

IMPLEMENTATION OF AGRARIAN REFORM IN
NORTH SUMATRA, INDONESIA:
THE PRODUCTIVENESS OF INSTITUTIONAL
FRAGMENTATION

by

Zhe Yu Lee

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science
(Geography)

at the

University of Wisconsin-Madison

2018

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	ii
Abstract	iii
List of Abbreviations	iv
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Historical context of land tenure and land use politics in Indonesia	13
Chapter 3: Situation of RAPS implementation in North Sumatra	77
Chapter 4: RAPS implementation as an open-ended struggle without guarantees	142
Works Cited	196

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to appreciate the efforts of Hutan Rakyat Institute (HaRI) in Medan, especially Wina Khairina and Saurin Siagian for helping to facilitate my fieldwork. Terima kasih banyak! Secondly, I would like to thank my co-advisors Professor Ian Baird and Professor Morgan Robertson, both of whom provided significant guidance throughout the past two and half years. Thirdly, I would like to thank my committee members, Professor Anna Gade and Professor Samer Alatout for giving valuable feedback and advice. Conversations with Professor Eunsook Jung, Professor Matt Turner and Professor Lisa Naughton also helped to inform the direction of the project. This project would not have come to fruition without the support of fellow geography graduate students, especially cohort mates, Luke Leavitt, Stepha Velednitsky as well as Will Shattuck and Nathan Green. Lastly, I would like to acknowledge the Trewartha Grant from the Department of Geography at the University of Wisconsin-Madison for the provision of financial support for fieldwork expenses.

Abstract

Over the past few years, the Government of Indonesia has set out to implement an ambitious goal of formally changing land tenure arrangements on over 20 million hectares of land across the country. With the official intention to democratize access to and control of land to a wider proportion of the country's rural population, this policy framework for agrarian reform constitutes a key component of President Jokowi's National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN). In this thesis, I analyze the politics surrounding the policy framework's implementation at the provincial level in North Sumatra. Given variegated meanings of agrarian reform held by different civil society actors as well as the abstract national-level policy framework allowing for multiple types of tenure to be claimed, I argue that non-straightforwardness of the claims-making process should be expected. Therefore, "ineffective" policy implementation cannot be merely explained by characterizing state institutions as dysfunctional and deficient given that the "accuracy" of land tenure claims cannot be ascertained neutrally, in addition to the non self-evident nature of how local communities are constituted. Based on fieldwork with provincial-level peasant organizations, indigenous peoples movements, conservation NGOs and bureaucratic actors, I make sense of how the fragmentation of the Indonesian state as it relates to issues of land tenure and land use provides opportunities for different civil society actors to assert and gain recognition for specific visions of (re)territorializing land and (re)subjectivizing rural populations in an effort to challenge longstanding political-economic structures that continue to privilege plantation, mining and logging interests.

List of Abbreviations

- AMAN: *Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara*
BAL: Basic Agrarian Law
BAPPENAS: National Development Planning Agency
BFL: Basic Forestry Law
BPRPI: Organization for the Struggle of the Guardians of the Land in Indonesia
BPSKL: *Balai Perhutanan Sosial dan Kemitraan Lingkungan*
BTI: *Barisan Tani Indonesia*
FMU: Forest Management Unit
FSPI: *Federasi Serikat Petani Indonesia*
IP4T: *Tim Inventarisasi Penguasaan, Pemilikan, Penggunaan dan Pemanfaatan Tanah*
KPA: *Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria*
MoF: Ministry of Forestry
MoEF: Ministry of Environment and Forestry
NLA: National Land Agency
OMI: One Map Initiative
PKI: Indonesian Communist Party
PS: *Perhutanan Sosial*
RAPS: *Reforma Agraria dan Perhutanan Sosial*
RPJMN: National Medium-Term Development Plan
SARBUPRI: *Serikat Buruh Perkebunan Republik Indonesia*
TAP: Parliamentary Directive on Agrarian Reform and Management of Natural Resources
TGHK: *Tata Guna Hutan Kesepakatan*
TORA: *Tanah Obyek Reforma Agraria*
WALHI: *Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia*
YLBHI: *Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia*

Chapter 1: Introduction

Issues of people-centered and equitable development in Indonesia's vast and diverse agrarian and forested landscapes have vexed the country especially since its independence in 1947. Broad-based distribution of benefits has remained elusive for over the last half century surrounding interlinked issues of land allocation and distribution, natural resources management, rural development and forest and biodiversity conservation (Lucas and Warren, 2013; McCarthy and Robinson, 2016). Hence, while these issues are definitely not new to Indonesia, the current national policy framework, *reforma agraria dan perhutanan sosial* (RAPS) as constituting a central part of President Jokowi's 2014-2019 National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) or *Nawacita*, contains an intention to alter the land tenure arrangements on over 20 million hectares of land and is no doubt a significant undertaking. This policy development did not incidentally emerge, but is a result of many years of concerted mobilization by various civil society actors after the downfall of President Suharto in 1998.

While broad support for the current national-level RAPS framework did not happen by chance, there is no guarantee that its contingent articulation as political agreement will continue to hold together as its implementation intensifies. These complications arise in part due to the fact that such issues are inextricably tied to concerns such as those related to natural resource management, tropical deforestation, indigenous peoples' rights, food security/sovereignty and environmental justice that do not necessarily cohere in clear ways. On the one hand, there is widespread agreement that inequitable economic development (especially in rural areas) and environmentally unsustainable impacts of rampant forest exploitation and plantation development that

have transpired over the past few decades, need to be resolved in a coordinated manner in part through changing policies relating to land tenure (i.e. clarity over who owns or has access to specific plots of land). Given widespread negative global attention that Indonesia has received for high rates of deforestation and biodiversity loss especially in the past decade, coupled with domestic pressure to ensure that the use of the country's unique landscapes and ecosystems be made more equitable, the ongoing implementation of the RAPS framework *may* result in systemic shifts to land tenure arrangements and land use practices in the country. On the other hand, different civil society actors have different priorities regarding what RAPS should achieve given opposing epistemological and cultural worldviews. Therefore, advocacy efforts that attempt to minimize contestation and fail to acknowledge diversity and incommensurability in viewpoints may either lead to outcomes that will satisfy no one or potentially lead to the intensification of monoculture production, including by small farmers themselves.

In part due to how complex issues of development have been depoliticized over the past few decades and because of the country's specific political history, it is unsurprising that the contemporary dominance of "nonideological" framings of land tenure issues have persisted at the national and provincial levels. Currently, attempts at using the bureaucratic-legal arena are perceived by various civil society actors as the only effective means to strive for substantive shifts in formal land tenure arrangements. Their seeming strength and legitimacy in political and policy discourses today can be attributed to how these approaches are perceived as necessary counterweights to "anti-democratic," "illiberal" tendencies that characterized certain strands of Indonesian politics continue to persist until this day. The lack of ideological differences between different political

parties also compels civil society actors to focus their advocacy efforts by engaging state institutions in the bureaucratic-legal arena rather than in national or sub-national legislative processes.

In this thesis, I will discuss how the RAPS framework is understood at the provincial level in North Sumatra by civil society actors as they facilitate the processing of land tenure claims at the local level. Specific characteristics unique to the province include a rural economy with extended history of plantation production (e.g. timber, rubber, tobacco and oil palm). At the same time, dissent and protest against dominant economic and political actors are common given longstanding instances of land conflict between state-owned enterprises/private companies and local communities that have been documented since the Dutch colonial era. In addition, the province currently plays a prominent role in national debates regarding economic development and rural livelihoods in consequential ways. North Sumatra is the 4th most populous province in the country (most populous outside of the island of Java) with over 13 million people as of 2014. In addition, it is ethnically diverse, including Batak (can be further subdivided into Toba, Simalungun, Karo, Pakpak, Angkola and Mandailing, with some who self-identify as adat (or indigenous) making up approximately 45% of the population, Javanese (who mainly are transmigrants) making up approximately 30% of the population, Melayu (who mainly have inhabited the eastern part of the province where plantation landscapes have been dominant) making up approximately 6% of the population and Chinese (2nd or 3rd generation immigrants from mainland China) also making up approximately 6% of the population). In addition to considering such ethnic diversity, policies relevant to land tenure also have to take into account the heterogenous ecological conditions and

characteristics of the province's different landscapes. North Sumatra contains areas ranging from "pristine" primary forests of the Leuser Ecosystem, a conservation corridor for charismatic fauna such as tigers and orangutans, plantations in the eastern lowlands, as well as expanses of what some perceive as "degraded" forests, some of which contain agroforests characterized by the prevalence of small-scale agriculture. It is this specific context and circumstances that informs the implementation of RAPS in the province, which involves a diverse array of state and non-state actors who have wide-ranging views and interests.

The provincial scale is an appropriate level of analysis given that ongoing policy debates and shifts that take place at this spatial scale are not only influenced relatively directly by rural populations and civil society actors, but also at the same time are structured and constrained by national level frameworks and discourses. Importantly, as alluded to already, I do not characterize "civil society" as a homogenous entity. Rather, I recognize that there are (significant) differences in perspectives and advocacy strategies even as synergies and alliances do also exist. Their involvement in political life at the national and local levels have been robust and continuously on the rise especially in the last 20 years since the downfall of President Suharto, who ruled the country from 1966 until 1998 while repressing interests and viewpoints opposed to his vision of capitalist modernization. In this regard, my thesis attempts a fine-grained analysis to critically assess the productive effects of actually existing interactions in the bureaucratic-legal arena at the provincial-level between various state and civil society actors, to concretely achieve the goals of RAPS as defined in the abstract at the national level. By specifically assessing the situation in the province of North Sumatra, I explain how attempts to deploy

existing procedures to implement the RAPS framework do not have totalizing effects, but rather engender heterogeneous, multiple outcomes because of differentiated instantiation and interpretation of its provisions at the sub-national scale.

I conducted fieldwork in the city of Medan, the provincial capital of North Sumatra, and engaged with different civil society actors regarding their opinions of the current provincial-level policy and legal framework, as well as gained insights into the mediating role they play in making national level policies meaningful at the local level. Unsurprisingly, attempts at implementing land tenure policies have and will continue to result in multiple outcomes that are unintended by the national-level RAPS framework given variegated historical trajectories of land use over the past 100-150 years. By taking into account these circumstances and in addition to the fact that various civil society actors at the national level have strong connections to advocacy efforts surrounding issues of land tenure and land use in North Sumatra, the province is an ideal place to make sense of the complexities of governing forest and agrarian landscapes and the people living on them in Indonesia more broadly.

