aribowo 2022)
2.		Indramayu Agrarian Reform Enforcement Committee (KPRA)	Demonstrations demanding the Regent and Chair of the DPRD of Indramayu Regency to implement the Agrarian Reform Task Force (GTRA)	Indramayu Regency, West Java Province, June 2022.	(Jan 2022); (WT 2022)
3.		Sepetak NGO (Karawang Farmers' Union)	Two farmers stand with a banner in the background that reads, "This Farmers' Land is a Priority Location for Agrarian Reform. WARNING!!! Perhutani Prohibited Entry"	Karawang Regency, West Java Province, June 2022.	(Willy 2022)
4.		AS from KPH (Forest Restoration Coalition) Java	Submission of "Amicus Curiae" (Friends of the Court) to PTUN Jakarta KHDPK Restoring Java Forests for lawsuit number 275/G/2022/PTUN.JKT	at PTUN Jakarta, October 2022.	(Red 2022); (Syarif 2022); (Jimmy 2022); (Satrio 2022); (Widiarto 2022)

Notes:

The actors' names in the data (Tables 1, 2, 3) for this research are written with initials because including their names here does not or has not obtained written or (verbal) permission from those concerned. The data source in this research was obtained through mass media/social media. We are writing with initials because it is part of the data collection process.

They are:

ADW: Ade Wardhana (table 1.3.) business figure (CEO of Minaqua Indonesia)

DeMu: Dedi Mulyadi (table 1.3.) Deputy Chair of Commission IV DPR RI

Din: Denny Indrayana (table 2.4.) (Integrity Law Firm), Legal Counsel for the Alliance to Save Java Forests (ASHJ)

AS: Aji Sutisna, (table 3.4.) an activist of KPH (Forest Restoration Coalition) Java

No.275/G/2022/PTUN.JKT (Table 3), serves as a Friend of the Court submission supporting KHDPK in restoring Java's Forests. This document, titled "KPH Java" represents 88 forest farmer groups that hold Social Forestry permits. It aims to provide advice to the Panel of Judges at the Jakarta PTUN in support of rejecting the complaint filed by ASHJ. ASHJ asserts that KHDPK is in compliance with the laws and regulations that govern it (Widiarto 2022).

AR activists countered the KHDPK strategy by offering assistance through three types of action: (i) organizing protests, (ii) occupying forest regions, and (iii) obstructing attempts to take legal action against the decree. Forest farmer organizations in Blora, Central Java, and KPRA in Indramayu, West Java, conducted the demonstrations. These forest farmer organizations in two provinces of Java urged the regional heads to enforce the implementation of the GTRA during their demonstrations. The GTRA, or Regional Governance and Policy Framework, is a policy that has been adopted by regional authorities in recent years. Furthermore, the Java KPH initiated legal proceedings to counter the litigation and uphold the KHDPK order. The three activities by agrarian reform activists demonstrate that the public policies established by the regulator have garnered favorable support in society.

As a result of the decree issued by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry in Java, there has been a debate with both opposing views and support. The stakeholders involved in this social conflict in the forestry sector include the government/KLHK as the regulator, the Sekar (Workers' Union) of Perhutani as the operators, environmental activists, and the local community. This conflict exacerbates social unrest, instability, and undermines the idea of community welfare. Furthermore, to overcome these negative impacts, promoting a more egalitarian dialogue between parties in controversy is recommended and necessary, creating opportunities to build consensus on sustainable solutions.

5. Discussion

The current study discussed both the rejection (Tables 1 and 2) and support (Table 3) of these measures. These two interest groups were engaged in discussion with the industrial and business group (Mark 1997) and the environmental activist group (Arancibia et al. 2004) regarding their controversial actions related to public policy (Shakil 2021). The interest groups were associated with a state forestry firm authorized by Indonesian government to uphold the practice of managing forest areas under state control, a tradition in place since colonial times (Peluso 1991). These interest groups of environmental activists affiliated with NGOs, held a series of actions to strengthen the agrarian reform movements. The agrarian reform activists engaged with the other forestry forums and took collective action through rallies, the occupation of forest areas, and a counter-case filed with the PTUN to invalidate the KHDPK policy. However, these

movements were seen as a solution to forestry problems in relations to local residents (Wicaksono & Purbawa 2018; Arifin 2020; Syanurisma 2022). The actions by activists associated with the state forestry corporation and NGOs are a direct result of the dispute surrounding the implementation of Agrarian reform in Java and its associated consequences. Moreover, to enhance the findings, a few other themes are discussed below:

