

Challenges in the collaborative management of national parks in the Heart of Borneo:

A case study of Kayan Mentarang National Park

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Introduction

Tropical rain forests must be conserved to mitigate the effects of climate change and biodiversity loss. The Heart of Borneo (HoB) conservation initiative was developed by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) to protect forested areas in the central region of Borneo Island. To support this initiative, an international agreement was signed by the governments of Brunei, Indonesia, and Malaysia in 2007. The Indonesian government designated some parts of the HoB region as national parks to conserve this region. However, the Dayak people reside in the HoB region and rely on forest resources and swidden agriculture. Thus, the forest in the HoB region may not only be a “global/national commons” but also a “local commons.” Therefore, governments must collaborate with local people to manage national parks. This presentation clarifies (1) the collaborative management system of Kayan Mentarang National Park (KMNP), which is in the HoB region, and (2) collaborative management challenges that have emerged.

Research method

The Kayan Mentarang area was designated as a Nature Reserve in 1980 by the Indonesian government. In 1996, it was recharacterized as a National Park based on the aspirations of local communities and support from the WWF. The total area of KMNP is 1,271,697 ha as of 2015, and it is located across 8 districts (5 districts in Malinau regency and 3 districts in Nunukan regency). Each Dayak village has one village leader who manages governmental affairs at the village-level based on national law. Furthermore, there are 11 tribal territories in and around KMNP that nearly correspond with the districts. Some Dayak tribes are established in the area, and each tribe has a tribal territory. Each village has one customary chief who manages daily issues such as resource utilization conflicts at the village-level, based on customary law.

Preliminary field research was conducted in 2 villages in A tribal territory, 2 villages in B tribal territory, and in Malinau city in September 2017 and March 2018.

Interviews were conducted with customary chiefs, village leaders, and villagers in 4 villages in A and B tribal territories as well as WWF staff members and local KMNP officers in Malinau city.

Results and discussion

In 2002, multi-stakeholder supervisory board was established to facilitate the collaborative management of KMNP. The board includes representatives from district, provincial, and central government offices; the chairperson of the Indigenous peoples alliance (FoMMA), which consists of at least two representatives from each tribal territory in and around KMNP; NGOs; and universities. KMNP management policies are discussed with this multi-stakeholder supervisory board and the Directorate General of Natural Resources and Ecosystem Conservation, which is designated by the Directorate General of Natural Resources and Ecosystem Conservation. These policies are implemented by local KMNP offices in collaboration with FoMMA and carried out in the field by KMNP rangers, FoMMA members, and local peoples with support from NGOs.

Collaborative management challenges are exemplified by the KMNP zoning decisions. FoMMA first proposed 3 zones for the KMNP. However, the Ministry of Forestry Decree No.56/Menhut-II/2006 stipulates that a national park requires at least 4 zones. The multi-stakeholder supervisory board continued to discuss this issue and conduct ground surveys. Finally, 5 zones were designated—the Core Zone, Forest Zone, Use Zone, Traditional Zone, and Special Zone; this was agreed upon by all stakeholders at the board meeting, indicating that collaborative decision-making processes facilitated problem resolution.

However, an A tribal territory representative still disagreed with the 5 designated zones although the FoMMA chairperson agreed with the decision at the board meeting. This problem arose due to insufficient communication among FoMMA members. Moreover, a village leader and some villagers did not know where the KMNP border had been established as a result of poor communication regarding decisions and discussions in board meetings between the representatives of tribal territories and local peoples, between local KMNP offices and rangers, and between rangers and local peoples.

It has been inferred that KMNP's remoteness leads to problems in communication among stakeholders. While board meetings are supposed to be held at least twice per year, a tremendous amount of money, time, and labor are required for all stakeholders to gather in one place. Most stakeholders rely on air travel to attend meetings. Due to significant expenses and an insufficient budget, the board meeting of

2016 could not be held. Furthermore, it is difficult to share information in each tribal territory because of their remoteness. In A tribal territory, it takes 4 hours to travel in a small boat from the capital village to the farthest village. Those who travel by boat must also pass several dangerous streams. KMNP has poor cell-phone reception, which further problematizes communication. Although an ideal collaborative management system has been established, the remoteness of the region reduces the system's efficacy and efficiency.

KMNP management based on the 5 zones does not currently have negative effects on local people's livelihoods because they still have access to forest for swidden agriculture outside of KMNP, and they are allowed to gather non-timber forest products inside KMNP aside from the Core Zone. However, there are potential conflicts between government officials and local people. There is a gap in the understanding of Traditional Zone regulations between a FoMMA member and a local KMNP officer. The FoMMA member believed that local people were allowed to make swidden fields in the Traditional Zone while the local officer did not. The regulation of the Traditional Zone lacks clear instruction regarding swidden agriculture. A representative of A tribal territory wanted to move KMNP borders far from existing villages because KMNP regulation might constrain local peoples' livelihood. In summary, government representatives aim to reduce local people's impact on KMNP while local people do not want their livelihoods to be constrained due to regulations. The contradictory structures of "global/national commons" vs. "local commons" have not yet been rectified although a collaborative management system has been established.