Overall Argument and Research Questions

In this thesis, I attempt to answer the following overarching research question:

Why does the implementation of the national-level RAPS framework at the provincial and local level take place in a non-linear, non-deterministic way?

I identify three sub-questions that are related to the research question stated above

- a. What role do provincial level civil society actors have in realizing the goals contained in the abstract national level RAPS framework at the local

level in North Sumatra?

- b. How are obstacles that hinder the “efficient” processing and recognition of land tenure claims framed differently by different provincial-level civil society actors in North Sumatra?
- c. How does persistent institutional fragmentation and heterogenous/diverse visions of territorialization positively or negatively affect the prospects for the “successful” implementation of the RAPS framework?

Based on Alatout (2006), I define territorialization to mean a specific constructed regime of control over or a specific constructed form of relating to a demarcated area of land that not only have differentiated and uneven effects, but also have to be actively and constantly maintained and legitimized over time. Its notion of bio-territorialization is also relevant to this thesis as I will highlight how different justifications to control and relate to land also simultaneously produces consent or acquiescence to specific economic and environmental behaviors.

Overall, I argue that given the persistence of different perspectives articulated by different state and non-state actors regarding how land should be territorialized, the implementation of the RAPS framework does not take place on the basis of adhering to already-existing bureaucratic procedures. This is important to note because I contend that the central government at the highest political levels, believes that it can be responsive to the interests of the country’s rural populations as it attempts to implement the RAPS framework in a manner that minimizes contention, and does not jeopardize the interests of plantation, logging and mining industries who have enjoyed disproportionate formal access and control over the country’s land for many years. However, the ability of

dominant political-economic interests to influence how state institutions behave and function is never complete or permanent. Therefore, non-linear implementation of the RAPS framework and institutional fragmentation in relation to issues of land tenure and land use provide opportunities in the bureaucratic-legal arena for different civil society actors to legitimize different visions of how land should be allocated, used and/or conserved. Such contestations may *possibly* result in “different” or “better” land tenure arrangements.

As will be elaborated on in Chapter 4, I primarily use four analytical lenses in this thesis. Firstly, governmentality studies helps me make sense of how specific visions of territorialization inescapably structure common sense regarding what economic and environmental behaviors are deemed broadly acceptable. Secondly, science and technology studies allows me to account for how the production of “true” knowledge about land is not only constructed and contested, but also simultaneously generates specific configurations of governance arrangements. Relatedly, socio-legal studies draws attention to the importance of subscribing to a relational understanding of property to make sense of how shifts to existing land tenure arrangements are always possible. Lastly, anthropology of bureaucracy illuminates how actually existing situated, everyday practices of state institutions, configure social order in specific, normative ways even as they maintain their legitimacy by characterizing their work as apolitical and disinterested. Together, these theories allow me make sense of the contingency and the contestability of land tenure arrangements as local communities, mediated by civil society actors, engage specific state institutions and deploy diverse justifications to articulate and gain recognition for tenure claims. I will show how such processes of contestation can be

productive in enacting “new” understandings and manifestations of local communities, rural subjectivities and state-society relationships even if attempts to formally change land tenure arrangements “fail.”

Research Methodologies

Observation of civil society and state institution forums

Many key members of various provincial-level civil society actors working on issues of land tenure and land use are based in Medan and hence, the city has been a key site of policy debates over the past half century regarding rural development and conservation paradigms. I attended a number of forums where these actors were discussing their involvement in the RAPS implementation process. Doing so allowed me to gain insights into how differences in views over how RAPS should be implemented are currently understood, expressed, grappled with and potentially resolved. Some of the discussion themes I looked out for include the extent of emphasis placed on the need for and meaning of reform of the Indonesian state, the demand for better and/or more “information” from the state, as well as how they envisaged the implementation of the RAPS framework as part of a broader strategy to realize goals to transform existing land use and conservation practices as well as rural development paradigms.

In addition, I also had the opportunity to observe two meetings where civil society actors had the opportunity to interact with officials from various state institutions. As will be discussed in the Chapter 3, the first forum took place in preparation of a joint effort between conservation NGOs and a state institution to accelerate the processing of land tenure claims in a number of pre-identified local communities. The second forum took

place after the collection of relevant information from these local communities had happened. My observation of these forums allowed me to make sense of how “non-ideological” framings of RAPS implementation renders invisible several tensions and complexities that complicate the preparation of land tenure on the basis of existing procedures. I paid close attention to how new relationships between state institutions and local communities were being imagined and envisaged as formal land tenure arrangements are changed and what it may portend for how land use practices as well as meanings of Indonesian citizenship may or may not shift.

Semi-structured interviews with leaders of Medan-based civil society actors and state institutions

With the assistance of a local research NGO, which included the provision of an interpreter/translator, I identified key informants and conducted semi-structured interviews to obtain a more detailed picture of why policy implementation is so fraught in part by ascertaining how provincial-level civil society actors drive policy debates in specific ways. I spoke to representatives of conservation NGOs, peasant organizations, community development NGOs, participatory mapping NGOs and indigenous peoples’ movements that are involved in RAPS implementation to different extents at the provincial level in North Sumatra, some of whom collaborate with one another to achieve shared goals. Key discussion topics included how the meaning of “politics” is understood and perceived as either a hindrance towards effective policy implementation or as a necessary element in achieving broad-based economic benefits intended in theory by the RAPS framework, as well as how they supported or opposed the worldviews and perspectives of other civil society actors. In addition, I was also able to speak to leaders

of provincial-level state institutions who were active in facilitating the implementation of one component of the RAPS framework. A major theme discussed was how they perceived RAPS to be different than previous attempts to change land tenure arrangements. In total, I spoke to approximately twenty leaders of state institutions and representatives of civil society actors.

These interactions with these actors allowed me to indirectly gain insights into this contested process in terms of making sense of different idiosyncrasies and particularities as well as different elements that must come together for a successful land tenure claim to be made. I specifically looked out for the views expressed regarding the ease or difficulty with which information about land is curated to fit the dictates of the existing bureaucratic procedures of the claims-making process. I desired to make sense of how different civil society actors define and grapple with the political space available and the scope of acceptable advocacy discourses have implications on how the “effectiveness” of policy implementation is understood in differentiated ways.

With consent obtained, I recorded the semi-structured interviews that I conducted and relevant portions of the forums I observed. Two native speakers of Bahasa Indonesia assisted me in transcribing the recordings. However, it is important to note that given that I am still in the process of becoming fluent in Bahasa Indonesia, my limited language skills hindered this field work in a number of ways. Firstly, I was not able to take detailed ethnographic field notes in real time, which constrained my ability to capture the nuances of the perspectives and arguments that were articulated by my interlocutors. Secondly, given that I was reliant on an interpreter/translator to help facilitate the conversations, I was not able to steer the interviews in ways that would have allowed me to draw out

complex sentiment and perspectives to the further extent possible regarding the implementation of the RAPS framework. In addition, I did not feel confident and comfortable in directly quoting from the transcripts given that I am unable to make sense of the full context and meanings of the expressed remarks. Rather, as will be clear in Chapter 3, most of the evidence for the claims and arguments I make, are based on general themes that were repeatedly mentioned over the course of the interviews or were raised by different individuals.

Positionality

This research is not aimed at criticizing the strategies employed by civil society actors, but rather is directed at comprehending the logics behind how they perceive and engage with state institutions in specific ways to implement the RAPS framework in ways that are tied directly to the realization of specific conservation and/or rural development goals. Given this approach to my research, I was able to gain trust of my interlocutors through repeated interactions over 8 weeks of fieldwork to figure out how they wrestle with complex and sometimes tortuous policy dilemmas. In this vein, I presented myself as someone who wants to think through these multifaceted issues with them rather than as being someone who will be using certain preconceived normative criteria to impose an outsider assessment of what constitutes “good” or “bad” policy.

Nevertheless, I do not foresee myself as a detached researcher coming up with definitive conclusions to why policy dilemmas continue to persist, especially given that some of the interlocutors who I engaged with have themselves had relevant formal academic training in political ecology, environmental anthropology and critical agrarian

and development studies. Rather, my own understandings and interpretation of the contested nature of policy enactment and implementation will themselves be situated, partial and contingent. This is especially salient given that a central focus of my research is concerned with exploring how policy and legal abstractions manifest themselves in heterogeneous ways when they “collide” with the complexities of actual policy implementation at the provincial and local level. This research will potentially allow my own insights into how ambiguities inherent in the understandings of policies are continually negotiated and grappled with to themselves (indirectly) contribute *something* back into ongoing debates regarding RAPS policy implementation.

Chapter 2: Historical context of land tenure and land use politics in Indonesia

In this chapter, I am interested in making sense of the historical emergence of complex dynamics that structure the possibilities of incremental or transformational change regarding issues of land use and land tenure. In this regard, contemporary policy deliberation cannot be disentangled from the country's complicated political history of the deliberate and violent dismantlement of leftist political forces and organizations and the subsequent depoliticization of development discourses and policies from the mid-1960s onwards. The onset of top-down capitalist modernization led by President Suharto began approximately twenty years after the country's independence and quashed attempted imaginaries of nation-building and economic development that were untethered to some extent from ideas and dictates of "Western capitalism" and which in part, motivated anticolonial mobilizations. The legacy of specific political events and transformations during the mid- to late- 20th century continue to haunt not only governing institutions and political/policy processes, but also everyday life. Hence, even as a cultural and political taboo of explicitly invoking the country's leftist and Communist past as means to mobilize for social change remains robust, the existence of unspoken specters of leftist radicalism and progressive vocabularies inflect state-society interactions in the bureaucratic-legal arena working to formally alter the country's land tenure arrangements.

In the rest of the chapter, I argue that dominant land tenure arrangements as well as top-down land use and conservation policies (and inflected with either authoritarian or technocratic impulses) do not have totalizing effects in terms of structuring the lives of

rural populations at the local level. Rather, they are always open to being constantly challenged as evidenced by how discontent over rural industrialization policies of President Suharto partially contributed to his downfall in May 1998. Therefore, even as meaningful shifts to land tenure arrangements currently remain elusive, I argue that ongoing impasses with regards to organizing Indonesia's state institutions in an "optimal" manner (i.e. continued attempts to find a "right" combination of centralized and decentralized configuration of political authority) suggests that contestation over RAPS implementation will likely continue and may result in unexpected and meaningfully different outcomes. Relatedly, the Indonesian state should be characterized as always being unable to articulate and actualize a clear, singular framework of how land should be allocated, used and/or conserved throughout its postcolonial history up until today. Recognizing this will allow me to render consequential the concerted advocacy efforts of various civil society actors to steer RAPS implementation in specific directions as they engage different state institutions at different spatial scales.