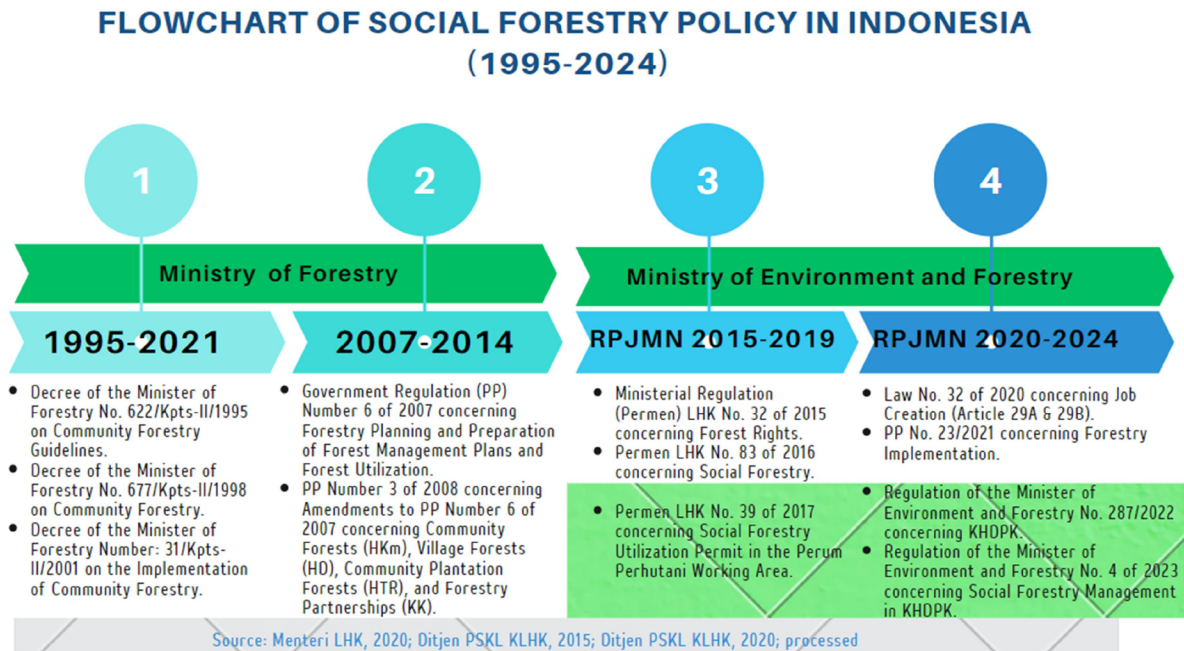
5.1. Policy Rejection

The purpose of rejecting the policy was to attain corporate success in Community Forest Management (CBFM), as practiced in several African countries such as Ethiopia and Kenya (Duguma et al. 2018). Our analysis indicates that the adoption of CBFM policies through LMDH has not yet been widely accepted in forest area management. Instead, it has been implemented as a short-term project rather than as a mainstream approach. The PHBM primarily focused on forest management rather than addressing the demands of community development.

The policy faced rejection through various forms of public dissent, such as protests, petitions, and online campaigns (Hussenot 2014), which intensified the debate surrounding the KHDPK policy (Table 1). The LMDH, a community-based group of environmental activists, was particularly vocal in its opposition, engaging in heated arguments against the initiative further increasing the debate on KHDPK policy (Table 1). The LMDH, engaged in intense arguments vehemently opposing the initiative. The LMDH was formally acknowledged by Perhutani through PHBM initiative in 2001 (Sa'diyah & Soetarto 2021). The establishment of LMDH was initiated by Perhutani as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts (Christmas et al., 2021). LMDH operates as a partner, adhering to the values of collaboration, empowerment, transparency, and goal achievement (Raharjo et al. 2020). Furthermore, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry supported the establishment of Forest Farmer Groups (KTH). However, conflicts between LMDH and KTH sometimes occur at the operational level (Matondang 2019). The objective is to achieve success in CBFM, similar to the success achieved in African countries such as Ethiopia and Kenya (Duguma et al. 2018).