I will demonstrate how contestation over land and natural resources has been a central feature of Indonesia's history since the Dutch colonial era and point to key features of policies relating to land tenure and how they have changed or not changed over time, especially since the country's independence. I will pay attention to making sense of how specific framings of such issues came to dominate at specific moments in Indonesia's post-independence history, thus illuminating how the nature of consensus-building and contestation between different state and non-state actors has changed over the last half century or so. I will detail how specific political conjunctures since the mid-20th century until today led to the weakening of "ideological" framings and the

concomitant shift to the bureaucratic-legal arena as the site for “politics” over issues of land tenure and land use to play out. One striking feature is that all state and non-state actors embrace goals of explicitly producing specific subjectivities and instilling norms and values (*nilai dan norma*) amongst rural populations (e.g. language of *revolusi mental* or mental revolution) through this policy. Though there are certainly disagreements regarding what RAPS should achieve, this explicit normative element of actively guiding and shaping the subjectivities of rural populations is something that deserves analytical attention. Nonetheless, such open-ended conceptualizations of social change may also reinforce fundamental disagreements over how land should be allocated, used and/or conserved and which could possibly also sustain existing unequal land tenure arrangements.

Post-independence land and development politics from independence until 1965

The nature of contestation in relation to land tenure arrangements is markedly different at different periods of Indonesia’s history, ever since the Dutch colonial era that began in the 19th century. One fundamental principle that continues to strongly influence the country’s legal regime regarding land tenure until today is the notion that all lands not titled individually or left “unused” are to be owned or controlled by the state. Such an approach informed the institutionalization of agrarian and forestry laws during the late 19th century Dutch colonial era that was aimed at attracting foreign investment for plantation development and contained provisions that permitted 75-year concessionary leases. This guiding principle for the most part rendered illegitimate from a legal standpoint the diversity of informal communal arrangements that continue to persist

today at the local level. Unsurprisingly, debates over who would control land (and benefit economically from its use) characterized anticolonial struggles against the Dutch as well as visions of nation-building in the geographically vast and ethnically diverse newly-independent nation-state from the early to mid-20th century (Rachman, 2011). Hence, issues regarding how land was to be distributed and controlled played a significant role in “struggles between the Javanese center and the regional peripheries, [with] internecine conflicts pitting advantaged ethnic groups against those marginalized by the colonial economy, and political battles between (among others) those who envisioned a Dutch allied independent federation and those who supported a more or less socialist state” (Stoler, 1988, 229).

In this regard, the strong role of the state in relation not only with regards to issues of land tenure, but also economic development more broadly, did not go away upon the country’s achievement of formal independence in 1945 even as political and legal frameworks underwent significant transformations. One foundational development was the introduction of *Pancasila*, a set of principles that was enshrined in the country’s Constitution and which continues today to order and justify the existence and legitimacy of the unitary Indonesian state. Its emphasis on principles such as representative democracy, monotheism, nationalism and social justice is intended to justify the role of the state in binding the country’s diverse peoples of different ethnic and religious backgrounds to commit to a shared vision of stable political order and postcolonial nation-building as a means to reverse the injustices and exploitation that took place during the colonial era (Rachman, 2011). The institutionalization of these tenets into everyday life continues to be a work in progress until this day given the challenges posed

by political Islam as well as existing and past separatist movements (e.g. in the provinces of West Papua and Aceh) that have and continue to threaten the integrity of the unitary Indonesian state. As I will elaborate later, current national policies such as RAPS contribute towards reinforcing the Indonesian state's goals in terms of producing nationalist sentiment and ensuring that its fundamental authority is firmly recognized and perceived as indisputable.

Relatedly, the facilitative role of the state in managing the country's vast natural resources within its territories is enshrined in Article 33 of the Indonesian Constitution, which explicitly states that "the land, the waters and the natural riches contained therein shall be controlled by the state and exploited to the greatest benefit of the people" (Rachman, 2011, 22). However, how the state would operationalize this provision was not immediately self-evident. Therefore, political contestation in the country's rural areas regarding access to and control of land and the resources it contains was most pronounced and most explicitly politicized during the twenty years after independence as competing visions of nation-building were being defined, fought over and operationalized.

From independence to the mid-1960s, Indonesia was ruled by President Sukarno, one of the country's anticolonial heroes. During this time, leftist political parties as well as peasant and farmworker unions significantly influenced imaginaries of rural development strategies (Bachriadi, 2009). Significantly, the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) that was repressed during anticolonial struggles became the largest communist party in the world by membership outside the Soviet bloc (over 3 million members) during the early years after the country's independence and "emerging as the most

powerful political party in the country” (Kuddus, 2017, 17). They viewed that genuine decolonization and freedom would not only be achieved solely with formal independence and envisaged peasants (as well as workers) to continue to act as revolutionary forces for radical change. Importantly, the PKI allied with a significant number of mass-based organizations to mobilize populations to push for these structural shifts that would crucially involve democratized control of land. Such groups included *Serikat Buruh Perkebunan Republik Indonesia* or SARBUPRI (plantation workers) and *Barisan Tani Indonesia* or BTI (peasants) and whose combined membership was estimated to have numbered up to 20 million people (White, 2016).

Though President Sukarno was not officially affiliated with the PKI, he sympathized with many of their ideas regarding nation-building and supported their “land for peasant” campaigns and saw it “as the vanguard party for his political ideas and ambitions to radicalize the Indonesian masses” (Rachman, 2011, 21). His focus on calling for land redistribution was reflected in much of his public rhetoric as he highlighted the injustice of colonial plantation estates as well as the parallels between the ideologies of capitalist modernization and colonialism (Rachman, 2015). He advocated for a socialist interpretation of the principles of *Pancasila* with his call for “Marxism adjusted to the Indonesian condition” (Rachman, 2011, 20) that would work towards the transformation of both the state and society towards political sovereignty (*berdaulat secara politik*) and economic self-sufficiency (*berdikari secara ekonomi*), which were part of his *Trisakti* formula he derived to serve as principles for postcolonial nation-building. This explicit call towards restructuring political and economic life that would liberate the country from colonial structures and external dependence also extended to issues of culture and identity

as the creation of a nationalist subjectivity abetted by the state was seen as a priority (Rachman, 2011). The strength of such views amongst the country's post-independence political leaders as well as the broader population were "conditioned by the exploitative nature of Dutch colonialism—which concentrated much of the economy in foreign hands and oriented it toward production of commodities, such as rubber, tin, palm oil, and petroleum, for the world market" (Simpson, 2008, 16). One concrete strategy to achieve these fundamental shifts and increase political consciousness was through village democratization at the local level that was facilitated by the PKI and BTI cadres. Such efforts that attempted to minimize hierarchical government structures included the establishment of Village Consultative Boards to encourage villager participation in local-level decision-making and ensure accountability of village leaders and officials as well as of mutual help institutions and cooperatives that would help to solve practical problems such as irrigation provision and rat extermination (White, 2016).

The clearest manifestation of ideological rhetoric can be seen in President Sukarno's decision to nationalize foreign companies as well as foreign-owned land. Debates over the fate of colonial plantations were at the heart of political negotiations between the Netherlands and Indonesia upon independence. The Dutch did not relent in their view that ownership of plantations should not change. Political impasses continued into the early 1950s, but the situation changed when President Sukarno declared martial law in 1957, "over five hundred Dutch plantations, roughly three-fourths of all plantations in Indonesia (as well as a great number of other Dutch corporations) placed under the supervision of the military in coordination with the Ministry of Agrarian Affairs" (Rachman, 2011, 29). As be important later, it is crucial to note that this move

entrenched rather than dismantled the plantation economy.

Emergence of centralized rule with planning and expertise logics

Nevertheless, the clout of mass-based organizations and social movements working to mobilize populations from below did not mean that top-down governance approaches and tendencies did not have a marked influence during the early years of Indonesia's independence. Given the sheer size of the country,

U.S. officials and social scientists identified the Southeast Asian nation as a linchpin in Washington's strategy of regional economic integration and as a line of containment against the expansion of Soviet and later Chinese power. Washington hoped that its support for Indonesian independence and the provision of a modest program of economic and technical assistance beginning in 1950 would help foster the emergence of a representative, capitalist, and pro-Western government (Simpson, 2008, 14)

As a result of being caught up in the emerging Cold War geopolitical context in the early 1950s, significant amounts of foreign funding attempted to steer the country's overall postcolonial nation-building trajectory in specific directions. American influence was the most pronounced given that "between 1949 and 1960, Washington extended more than \$470 million in aid to Indonesia, concentrated in technical assistance, participant training, Export-Import Bank loans for infrastructure projects, and PL 480 (Food for Peace) commodity assistance" (Simpson, 2008, 49). Aside from material aid, the training of civilian and non-civilian individuals who would eventually become senior bureaucrats and military personnel at the national level came to be an important component of institutionalizing and entrenching logics of technical expertise within the Indonesia state (Simpson, 2008).

Towards the late 1950s, President Sukarno would embrace this emerging top-down character of the Indonesian state, although his ideological leanings differed from what the United States was promoting. Despite PKI and BTI's bolstering of participatory structures especially at the village level, the determination to move towards achieving socialism was eventually perceived by President Sukarno to not be possible through the traditional democratic process, especially given the influence of groups such as certain factions of the army as well as Islamic political parties who were vehemently against leftist ideologies, which they perceived as promoting godlessness and atheism. Hence, in 1957, President Sukarno decreed the beginning of the era of Guided Democracy and suspended elections. Instead, "functional groups" (i.e. non-state actors including peasant organizations) would provide advice to the government cabinet whose members were chosen by the president himself. In this regard, when he created the National Development Planning Agency (BAPPENAS) in 1959, he identified top-down leadership and planning as crucial aspects of working towards realizing economic prosperity (Rachman, 2015). His emphasis on the need for nation-building to be clearly directed from above was most reflected in his "Eight-Year Plan [that] was the most concrete expression of Sukarno's concept of Guided Economy, a rough blueprint for state-led development that advocated intervention in basic industries to promote long-term development needs" (Simpson, 2008, 50). However, such state involvement would not only come in the form of provision of financing and direct operation of nationalized plantations. In addition, given continued personnel training by the United States, it also included "counterinsurgency and civic action programs aimed at involving military personnel in rural infrastructure projects, where they could both forge closer ties with and

expand their surveillance and control over rural populations in the name of development” (Simpson, 2009, 474). Crucially, this entrenchment of the authority of the central government to impose development trajectories in local contexts marked by signifying communitarian vocabularies such as cooperation, consensus and collaboration away from their ideological and non-hierarchical meanings. Instead, they were deployed to justify conformity to dictates from above.

Basic Agrarian Law of 1960

In spite of the shift in Sukarno’s governing approach towards espousing the need for top-down rule, the passage of the Basic Agrarian Law of 1960 (BAL) encapsulated the relative success of the influence of leftist and left-leaning political forces during the first decade or so of Indonesia’s independence, especially in relation to dealing with the contentious issue of land distribution. Importantly, the law explicitly “makes a distinction between economically weak and economically strong and articulates the commitment to protect the economically weak groups that were perceived as victims of feudalism, colonialism, and imperialism” (Rachman, 2011, 25). In a major speech given in August 1960, President Sukarno “emphasiz[ed] it as ‘a most important advance in the Indonesian revolution’...[and used] slogans [that] included: ‘land does not have to be means of exploitation,’ ‘land for peasants,’ ‘land for those who actually till it’” (Rachman, 2011, 21). More specifically, the law contained explicit provisions that discussed the importance of “social function” of land. Ceilings on landholding and prohibition on foreign ownership were also integral components of the law and which gave authority to the state to identify lands that were constituted “surplus” or “unused” lands that would be

targeted for redistribution (Lucas and Warren, 2013). Formal institutions such as land reform courts and land reform committees were also set up to facilitate its implementation (Tjondronegoro, 1981).

This law technically remains in force today and “the date of its proclamation is still annually celebrated as “*Hari Tani*” (Peasants’ Day), accompanied by public awards, seminars, and editorials in the national newspapers” (Lucas and Warren, 2013, 3). As will be elaborated on in the next chapter, many of civil society actors today continue to invoke the original intention and spirit of BAL as a rhetorical strategy in their advocacy efforts to implore the state to carry out its responsibility of ensuring that land tenure arrangements would benefit the majority of the country’s rural populations and achieve some semblance of economic justice. Nevertheless, the law itself from its inception contained a number of ambiguities that contributed to failed attempts at fundamentally restructuring the country’s land tenure regime to reverse injustices of colonial land tenure arrangements. As alluded to earlier, the Indonesian Constitution gives the authority and mandate to the state to define how best to “manage resources for the social welfare of the Indonesian population as a whole” (Lucas and Warren, 2013, 41). This view promoted the assumption that the “state’s interests” (in whatever ways they are defined) would automatically align with the interests of “the people” (*rakyat*). Two major consequences of this approach are relevant to mention. Firstly, it led to the marginalization of customary or adat law (*hukum adat*) in its favor of national legal frameworks as the BAL explicitly stated that the use of such provisions “must not be contrary to national interest and the interest of the state.” The consequent delegitimization of informal communal arrangements and practices was “rationalized by the same evolutionary developmentalist

ethos that had previously underpinned colonial policy and law” (Lucas and Warren, 2013, 6). This paternalistic approach towards governing indigenous communities was an attempt to not only integrate them into the project of Indonesian nation-building, but also standardize the ways in which relationships to land were to be structured. Secondly, the BAL contained provisions that allowed the state to allocate “rights of exploitation” or *hak guna usaha* (HGU), which are similar to *erpacht* rights under Dutch colonial law that granted corporations long-term leases to significant expanses of land (Rachman, 2011). In effect, large-scale plantation production was seen as an important contributor to the country’s economic development, demonstrating how such extractivist logics did not disappear at the end of colonial rule. Hence, while the BAL is mostly perceived as a progressive policy that aimed to democratize access to and ownership of land and benefits arising from its use to a greater proportion of Indonesia’s rural population, it has also been interpreted by some as “reproduc[ing] the typical ‘anti-communist’ model of land reform” (White, 2016, 4). This pessimistic outlook is compounded by the fact that there were no provisions that would lead to the “confiscation of excessive landholdings without compensation” (Tjondronegoro, 1981, 2). One could interpret the motivation of the BAL as desiring to moderate the demands of the rural masses rather than catalyze transformations to inequitable land tenure arrangements and political-economic structures that began during Dutch colonial rule.

The G30S events of 1965 and the beginning of President Suharto’s 30-year rule

Unsurprisingly, the implementation of the BAL would be stifled by elite interests upon its passage and in 1964

the...PKI and...BTI launched “unilateral action” (*aksi sepihak*) to take over and occupy lands that were supposed to be redistributed...They claimed that the implementation of land redistribution and sharecropping arrangement was slow, because landlords, most of whom were associated with traditional Islamic and nationalist parties, were blocking the land distribution and the sharecropping arrangements (Rachman, 2011, 38).

Despite such efforts by political forces and mass movements, significant progress to restructure the country’s land tenure arrangements and enact meaningful land redistribution did not occur. It has been estimated that only approximately “454,966 hectares were allotted to some 568,862 people” (Tjondronegoro, 1981, 2) by the early 1960s. These minimal efforts would further come to an abrupt halt beginning in September 1965 when a “coup” (known as G30S) instigated by one of two competing factions of the Indonesian military set into motion a series of political developments that would see President Sukarno deposed from power in March 1966. Suharto, a military general who was directly involved in G30S events would eventually come to power and rule the country until 1998. In the subsequent months and years, “all left and left-leaning parties, associations and organizations were criminalized and banned. Hundreds of thousands of peasants and farmers alleged to be supporters of PKI and their affiliates, including BTI, were killed” (Peluso, 2008, 381). In addition, land reform courts and committees were dissolved by 1970 and the interests of the country’s smallholders and farmworkers were represented solely by the state-sanctioned Indonesia Farmers’ Harmony Association’ (HKTI) (White, 2016). The rightward political shift and violent dismantlement of leftist political forces can be characterized as a

counterrevolution in the countryside...[that must be understood within a] larger context of conflict between two well-organized, bitterly opposed forces with differing visions and programs for the completion of the national revolution of Indonesia, the PKI–Sukarno alliance and the military-led social/political coalition...[T]he threat to which the right

reacted with such violence was not a militant communist-led armed revolution but the prospect that the PKI could actually come to power through peaceful electoral politics in the immediate future. (Bello, 2018, 30).

President Suharto's rule would transform not only the state's bureaucratic, institutional and political structures, but also more fundamentally, the state-society dynamic, given the substantial shifts in the meaning and purpose of "politics" as perceived and internalized by the country's population.

Resignification of *Pancasila* and other nationalist discourses

The meanings of nationalist tropes that had come to structure the country's nation-building project would undergo substantial changes as President Suharto began to entrench his rule in the late 1960s. One significant factor was the increasing influence of the army in policymaking, rationalized on the basis of maintaining political stability. As a consequence, the depoliticization of everyday life was further entrenched, which reduced political space for meaningful democratic participation (Simpson, 2009). The justification for Guided Democracy under President Sukarno with his decision to suspend the democratically-elected legislature and centralize executive power with the aim of realizing a postcolonial nation-state on the basis of leftist political ideas was deployed to serve a diametrically different vision of nation-building. With Suharto, a different form of social engineering meant that the continued suspension of multi-party democracy would serve to instead prioritize a vision of political order that would serve to enable a top-down conservative form of capitalist modernization. Any political dissent from the country's populations, mass movements or non-governmental organizations and political parties would not be tolerated. Over time, the military gained formal roles in "domestic political

and cultural life, including the ideological screening of employees and election candidates, marking identity cards, purging leftist intellectuals, suppressing campus and labor activists, issuing letters attesting that the bearer came from a ‘clean environment’” (Kuddus, 2017, 60). At the same time, the country’s national legislature or MPR, controlled by Suharto’s Golkar party, dissolved the PKI and enacted “a ban on all expressions of communism or Marxism-Leninism as an ideology—a raft of laws that remain largely in place to this day” (Kuddus, 2017, 57-58). Such a heavy-handed approach towards the elimination of leftist ideas and ideologies in national political discourse and the national consciousness was justified on the basis of the doctrine of “Balatkom, an abbreviation of *bahaya laten komunis*, ‘latent danger of communists’, coined by *Lemhanas*, the National Security Institute, in its 1978 ‘national vigilance refresher course’” (Kuddus, 2017, 61). This non-democratic approach to state rule led to “an enlarged role for functional groups, of which the military would be the most powerful” (Simpson, 2008, 223). The military would only become more entrenched as (perceived) fears of internal threats to national harmony in the country only served to legitimize its direct influence on political and cultural life. Over the first few years of President Suharto’s rule, around 20,000 military officers took up leadership positions in various state institutions at all scales. (Kuddus, 2017). The resulting repressive state structure was to remain robust for over thirty years as any explicit and public expression of social discontent was continuously quelled to the furthest extent possible.

Significantly, President Suharto did not reject the principles of *Pancasila*, but rather resignified its meanings to for it to align and support his vision of top-down state imposed capitalist modernization. What took place was that

Sukarno's catch-all formula—the nation, the world, humanity, consensus, social provision, God—only needed to be re-ordered to give pride of place to God, the nation and consensus.... Suharto's ideologues rejected both Marxism, based on class antagonism, and Western liberal capitalism, based on individualism, competition and greed, as wrong for Indonesia, since they did not promote the inclusive 'togetherness'—*kebersamaan*—transcending both individual and class which was the foundation of the *Pancasila* system (Kuddus, 2017, 62).

The ideals of cooperation and collaboration were not discouraged but rather, their meanings were transformed so as to justify minimizing political contestation and dissent from below. By framing these policies as “non-ideological” and inflecting them with culturalist overtones, this move served to institutionalize political structures and frameworks that did not promote the participation of the masses as the project of postcolonial nation-building had intensified more than two decades after the country's independence. The shift in how the fundamental tenets of the country's founding principles can be seen by how

guidance, hierarchy, harmony, structure, formality, paternalism and patriarchy [became] all key themes in the new regime, in attempts to 'order' Indonesia's social and political life. All of these 'Indonesian values' justified the formulation of family state ideology and its manifestation in *Pancasila* Democracy, the state system under authoritarian regime of Suharto. Regardless of any critiques, the military ideologues successfully established the concept of *Pancasila* Democracy as culturally authentic to Indonesia, since it is anti-Marxist, anti-liberal, anti-party, anti-mass mobilization, anti-revolution and anti-class struggle (Savitri and Adriyanti, 2018, 6)

As will be discussed in the following chapters, the malleability in the meaning of these nationalist ideals that had always contained explicit communitarian and communal valences, (e.g. debates over notions of national unity and citizenship) are integral components of debate of what kind of subjectivities should be produced through the implementation of the current RAPS framework.