Furthermore, the LMDH, as a community-based group that initiated opposition to the KHDPK policy (Figure 2a & 2b), arose due to a lack of effective communication between the community and the policy-makers (Nguyen & Catalan-Matamoros 2022). There was a certain degree of miscommunication that occurred due to a gap between the parties, namely LMDH and the central government (KLHK) (Merson 2017). The communication gap in the execution of programmed actions has remained unsuccessful (Hermanto & Nugroho 2021). The introduction of new policies added to the complexity of actions at the implementation level. On the regulatory side, internal coordination within the Ministry of Environment and

(a)



(b)

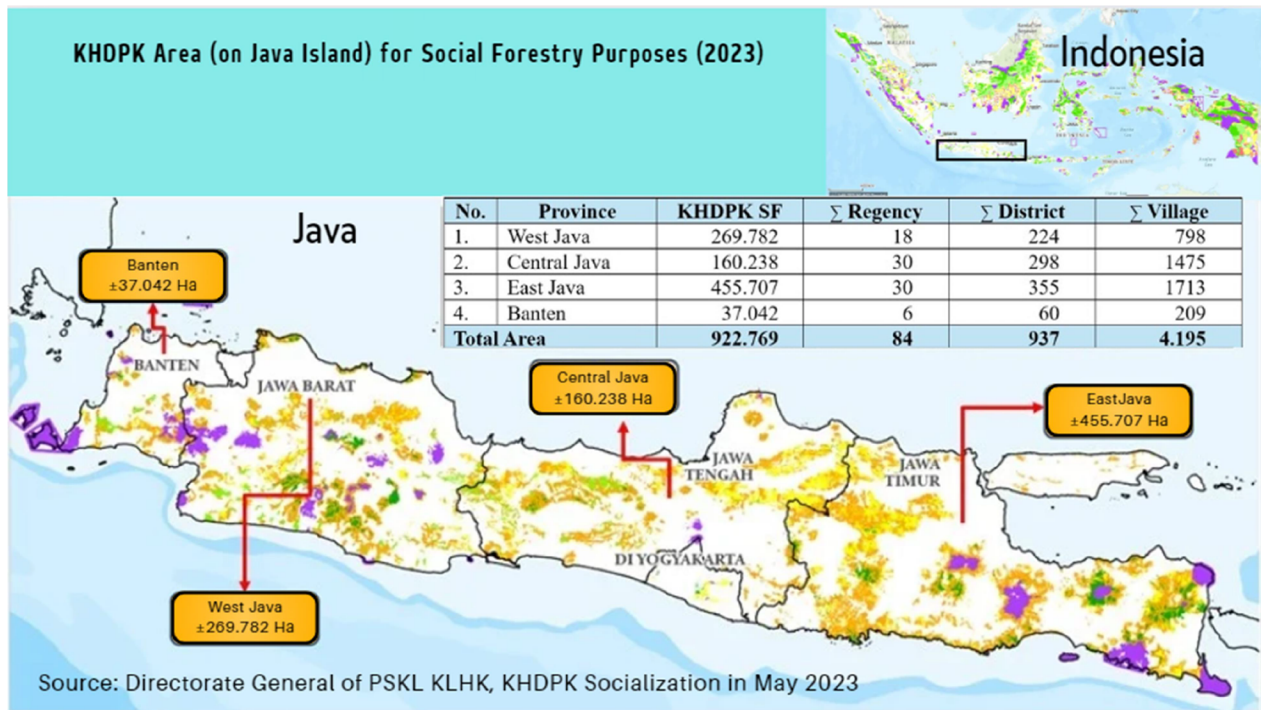


Figure 2(a). Flowchart of Social Forestry Policy in Indonesia 1995-2024. (b) Location and Area of KHDPK in Java with Social Forestry Purposes Year 2023.

Forestry remained a significant obstacle, as well as coordination across and between regional governments (Galudra 2019). The lack of effective institutional internalization within the Ministry is a crucial factor contributing to the spread of disinformation, which in turn leads to opposition to public policy.