Resignification of meaning of “development” and standardization of village governance

It would come as no surprise that this depoliticization of everyday life and resignification of nationalist tropes would also be accompanied by a marked shift not only regarding land reform policy, but also how “development” was to be conceptualized and understood by state actors as well as the country’s population at large. With the delegitimization and elimination of leftist ideologies and viewpoints, policy frameworks evolved from a previous emphasis on attempting to “redistribut[e] assets to farmers...to introduc[ing] technology in order to boost agricultural production” (Tjondronegoro, 1981, 3). In this regard, the technocratic planning apparatuses that had been set up in the 1950s with socialist undertones were restructured to justify expert-driven capitalist modernization, and were crucially influenced by American knowledge frameworks, geopolitical interests and financial resources that had already begun to assert themselves in the 1950s as mentioned earlier. The problem of “development” as understood by actors such as US advisors of agricultural extension programs focused on “technical training and agricultural capitalization, clashing not only with Indonesian radicals, but with more moderate development planners who prioritized agricultural self-sufficiency and rural employment” (Simpson, 2009, 471).

Instead of promoting the realization of non-hierarchical structures at the local level, the desire to produce obedient subjects through the top-down imposition of development policies is exemplified by the “new regime contract[ing] with multinational corporations for provision of the new ‘Green Revolution’ inputs including fertilizers, insecticides, extension and management, and the new ‘IR’ paddy varieties” (White, 2016, 12). The roll-out of this policy took the form of the increased standardization of existing

village-level institutions with the

creat[ion of] the Village Enterprise Units (BUUD) and a few years later Village Unit Cooperative (KUD), which were used to distribute the new agricultural inputs. In 1973, Suharto published the presidential instruction establishing KUD as the vehicle for the processing and marketing of the peasant's yield, distributing farm inputs (fertilizer, seeds, and pesticides), managing the farming credit program, and counseling farming modernization. Village heads were pressured by central government to mobilize the peasantry to fulfill Green Revolution targets. The cooperative movement was thereby coopted as an economic institution and instrument of government, instead of an egalitarian and self-managing peasant political organization as in the vision of BTI (Larastiti, 2018, 5).

More broadly, a number of laws passed in the late 1960s and 1970s dictated and incentivized conformity of villages with central government mandates. These laws included external appointment of village heads instead of being elected by the village population as well as an annual allocation of village funds, but which were channeled through district governments (Vel et al, 2017). Such efforts culminated in the passage of Village Law of 1979 that reinforced the legitimacy of a hierarchical bureaucratic structure in the country. Not only did it become central towards efforts to continue to promote a strong nationalist identity throughout the country's over 10,000 islands, but it also was simultaneously geared at minimizing social tensions and discontent towards the state during the years when Suharto's vision of top-down capitalist modernization began to be entrenched. This law adopted and modified Dutch colonial administration practices and created uniform institutional structures by defining the village "as an administrative unit under the coordination of the subdistrict head (*camat*) and had as its official objective to support national economic growth, equality, stability, and security" (Vel et al, 2017, 451).

In this regard, this law reinforced the central government's desire to ensure that

the direct pacification and control of populations at the local level can be achieved. With this law, instead of cultivating a diversity of viewpoints and approaches, sub-national governments had to rely on the central government for resources and guidance to frame and finance development policies with regard to issues as diverse as family planning, agricultural production and village cooperatives (Simanjuntak, 2013). Hence, the most prominent of the long-term effects of these laws was the establishment of patron-client relationships as purely coercive logics were never going to be completely effective. Rather, attempts to impose top-down mandates would not have been successful if not for the transfer of funds from the central government to sub-national state institutions (Schulte Nordholt and Van Klinken, 2007). The stability of this logic/structure was premised upon “ruling national parties suppl[ying] rural elites with agricultural subsidies; rural elites, in turn, act[ing] as the state’s “agents in the countryside”: policing villages, distributing development goods to loyal followers” (Welker, 2012, 392). In addition, this standardization of village governance has resulted in the reconstitution of communities and land tenure arrangements (e.g. individualization and self-responsibilization of economic production) that previously were structured on the basis of locally specific (communal) customs and practices (Warren, 2005).

Basic Forestry Law of 1967

As President Suharto entrenched his rule, the combination of top-down authoritarian and technocratic expert-driven governance approaches was further institutionalized when the sectoral and bureaucratic split between issues of “forestry” and issues of “agriculture” occurred with the passage of the Basic Forestry Law of 1967

(BFL). The law led to the Indonesian state staking ownership claims on approximately 70 percent of the country's landmass. This land area which would constitute the country's "forestry estate" would be governed very differently than what is defined as "non-forested" land (i.e. agricultural and urban). This legal development would further transform the nature of the country's land tenure arrangements away from widespread informal control or formal ownership and towards large-scale corporate-led production of plantation commodities and mining activities that would be coupled with state oversight of large expanses of land where human activity would be restricted (Rachman, 2011; Lucas and Warren, 2013). One of the most consequential aspects of the law was the classification of different parts of this land area for either "production" and "protection" based on forestry and conservation science (Galudra and Sirait, 2009). In theory, doing so would set aside areas with high conservation value while allowing other less forested landscapes to be exploited for its resources. Hence, the establishment of rules regarding the determination of what kinds of economic activity are deemed acceptable on what type of land was perceived as scientifically neutral (Brockhaus et al, 2012).

In a sense, the intention and philosophy behind the law was nothing new given that it was built upon knowledge and legal frameworks during the Dutch colonial era that worked on the assumption that the exploitation of forest and agricultural lands could take place based upon logics of disinterested rationality and importantly would bring about broad-based benefits for rural populations. Significantly, this law gave the state a clear opportunity to operationalize provisions in Article 33 of the Indonesian Constitution that conferred it the authority to make policy decisions in the name of the national interest. With the state having "the exclusive and unqualified right of management and allocation

of resource extraction” (Lucas and Warren, 2013, 8), any resistance and disagreement with decisions of the central government would not be tolerated, thus further reinforcing the clampdown on dissent that would become characteristic of President Suharto’s rule in the name of political stability to engender an enabling environment for economic development. Unsurprisingly, this law spawned the increase in state-owned and private companies obtaining long-term concession rights and business licenses to exploit forest and mining resources (Rachman, 2015).

Widespread societal discontent beginning in the 1970s

President Suharto had intended for capitalist modernization, underpinned by the extraction/exploitation of forest resources and plantation production, to bring about broad-based prosperity and increased standards of living without the radical restructuring of the country’s land tenure arrangements. Instead, the benefits stemming from land use policies and license allocation decisions based upon provisions in the BFL have over time disproportionately accrued to state-owned and private corporations at the expense of smallholders and local communities. A consequence of the licensing regime that BFL engendered was that existing human settlement of land areas categorized as being part of the “forestry estate” were rendered illegal as access or ownership rights were not formally allocated to local communities (McCarthy and Robinson, 2016). What ensued was the emergence of numerous conflicts with corporate actors that have been given concession licenses on these land areas (HPHs and HTIs) in addition to land areas categorized or recategorized as being outside the forestry estate (HGUs) (Bachriadi, 2009).

Unsurprisingly, the proliferation of allocating concession licenses to large

expanses of land would not have occurred without patronage relationships that opened up opportunities for rent-seeking and led to entrenched corruption. The establishment of close linkages between senior government officials and a budding business elite led to the former “enrich[ing] themselves and their families, reward[ing] political supporters, and co-opt[ing] opponents....[They included] military officials, [who] were integrated into senior positions in the bureaucracy, cabinet and parliament, a process legitimized by the military's dual function doctrine” (Rosser et al, 2005, 56). As a result, a class of “crony capitalists, a relatively small, but immensely wealthy, military-political-financial oligarchy [emerged], rivalrous yet densely interlinked by kin and nuptial connections....Its conglomerates controlled concessions over millions of acres of forest, plantations, mines, oil and gas fields” (Kuddus, 2017, 63). Thousands of land conflicts began to be documented in the 1970s throughout the country (Bachriadi, 2009).

As non-forestry estate land was increasingly perceived as a commodity on which valuable cash crops could be produced, “the price of land also increased rapidly, making it more attractive for investments if not speculation” (Tjondronegoro, 1981, 4). This phenomenon would be exacerbated with increased dependence on credit for inputs leading to agricultural debt as well as a rise in land transactions and land fragmentation. Estimates suggest that “7.95 million people in 1963 having average landholdings of 0.71 hectare, [but] a decline was noticed in 1973 when average holdings was put at 0.60 hectare with a total of 8.27 million farmers” (Tjondronegoro, 1981, 6). Discontent amongst rural populations was increasingly palpable and spurred at a point “restless protest movements and even occasional clashes that the government decided to instruct two ministers of state in late November 1977 to take a closer look at agrarian problems”

(Tjondronegoro, 1981, 5).

Spatial planning as rational response

One of the responses by the central government to such problems was the establishment of complex bureaucratic infrastructures intended to balance goals of forest protection and exploitation in a depoliticized and technocratic manner. Such frameworks that were institutionalized across horizontal and vertical levels of government, operationalized the BFL's paradigm of governing the country's vast forested landscapes through suggesting that social and environmental problems would decrease once proper procedures and best practices were followed. Doing so gave the management of forested landscapes and the resources it contained a veneer of neutrality and was another strategy to ensure that discontent from rural populations would either be discredited or minimized. This kind of thinking would come to be integral to how the state would legitimize any changes made to the categorization of land areas within the country's forestry estate and in effect, how it would allocate concession licenses (Rachman, 2015). Importantly, material practices of mapping and spatial planning would come to play a central role in government efforts towards gathering consistent and comprehensive information only beginning in the early 1980s under the assumption that doing so would subsequently lead to rational decision-making and informed license allocation while also preventing irresponsible corporate behavior and unsustainable land use. Nevertheless, it was only in 1983 through the *Tata Guna Hutan Kesepakatan* or TGHK when the Indonesian state through its Ministry of Forestry (MoF) formally categorized the land area within the "forestry estate" into

(1) protection forest for watershed protection; (2) conservation forest for protected areas; (3) limited production forest, where logging was to be accompanied by measures to reduce impact on soil erosion; (4) production forest for commercial logging; and (5) conversion forest for conversion of degraded production forest to agriculture or other uses (Brockhaus et al, 2012, 32).

During the same year, the MoF produced provincial TGHK maps at a 1:500,000 scale. In the subsequent years, a central government agency, the National Coordination Agency on Survey and Mapping (*Bakosurtanal*) worked on improving information quality and detail by deriving new maps at a lower spatial scale and of increased accuracy.

Three basic sets of maps at a scale of 1:250,000 were prepared covering the whole country: “Land Systems”, with an interpretation of their suitability for agriculture; “Land Use”, with existing forest zoning; and “Land Status”, with proposed forest zoning based on the methodology used for TGHK based on climate, slope and soil type. The Land Status maps became the country's standard for practical application, and underpinned provincial sectoral planning as the new TGHK (Brockhaus et al, 2012, 33).

The production of high-quality maps of the forestry estate were inextricably tied to mainstreaming spatial planning at the subnational level. Doing so suggests that “good” outcomes that would benefit rural populations in context-specific ways could result from development policies that are informed by accurate data and derived from scientific criteria. Such interlinked efforts that attempted to institutionalize bureaucratic categories as truth regimes “extended spatial planning to the entire territory of Indonesia and provided an ambitious plan for an integrated, hierarchical, top-down planning system from the center to the districts” (Bedner, 2016, 69) also attempted to resolve any policy differences between different state institutions at the national level. They began in earnest

in 1992, [when] a Law on Spatial Planning provided rules for spatial land use planning called RTRW (*Rencana Tata Ruang Wilayah* or Regional Spatial Land Use Planning) under the authority of the National Development Planning [Agency] (BAPPENAS) and associated provincial-

level offices (BAPPEDA). In response to that initiative, the MoF in 1997 engaged in the production of its own “integrated maps” or *peta paduserasi* instead, to streamline the TGHK maps at the provincial level (Brockhaus et al, 2012, 33).

Arguably, these endeavors are an extension of the central government’s propensities that began in the post-independence period under President Sukarno to purposefully be involved in directing the nation’s economic development. As will be discussed later in this chapter, successful efforts to gather such data in a comprehensive, standardized and coordinated manner remain elusive and do not follow a linear trajectory.

Given the authoritarian nature of President Suharto’s rule, it was able to stifle dissent for many years. However, activist networks consisting of NGOs, students and community leaders both in rural and urban areas, began to emerge in the early 1990s to contest state policies (Peluso, 2008). Unsurprisingly, the clearest basis of opposing President Suharto’s economic policies and the negative consequences it had engendered was not the invocation of ideologically-inflected leftist discourses, but rather the appeal of the language of anti-corruption, rule of law, accountability and clean government. The clearest example of such forms of activism is the emergence of an environmental movement throughout the country present at both the local (i.e. to document cases of forest degradation/destruction) and national levels (e.g. advocacy efforts to prompt government action). The depoliticized framing of the problems (e.g. unsustainable and uncontrolled forest and land use) became essential so as to be able to prompt responses from the state. Given that environmental issues were understood to be “scientific” and “neutral” rather than “political,” Suharto’s government became responsive to the concerns of civil society to some extent by passing a number of environmental laws in the 1980s (Afiff and Lowe, 2007).

Although agrarian and economic justice issues were dealt with indirectly, these efforts were effective in calling attention to negative consequences of a rural development strategy premised on large-scale plantation, logging and mining activities and focused on leveraging legal tools at the national level as the avenue to seek redress. It was also the time when global concern regarding various environmental problems became ever more mainstreamed during the years after the 1972 UN Conference on the Global Environment in Stockholm and institutional responses took place at the global (i.e. multilateral environmental agreements) and national levels (i.e. creation of ministries/departments of the environment). In Indonesia's case,

in response to international pressures, but in ways meant not to interfere with the tremendous accumulation from the forestry sector, Suharto created the Ministry of Environment (MoE) [in 1978], headed by Dr Emil Salim. The MoE had a meagre budget and little actual power inside the state. However, Salim's MoE provided a safe haven for environmental justice activists – its own marginal position in government creating a basis for alliance with these justice advocates. ...At a time when the New Order government interpreted any criticism of its development policy and practice as subversive, environmental debates were the only public media through which farmers' rights or access to land lost to extractive enterprises could be discussed (Peluso, 2008, 384).

This embrace, albeit limited by the Suharto's presidency of environmental concerns marked a shift in which non-state actors not only began to gain a degree of influence and legitimacy, but also had sympathetic allies working in government ministries at a high level, whether as senior bureaucrats or as political appointees. At the very least, this illustrates the non-totalizability of top-down centralized rule and the persistence of a heterogenous (bureaucratic) state, despite attempts at cross-sectoral integration. With the creation of the MoE, intra-bureaucracy differences with the MoF regarding desirable production/protection paradigms (even as techno-managerial impulses were common)

became more pronounced. The former's mandate was to maximize the amount of forested areas that would be relatively untouched by human activity while the latter was focused on maximizing the extraction and cultivation of forest products, in part to increase economic growth and government revenue. At the same time, it also has to be acknowledged that a uniformity of views did not exist within environmental (and conservation) movements and NGOs, not to mention between them and agrarian justice movements and NGOs as they emerged during this time and gained a degree of clout. Certain conservation groups focused their attention on local communities as main contributors to deforestation while environmental justice groups who were aligned more with peasant organizations called attention to inequitable distribution of land (Peluso, 2008). As will be discussed in later chapters, many of these differences persist up until today given different meanings of environmental protection as well as importance and legitimacy attributed to such efforts.

Another strategy of seeking redress from rampant negative social consequences of forest exploitation was the deployment of the language of (human) rights. Legal aid NGOs such as *Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia* (YLBHI) would play a crucial role in interpreting provisions in existing laws especially the BAL in ways that highlight violations by state actors. Given that (human) rights discourses were also mainstreamed around the same time as environmental protection discourses in the global arena during the 1980s, such tropes also began to gain resonance at the national and local level in Indonesia. YLBHI invoked them often in formal judicial processes and non-formal dispute resolution mechanisms to resolve land conflict (Bachriadi, 2009). It was in 1993 when *Komisi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia* or *KOMNAS HAM*, an independent

government institution was established, partially in response to global pressure to deal with human rights violations that were increasingly being documented in the country (e.g. state-sponsored political violence). It is interesting to note that connections between environmental movement and legal aid NGOs such as YLBHI at both the national and sub-national levels were strengthened during this time (Peluso, 2008). It is the acknowledgement of the necessity of contesting the state at different scales that made such activist struggles increasingly effective, something that as will be discussed later, remains a feature in the context of RAPS implementation. Yet, even as these connections were established for coordination to take place against state policies, different strategies were imagined to enable systemic change. For example, groups such as *Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia* or WALHI were focused on using the language of entitlements to ensure that marginalized populations could have their basic social and economic rights guaranteed. This highlighted how doing so required explicit criticism of New Order laws, especially the BFL. In contrast, groups such as YLBHI directed their attention towards interpreting provisions in the BAL in ways that make visible how the state had not yet implemented the law and achieve outcomes for rural populations, as was originally intended.

Such state-society interactions that are primarily focused in the bureaucratic-legal arena redefined what “politics” and political contestation meant. This development is a logical endpoint of years of disavowing and delegitimizing explicitly “ideological” ideas and discourses, especially in relation to economic policy, from the public sphere. It marked the beginning of contestation structured on the basis of seemingly value-neutral vocabularies of (human) rights and environmental protection that would come to

influence much of the contemporary activist struggles over land tenure issues. Nevertheless, a broader political atmosphere continued to shift and influence these contestations that were increasingly taking place in the bureaucratic-legal arena from the 1980s onwards. Despite measures by the government to address some of these broad concerns, discontent only rose through the 1990s (a decade when economic integration with the global economy intensified) and many non-state actors became emboldened to organize protests and confront the state in the streets, despite the constant threat of repression.

Post-Suharto “decentralization” and “democratization”

Discontent resulting from the combination of a deteriorating broader macroeconomic situation, growing ineffectiveness and illegitimacy of political repression and overt manifestation of cases of clientelism and corruption climaxed in May 1998 when a series of concerted mobilizations in many parts of the country led to the end of President Suharto’s rule. After over thirty years in charge of the country,

the cronyist financial complex emerged as the weakest link, with banks run by Suharto’s kith and kin among the rashest lenders. The armor-plated dictatorship offered no guarantees to depositors, but instead gobbled up the nation’s savings. Amid soaring interest rates, mass panic, bank runs and neo-colonial [International Monetary Fund or] IMF interventions—a famous photo showed Camdessus, the IMF chief, standing over the bowed figure of Suharto as he signed the IMF letter slashing food subsidies in January 1998—the economy suffered a contraction of nearly 14 per cent, deeper than Thailand’s or Korea’s, and the rupiah plunged from 2,400 to over 17,000 to the dollar. Millions in the informal economy and the construction sector were thrown out of work. Food shortages were aggravated by that year’s El Niño drought. Protests erupted, led by various student groups, workers, peasants, housewives and a small new leftist grouping, the People’s Democratic Party (PRD); many involved clashes with the security forces (Kuddus, 2016, 65).

One striking aspect of these mobilizations against President Suharto and the institutional structures his regime had built up over thirty years is their cross-issue orientation and convergence of multifaceted grievances throughout the country, held together by widespread generalized distrust of the country's political system that had seen benefits accrue to a small minority. In addition, it was also a moment that aligned NGO (more urban-oriented and professional) and social movement (more ground-up and gained strength through mobilizing mass support) interests. In this regard,

NGO involvement in grassroots struggles also influenced the form protest actions took, tying them to broader political agendas for democratization and clean government, as well as linking local groups to international environment and human rights movements. Broad social movement discourses became part of the framework within which local struggles were being articulated and facilitated the attraction of substantial support from international donor agencies that underwrote large congresses, bringing together mass organizations from far-flung provinces (Warren, 2005, 309).

Unsurprisingly, issues of inequitable land distribution and land conflict were at the forefront of the political turmoil before, during and after the events of May 1998. Almost immediately after Suharto's downfall, widespread land occupations by landless people, peasants and smallholders spontaneously took place across the country on both forestry estate and non-forestry estate land (Peluso, 2008). These incidents included the looting of over two million hectares of state-owned plantations (Lucas and Warren, 2013). Some of these actions were justified based on provisions in the BAL, which as mentioned earlier, emphasized the social function of land. This intent of that law had remained unfulfilled as a significant proportion of land covered by concession licenses were not developed and can be legally considered under the BAL to be "neglected lands" (*tanah terlantar*). Lastly, "in the outer islands where customary adat lands had been taken without

acknowledgment of traditional rights for timber and mining concessions, occupations, blockades, and destruction of company assets were widely reported local responses” (Lucas and Warren, 2013).