5.2. Disharmony in Operators Relation with Regulators

The protests and demonstrations organized by Perhutani employees in response to the KHDPK decree (Table 2), became very popular. The Social Forestry

policy, which originated from the State Forestry Company (Perhutani) in 1972 (Raharjo et al. 2020; Sunarso 2022), was transferred to the government (KLHK) under President Joko Widodo's administration in 2014, specifically under the permit program (IPHPS) (Supriyanto et al. 2021). The government took over the management of almost half of Java's forest area from Perhutani operators through agrarian reform and social forestry schemes (Resosudarmo et al. 2019; Wicaksono & Kang 2019; Asmin et al. 2019). The objective of these actions was to acquire ownership of the land and authority over the national social forestry area, increasing its share from 1% (equivalent to 1.1 million

hectares) to over 10% (12.7 million hectares) in 2014 (Fisher et al. 2018) by shifting the paradigm from strict state control to community-based and customary (Pratama 2019; Ramadhan et al. 2023). The KLHK regulators did not adequately socialized this change to Perhutani operators. The relationship between regulators and operators lacked consistency, leading to a discordant communication and other issues.

The disharmonious relationship between regulators and operators given rise to miscommunication, which quickly spreads through the media (Nguyen & Catalan-Matamoros 2020). According to Al-Zaman (2024), this disharmony and ineffective communication, when published on digital media create a more critical situation and exacerbate misinformation on this issue. The implementation of social forestry is perceived as only partially fulfilling the initial political commitment to enhance the well-being of rural populations and promote engagement in forest rehabilitation (Maryudi et al. 2022). The lack of effective communication weakens the policy implementation and triggers resistance from operators. Furthermore, the rejection of the Decree No. 287/2022/KHDPK by operators, reflected by employees and parties who benefit from activities in forest areas (Ramadhan et al. 2022), is a sign of the continuation of a social reality where operators, who have managed forest areas in Java since the colonial era (Peluso 1993), still maintain state-based control over forest areas on Java Island. This similar mechanism of land tenure maintenance has also occurred in other countries, including in Kenya and Ethiopia (Ribot et al. 2006; Duguma et al. 2018). The conservation of forest regions is motivated not only by concerns over deforestation but also by the operators' anxieties about the loss of commercial value. Additionally, the experiences of some Native American tribes who, initially had less historical involvement in ranching and mining, have converged with those of other American Indians and environmentalists who have traditionally opposed such activities (Clark 2016).

5.3. The Reality of Agrarian Reform and Social Forestry Policies

Agrarian reform serves as the foundation for the social forestry policy, which is a significant concern (Martini et al. 2019), and is influenced by two primary factors: cultural and structural difficulties. These two factors in Java's implementation, which have thus far been subject to exceptions (Khanifa et al. 2021), are directly linked to the players in Perhutani (operators), community members residing near the forest, and their associated NGOs. The association between these two entities gives rise to concerns surrounding the rights to access land and ownership of resources (Table 3). During President Joko Widodo's era, the implementation of agrarian reform (AR) has focused on legalizing assets and redistributing land. However, it has not effectively addressed the issue of reducing inequality in land ownership, control, and land disputes. This policy seeks to foster economic well-being for individuals and society by acknowledging and protecting the rights of

individuals and groups to own property (Junarto & Djurdjani 2020).

Additionally, the reality of the agrarian reform was to maintain the social forestry policies through national strategic projects initiated in 2014 by the government of President Joko Widodo (DJPSKLa 2020; Ramadhan & Amalia 2021; Himawan 2022). As an elaboration of agrarian reform and *Nawacita* (Desmiwati 2016; Supriyanto, Sudarmo, and Setyowati 2021), these projects received support from NGO activists. Environmental activists were involved because, despite operators having sufficient resources and capabilities in sustainable production and protected forest management techniques, they are still witnessing degradation (Pratama 2019). However, it is not appropriate for regulators to ignore the existence of operators as part of the forestry industry, which plays an essential role in the national and global economic arena and has a significant influence on the lives and environment (Feng & Audy 2020).

5.4. Implications of Forest Area Management Controversy

The public controversy over the KHDPK policy reveals a conflict of interest between the two groups: those who reject and those who support the policy. These groups have different interests, such as the environmental protection of forest areas and economic interests particularly related to the use of natural resources. They had complex problems, and dilemmas often arise when implementing sustainable development policies (Zhang & Guo 2023). The complexity of forest area management issues that led to this controversy indicates that regulatory stakeholders should strengthen collaborative initiatives between the government (KLHK), Perhutani, and the community.