Revival of the agrarian reform agenda

The saliency of issues of land tenure driving broad societal discontent especially amongst rural populations led to the reconstitution of peasant organizations. Crucial to their ability to do so was the re-legitimation in the public sphere of “terms such as land reform, *reclaiming tanah* (land reclaiming), *okupasi tanah* (land occupation), *gerakan petani* (peasant movement), *pembaruan agraria* (agrarian reform)” (Rachman, 2011, 53) as the criminalization of overt expression of grievances would no longer be effective. Building on efforts in the late 1980s and early 1990s that escaped the state’s attention of community organizers and student activists to call attention to rural injustice (SKEPHI that emerged in the 1980s was the earliest organization known for its confrontational stance), various national alliances comprising of local and provincial peasant organizations and movements were formally re-established in the months after May 1998 (Bachriadi, 2009). *Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria* (KPA) and *Federasi Serikat Petani Indonesia* (FSPI) were two of the most prominent and visible peasant organizations, coordinating the advocacy work and consolidating the mobilization of rural masses taking place at the sub-national level. Efforts began to push the country’s legislative body, the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) to make agrarian reform a national priority once again. KPA “initiated a ‘Million Signatures for Agrarian Reform’ campaign addressed to political parties and the national parliamentary secretariat in Jakarta” (Lucas and Warren,

2013, 313) and viewed that success meant ensuring that the original intentions of the BAL could be realized. Their main suggestion to revise the BAL included:

(a) to limit the tendency of state power holders to use and abuse their power to allocate land and other natural resources; (b) to advance the people's rights to control, utilize, own and take benefit from land and other natural resources, and participate in decision making processes; (c) to put forward a revision of New Order's agrarian policies, including a comprehensive review of various laws contradicting the principles contained in the BAL (Rachman, 2011, 54).

In addition, FSPI also contributed to the call for legislative action, helping to coordinate the Cibubur National Conference on Agrarian Reform that brought together peasant groups, including HKTI, the state-sanctioned farmers' organization during the New Order, and produced a Declaration of Peasants' Rights (*Deklarasi Hak Petani*) (Lucas and Warren, 2013). We can make sense of this moment of political upheaval evoking imaginaries of change and claims-making on the state on the basis of a mixture of arguably socialist-populist-nationalist orientation of the BAL from the Sukarno era and a more recent invocation of the language of (economic) rights that had become ubiquitous at the global level.

Nonetheless, an additional complicating factor was the perceived need by some to also deal with the environmental consequences of rapid and uncontrolled development of (forested) land, problems that did not exist in the 1950s-1960s. An attempt was made to cohere the views of peasant NGOs/movements with environmental NGOs to overcome any mutual incompatibility that had to some extent existed. Aided by prominent university professors, a working group (Pokja PAPSDA) was set up to lobby the MPR to adopt a coordinated approach to achieve goals of both "agrarian reform" and "natural resource management." One of the main points of contention was the future of the BAL.

Many environmental interests desired an overarching comprehensive law on natural resource management that would have jurisdiction over all lands, with land use regulations superseding any land tenure claims by local communities or individuals, thus undermining the spirit and intent of the BAL (Lucas and Warren, 2013). However, what emerged from the interactions between environmental and agrarian interests and the state was a degree of convergence with the recognition by KPA leaders that those who occupy land could engage in agroforestry practices that were not environmentally “destructive.” Such attempts to suggest that achieving agrarian justice could simultaneously resolve environmental problems emanated from how global discourses around “community-based natural resource management” and “community forestry” combined with local knowledge frameworks (Peluso, 2008).

Ultimately, a contingent shared understanding emerged and was reflected by the legislature even as complete reconciliation of point of views between the two activist communities did not happen with the passage of the Parliamentary Directive on Agrarian Reform and Management of Natural Resources (TAP) in November 2001. The directive explicitly acknowledged that inequitable access and ownership of land over many decades had resulted in widespread conflict and environmental degradation, including for rural populations who identified as adat (Lucas and Warren, 2013). It would serve as a basis for various attempts in the subsequent years to meaningfully “succeed” in resolving these longstanding issues, with the current RAPS framework being the latest effort to try to do so. Notably, while the dichotomies of forest-agriculture, agrarian reform-natural resource management continue to be maintained to some extent, it is also significant that the decree also acknowledged how a more equitable land distribution may have positive

ramifications for realizing intertwined goals of environmental and economic justice that may have shared or overlapping definitions.

At the same time, it must be acknowledged that substantial disagreement with the TAP was expressed given the divergences in views that existed not only between, but also within both agrarian and environmental activist communities. In contrast to KPA who supported the TAP directive, FSPI lamented that it did not explicitly reference the BAL, which would give an opportunity for its progressive provisions to be officially repealed and reinforce market-oriented land policies that would exacerbate state or private control and management of the country's land and natural resources. There was also opposition amongst some environmental interests as they were wary of formally distributing forested lands to adat or non-adat communities. From their perspective, doing so would threaten conservation efforts that had already begun in earnest in some areas during the late Suharto era (Peluso, 2008). We see that dominant strands of environmental activism built up through the 1990s subscribed to a robust protection paradigm, which also small-scale activities contributing to environmental destruction that had to be regulated and controlled. Given this multiplicity in views, an argument could be made that it was a compromise between competing interests as it did not substantively deal with issues such as the future of BAL as well as the status of claims of rural populations who occupied land in the aftermath of the events of May 1998 (Lucas and Warren, 2013). These issues have remained unresolved in the intervening years and as I will demonstrate, continued attempts to tackle them are at the heart of contestations over the implementation of the contemporary RAPS framework. Differences regarding giving access or ownership rights to communities currently residing within the forestry estate (especially in areas where no

“forests” exist) remain a central conundrum.

Legal reforms enacted to decentralize government functions and liberalize political space

Inextricably intertwined with the establishment of agrarian reform and natural resource management as top national priorities and attempts to operationalize their intended goals was also a concerted undertaking to enact broader political and bureaucratic reform through decentralization of governmental functions and authority to the provincial and sub-provincial level (i.e. district, sub-district, village). Such “institutional reforms [that] were inspired by notions of good governance as developed in the West” (de Jong et al, 2017, 334) were seen as a necessity to quell widespread public discontent given rampant state corruption and patronage especially within the central government amongst senior bureaucratic and military officials during President Suharto’s rule.

The most prominent piece of legislation to attempt to do so was Law 22 of 1999 on Regional Governance that was premised on the basis that decision-making authority in hands of sub-national governments meant that better, more contextual and more accountable policies would be enacted. In theory, it gave substantial jurisdiction to district governments and their parliaments in areas such as “development planning and control; spatial planning, use and monitoring; peace and order; public facilities and infrastructures; health; education; social issues; labor; cooperatives and small and medium enterprises; the environment; land administration; civil registry; public administration; investment” (Ardiansyah et al, 2015, 8). Provincial governments would intervene when issues affect more than one district and the central government’s main

role would be to provide an overall policy direction. The Indonesian Constitution was amended at around the same time that authorized provincial and district heads (governor and *bupati* respectively) and parliamentarians to be directly elected (Ardiansyah et al, 2015). One important provision relevant to land tenure policy was the ability of district governments to grant certain concession licenses to companies for plantation, mining and logging activities. Law 25 of 1999 on Fiscal Balance also gave district governments the authority to directly raise revenue through taxes and fees without the involvement of the central government to derive their own budgets (Kimura, 2010). Nevertheless, institutional fragmentation and confusion ensued as there were significant ambiguity about the responsibilities of different levels of government for policymaking and policy implementation (Warman, 2016).

Decentralization of corruption and rent-seeking

In practice, “good” outcomes that had been intended did not occur as expectations for substantial reforms that would eliminate the worst excesses of the Suharto regime were short-lived despite the repeal of draconian measures to outlaw public protest and civil society organizing took place. Rather, patron-client arrangements that had originated amongst close associates of President Suharto at the national level merely became reorganized amongst local level elites. Such practices involved issues of land tenure as permits and licenses by district governments were handed out in a haphazard and unbridled manner (Schulte Nordholt and Van Klinken, 2007). Expectations of meaningful institutional and bureaucratic restructuring and reform resulting in more equitable distribution of economic benefits were dashed even from the very beginning of

decentralization. Patronage arrangements especially at the provincial and district level exploded with local businessmen colluding with politicians and bureaucrats to control access to land or natural resources (Aspinall, 2013a). Such reconfigurations of old predatory relations had consequential implications for limiting the possibilities of new relationships between rural populations and the Indonesian state as well as on prospects for substantive citizen participation in political life (Hadiz and Robison, 2005). Attempts to redefine political horizons remained elusive and promote meaningful political enfranchisement of rural populations did not occur as elites at the sub-provincial level used their newfound authority to govern villagers and draw state resources to themselves (Ito, 2011).

In most contexts across the country, district heads (*bupati*) became key nodes of power given the mediating role they play to distribute funds that are disbursed by the central government (Schulte Nordholt and Van Klinken, 2007). Furthermore, “the vast majority of local parliamentary candidates, as well as individuals vying for positions as *bupatis* and mayors, have been drawn from a pool of former officials, party apparatchik, as well as business figures and gangsters, many of whom had helped to exercise authority at the local level on behalf of the old authoritarian regime” (Hadiz and Robison, 2013, 54). The political space opened up by mass discontent in the months and years leading up to May 1998 did not generate extensive conversations regarding alternative development frameworks and trajectories (e.g. fundamental questioning the logic of concession-oriented rural development strategy). Mainstream political parties that were reconstituted after President Suharto was deposed did not have any explicit ideological commitments and instead mobilized support based on political favors and vote-buying. Rather,

pronounced differences between these parties have come in the form of irresolvable secular-religious divides and contested meanings of Indonesian citizenship that stem from the ambiguity inherent in the principles of *Pancasila* derived more than 70 years ago (Schulte Nordholt and Van Klinken, 2007). Such debates regarding identity politics and the rise of socially conservative sentiment have intensified in the last couple of years across the country and have come to dominate mainstream political discourse at the current moment.