Transparency and accountability from the regulator are necessary to ensure that the data about agrarian reforms and social forestry policies are available for public and openly accessible. The availability of data and information that the public can access aligns with the goals of technological transformation rules and regulations by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (Feng & Audy 2020). This allows the public to easily access information to understand and monitor policy content and its implementation. Those who reject the KHDPK policy believe that the circulation of Decree No. 287/2022/KHDPK to the public via social media was not accompanied by a social forestry Area Indicative Map (PIAPS). The PIAPS is an inseparable part of this policy. The incompleteness of the policy document indicates a lack of transparency in management. This lack of transparency leads to misinformation (Kumar 2024), which can become a catalyst for opponents to launch protests and lawsuits through formal legal channels in Indonesia.

The second issue concerns the management of internal integration within Perum Perhutani (BUMN), which has been mandated to manage production and protected forest areas on the Java Island, including Madura, since 1972 (Adib 2016; Pratama 2019;

Supriyanto et al. 2021; Perum Perhutani 2022; Nugroho et al. 2022). As the implementer of the KHDPK policy, Perhutani must release 1.1 million hectares (46%) of its working area (Men LHK 2022; Himawan 2022). The release of almost fifty percent (50%) of the working area became an significant issue when tens of thousands of Perhutani employees demonstrated against the KHDPK policy, resulting in legal demands at the PTUN in Jakarta. This rejection continues the opposition seen when the policy regarding Social Forestry and IPHPS Regulation P. 39/2017 was issued (Ramadhan & Amalia 2021; Veriasa et al. 2023; Kusuma et al. 2023).

Therefore, Perhutani's directors seemed to "close their eyes" and "dismiss" the actions carried out by their employees. In this context, Perhutani's directors failed to manage the internal integration of their employees due to two key issues: a lack of effective communication and insufficient consultation with employees regarding the new KHDPK policy. The inability to manage changes in the internal environment not only fails to adequately explain the impact of KHDPK policies but also highlights the ineffectiveness of the conflict management system. The ineffectiveness in managing internal change (Harden et al. 2021), is one of the factors that contributed to the massive demonstrations by thousands of Perhutani employees. An in-depth evaluation of internal relations by Perhutani's directors is potential solution for improving communication, involvement, and proactive conflict management to prevent similar conflicts from occurring in the future.

Lastly, the communities around the forests were organized into LMDH and KTH. The LMDH and KTH reflect society and are key stakeholders in Social Forestry policy (Moeliono et al. 2017; Zakaria et al. 2018). As stakeholders in Social Forestry policy, they act as a society responsible for the environment and collaborate on addressing Social Forestry problems and goals (Moeliono et al. 2017). However, in practice, there have been failures. LMDH and KTH have never been involved in decision-making regarding forest management policies in their area (Sunarso 2022) or in the use of forest products (Pratama 2019). These conditions prompted LMDH to join the demonstration against KHDPK policies. To address this, it is recommended to consider some creative, inclusive and sustainable programs that involve all stakeholders in the policy making process. An inclusive program ensures that all parties influencing the forest area management program are involved in the planning, decision-making and implementation processes.

The involvement of these parties ensures that the voices of minority groups or those vulnerable to marginalization are conveyed. Sustainability programs are designed to provide long-term benefits for the environment, society and economy, which requires long-term efforts in planning, resource management, and monitoring program impacts. In short, creating inclusive and sustainable programs not only opens the opportunities to be more effective and fair but also

provides long lasting benefits for all parties involved. This can reduce social inequality, increase community participation, and support sustainable development in future.

5.5 Limitations

The research had limitations, as it did not prioritize conducting interviews and observations with stakeholders, despite the intention to comprehensively examine impacts. The researchers utilized a case study method to provide a comprehensive analysis of policy consequences and undertake textual analysis. Therefore, conducting interviews with stakeholders (a limitation of this research), directly observing the execution of the policy, and evaluating qualitative data, could have provided a more comprehensive and profound understanding of the policy's influence. Sentiment analysis was employed to address the limitations posed by the lack of interviews and observations while engaging with stakeholders. This method was used to elucidate the public's reaction to KHDPK policies, utilizing content from 20 online newspaper publications. By analyzing online expressions, we categorize them into favorable (supporting), negative (rejecting), and neutral feelings. Additionally, we determined which aspects stakeholders are reacting to in policy Decree No.287/2022/KHDPK.

In addition to possessing both theoretical and practical value, the present study also has a few drawbacks. For example, the data sources were acquired from news reports via online newspapers and mass media. While online publications are widely used and easily accessible, they may not always be vetted, and their legitimacy is often limited. These data sources often have a low level of reputation, meaning their accuracy and reliability are not always confirmed. Additionally, these sources can contain factual inaccuracies and misinterpretations influenced by certain objectives. The study also recommends that future researchers gather data from the field through observation and interviews with individuals involved in policy development to obtain more thorough data.

Furthermore, three research areas warrant further exploration as a continuation of this study: an examination of the perspectives and preferences of all stakeholders, including regulators and operators, regarding the established KHDPK policies. This research has the potential to contribute to the development of more comprehensive and inclusive policies. Additionally, implementing conflict management tactics between regulators and operators can facilitate the establishment of a framework that promotes more efficient and cooperative communication. This research can also help mitigate disputes stemming from divergent viewpoints. Furthermore, establishing a proficient communication framework between regulators and operators can enhance the exchange of ideas and cooperation between the two entities. Ultimately, an effective communication model can minimize misconceptions and enhance trust between regulators and operators.

6. The Way Forward

The practical consequences of this research pertain to the two key groups (Regulators and Operators) involved in these governmental organizations, both of whom must adopt a more comprehensive and proactive approach to fostering conversation. Regulators should engage in more proactive communication efforts to build better dialogue. They can mitigate public dispute by implementing effective communication strategies to reduce misperceptions. Operators should take a more active role in developing and implementing regulations. Their involvement not only directly impacts the decision-making process but also helps to prevent future conflicts and controversies. Moreover, transparency in decision-making enables regulators to clarify and explain the established policies.

Therefore, operators must complete at least three steps: enhancing their comprehension of the relevant regulations to serve as a foundation for executing all operational actions in accordance with the applicable legal provisions. Furthermore, active participation in communications and discussions increases opportunities to contribute and ensures that the interests of operators are considered during the decision-making process. Additionally, transparent techniques in forest management, natural resource utilization, and environmental impact assessment can facilitate informed decision-making and foster productive debate.

7. Conclusion

This study examines the dispute surrounding the national policy on social forestry, as outlined in the Decree No.287/2022/KHDPK. It highlights the underlying conflict between the regulator (KLHK) and the operator (Perhutani) in forest management on Java Island, Indonesia. The disharmony between the two state bodies has become a significant issue since the regulator took over the social forestry policy management through a national strategic project in 2014. The regulator shifted the paradigm of forest area management from state-based to community-based through the agrarian reform scheme. However, the regulators did not communicate this paradigm shift effectively, leaving operators to grasp it only partially. The regulator has been unable to persuade operators and needs further authority to address their resistance to the policy. The operators continue to uphold the status quo by using a state-based approach to manage forest lands in Java, a practice rooted in colonial traditions. The discord in relations is not only due to the communication patterns established by the elites of the two-state bodies but also stems from mutual misperceptions.

Moreover, the disharmony and misperceptions at the elite level of the central bureaucracy have led to clashes between members of the forestry community and environmental advocates at the local level. The public controversy reflects ongoing disharmony and misperceptions by state elites. The findings of this research demonstrate that the primary source of controversy is the disharmonious relationship between

regulators and operators in managing forest areas on Java Island.

8. Actionable Strategies

The findings of this study also propose a few actionable strategies. There are eight strategies that stakeholders should follow in the context of PS policy:

1. Establish a structured dialogue forum for consultation between regulators and operators to facilitate the exchange of information and understanding;
2. Organize training and workshops to increase awareness and understanding of the complexity of PS policies among stakeholders;
3. Introduce a cross-sectional working group involving various related parties to collaborate in formulating more inclusive policies;
4. Strengthen communication between regulators and operators to facilitate faster and more accurate access to information;
5. Develop practical guidelines to facilitate PS policy implementation and minimize misunderstandings;
6. Encourage the active participation of local communities in planning and decision-making processes related to PS;
7. Establish a regular discussion forum between regulators and operators to address current issues and find joint solutions;
8. Create clear and measurable performance indicators to monitor the implementation of social forest policies and evaluate their impacts.

These eight strategies are concrete steps that stakeholders can follow to increase the efficiency of PS management.

Notes

1. This is a Latin word, which means 'friends of court'.
2. Mission and goals of political slogans by President Jokowi.

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



Author contributions

All authors contributed equally to the resources, conceptualization, methodology, analysis, validation, writing, review, and editing of the manuscript.

Declaration of Competing Interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

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