Persistent economic macrostructure

Unsurprisingly, economic policies promoted by the central government since the downfall of Suharto did not markedly shift away from a commitment to some version of capitalist modernization, but rather reinforced a neoliberal economic macrostructure. In the years after 1998, new governments “continue[d] to pass regulations facilitating resource control that are in direct conflict with provisions of the Basic Agrarian Law, such as the 2004 Plantation Law and the amended Foreign Investment Law” (Lucas and Warren, 2013, 329). Starting with the presidency of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, commitments were made for the country to maintain its status as the world’s largest producer of palm oil. The oil palm industry had a planted area of over 8 million hectares in 2010 (this figure was only around 100,000 hectares in the 1960s) with the aim to expand production on an additional 6 million hectares by 2025 (Brockhaus et al, 2012). Most recently, discussions remain contentious over a new palm oil law promoted by industry players to secure their interests as they seek the ability to further expand exports (Jong, 2018). More broadly, a push for further integration into the broader regional and

global economic networks remained strong over the past couple of decades through proposed policy frameworks such as the Comprehensive Asia Development Plan (CADP) and the Master Plan for Acceleration and Economic Satisfaction of Indonesia (MP3EI) (Lucas and Warren, 2013). These plans that are also embedded in official development planning processes such as the 2010-2014 National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) that envisioned a significant role for massive infrastructure development, rural industrialization and special economic zone projects. The push to realize these economic policies is in part motivated by the need to address concerns regarding national food and fuel security. In addition, it also allows the country to take advantage of regional and global demand for commodity cash crops (Rachman, 2015). Inevitably, this push towards expanding industrial plantations and developing infrastructure projects would require additional land, thus warranting the passage of the Law 2 of 2011 on Land Acquisition for Development and the Public Interest. This law developed procedures for private and state-owned companies to acquire land in a manner that in theory, would benefit all parties. Unsurprisingly, controversies have emerged regarding the definition of “public interest,” calculation of land value for compensation purposes, not to mention increased opportunities for rent-seeking to occur (Lucas and Warren, 2013).

There is little reason to believe that any meaningful shift to the country’s political-economic structure will be driven by the central government. It would seem like any top-down push to radically transform the country’s land tenure arrangements is unlikely as according to Warburton (2016), “Jokowi [has had to] str[ike] deals with oligarchs and placed wealthy, powerful partisans in strategic posts, giving them control over state resources and authority over lucrative industries. The president and his allies

accommodated vested interests in order to overcome an aggressive opposition in parliament” (306). In this regard, processes of decentralization and democratization over the past twenty years have not guaranteed significant changes, especially in terms of realizing a more equal distribution of economic benefits as Indonesia’s capitalist class (including those connected to plantation, mining and logging actors) has been able to accept the reconfiguration of the country’s state institutions (Aspinall, 2013b). This overarching structural inertia stemming from of the Suharto era has led to

politics [over the past two decades have] proceed[ing] almost without divisions, as [political] parties pursued more or less indistinguishable socio-economic policies. Religion and (more erratically) constitutional issues came to form the only significant cleavages....In this airless political atmosphere, there was a new attempt by NGOs and liberal intellectuals to revive *Pancasila* as an ideological platform....After 2004, many (secular and religious) intellectuals began arguing that its values of tolerance, *gotong royong* mutual aid and familial *kekeluargaan* were just what was needed, if they could be stripped clear of ‘oppressive’ New Order elements (Kuddus, 2017, 74).

Hence, despite the successful passage of the TAP, the persistent lack of substantive politicization of issues relating to rural development and land tenure and the concomitant framing of intertwined environmental and economic problems as predominantly caused by “bad” governance only reinforced a seemingly narrow space for meaningful contestation. The more recent attempts to rein in the excesses of this “free-wheeling character of Indonesian democracy” (Aspinall, 2013b, 234) has only served to bolster the influence of such technocratic paradigms of governance. It comes as no surprise that reflections regarding the fulfillment of promises of change 20 years since May 1998 have expressed a mixture of pessimism and measured optimism, highlighting how different analytical frameworks can produce different evaluations of what has transpired. At the

same time, suggesting that nothing has changed in the last twenty years might also be misguided. It has also been commented that

the modes of political organization that are now dominant in Indonesia are very different from both the ordered multi-polarity of the pre-authoritarian period and the unipolarity of the New Order. A striking feature of Indonesian political life now is its lack of powerful and permanent poles of attraction. Fragmentation is visible virtually wherever we look...For example, the national government—to say nothing of the lower levels—presents a kaleidoscopic image, with national ministries divvied up between parties and milked for the patronage resources they provide and with ministers competing against each other as much as cooperating. The breakdown of the orderly patronage relationships of the New Order has also produced internal fracturing within what are ostensibly Indonesia's most hierarchical state institutions (Aspinall, 2013a, 35).

What is interesting is how recent responses to deal with these problems of institutional fragmentation (and persistent corruption whether at the national or local level) have mostly taken the form of entrenching the legitimacy of a techno-managerial paradigm, even as the participation of non-state actors in political and public life has increased and even encouraged. It would seem that a shift back to top-down governance logics (i.e. expert-driven not authoritarian) are the main ways that can be imagined to counter these problems.

Politics of recentralization

While efforts towards decentralization have not been abandoned, a degree of recentralization of authority, in the form of proliferation of a large number of instructions and regulations promulgated by state institutions and the president at the national level (and to lesser extent, laws passed by the parliament) has taken place (Ardiansyah et al, 2015). The solutions proposed to counter the excesses of conferring too much discretion to local governments have emphasized the need for bureaucratic and policy coordination

and integration between vertical and across horizontal levels of government. Nevertheless, unresolved debates regarding the “right” combination of centralized/decentralized rule remain robust given heterogeneous epistemological worldviews intertwined with different economic interests amongst different actors. These conundrums demonstrate that changes to institutional structures will continue to be characterized by open-ended contestation, deliberation and negotiation, especially given the expansion of political space over the last two decades since the downfall of President Suharto.

The “political” nature of seemingly non-ideological debates over appropriate governance practices can best be seen in how policy discourses regarding solutions to deforestation are framed. Despite concerted efforts to deal with the negative consequences of opening up the country’s vast forests for human activity, rates of deforestation have not subsided and have worsened in the last few years. From a conservation science perspective, Indonesia has lost over 26 million hectares of “woodlands and peatlands” from 1990-2015, which corresponds to annual greenhouse gas emissions of around 45 million tons of CO₂ (Coca, 2018). Nevertheless, the cause of the problem is attributed mainly to “mismanagement” of natural resources and would be resolved by redoubling on a commitment to techno-managerial paradigm that will promote a transition towards a green economy. In 2013, the government launched a Green Growth Program, with green agriculture a key, accompanied by a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 26-41 percent from business as usual levels by 2020. Such goals would be achieved with a “proper” combination of a central government-led push to instrumentalize expert knowledge, harmonize and implement existing

conservation and concession licensing laws and combat corruption at all levels with a (rhetorical) commitment to citizen participation, local decision-making and community management (Anderson et al, 2016). To some extent, they are institutionalized in the next proposed RPJMN for the years 2020-2024 as “green” issues have been explicitly identified as constitutive of the plan (Sarturi, 2017).

In this regard, inclinations towards top-down control especially in relation to forest governance have not significantly weakened despite decentralization reforms after May 1998. At the moment of decentralization with the passage of Law 41 of 1999 on Forestry, the central government was not willing to relinquish broad oversight of the vast forestry estate. This law gave the MoF the authority to “designat[e], manag[e] and monitor the national forest areas, reported in 2011 to cover approximately 134 million hectares” (Ardiansyah et al, 2015, 22), allowing them to determine what kinds of activities can take place within these areas. Importantly, the broad forest classification categories established through the BFL were elaborated upon. For example, some “protection forests” that protect life-supporting ecosystem services have additional status as “conservation forests” or “national parks” if they are determined to be able to maintain high levels of biodiversity while some “production forests” are categorized as “limited production forests” (Ardiansyah et al, 2015). Crucially, the law for the first time explicitly “delineates the process for legal gazettelement (*pengukuhan*) of forest area in the following technical sequence: first, forest area designation (*penunjukan*); second, forest area boundary demarcation (*penetapan batas*); third, forest area mapping (*pemetaan*); and fourth, forest area establishment (*penetapan*)” (Gellert, 2015, 649). The designation of 70% of the country’s land mass as part of the forestry estate in the 1970s was not

accompanied by a legal process to clearly and accurately determine and demarcate its boundaries. It also reaffirmed the legal basis on which rights (in the form of concession licenses or permits) could be held by individuals or communities on land within the forestry estate on the condition that its ecological function would remain unchanged. However, not only has this work remained incomplete, but it also has brought about intractable problems for rural populations in around 30,000 villages as attempts to limit human activity in these landscapes (important to note that not all of which are actually “forested”) restricted their ability to reproduce their livelihoods (McCarthy and Robinson, 2016). As will be discussed later, one of the central aspects of the current RAPS framework is an attempt to resolve and clarify the legal status of these local communities who have long settled on areas classified as part of the forestry estate.

More broadly, some of the initial measures towards decentralization were rescinded only after a few years with Law 32 of 2004 that gave the central government the ability to veto regulations passed at the sub-national level even as it simultaneously attempted to clarify what functions provincial and district-level governments could exercise (Warman, 2016). In addition, the law explicitly mentions the importance of public participation and community involvement during the post-1998 political context. The assertion of top-down authority was unmistakable as each year from 2002-2009, up to 75 percent of district regulations related to land (which had dramatically increased after 1999) were rejected by the central government. It made provincial governors official representatives of the central government who are directly accountable to the president. Also, it explicitly made clear that provincial governments had a coordination and oversight role over districts regarding how they were carrying out their functions. The

consolidation of this trend towards recentralization occurred with the passage of Law 23 of 2014 on Regional Government, with the most significant provision being the withdrawal of the authority of district governments over forestry estate areas within their administrative boundaries, which included the ability to issue concession licenses (Ardiansyah et al, 2015). This latest law further clarified what issues district governments had exclusive or delegated powers over. However, it is notable that the law explicitly stated that “cooperation and shared revenues” would characterize how issues related to natural resource management would be governed. For example, provincial governments can provide “technical recommendations” to any changes proposed to the classification of areas within forestry estate, but only the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF) could approve such changes (Ardiansyah et al, 2015, 9).

Furthermore, the introduction of national-level presidential/ministerial instructions, decrees and regulations in recent years to specify how the wide-ranging scope of these laws would be implemented in practice took place. From the perspective of many actors, these efforts to effectively deal with persistent deforestation, require substantive involvement of the central government. Many directly relate to issues of land use and land tenure as they deal with the regulation of extraction and exploitation of forest products, determination of penalties for illegal logging, allocation of forest revenues and royalties, management of protected areas, promotion of restoration activities, formulation of procedures to change the status of areas in the forestry estate, and importantly, clarification of jurisdictional authority (Ardiansyah et al, 2015). The most consequential central government executive decision in recent years was arguably a two-year moratorium on concession licenses for primary forests and peatlands that was

rolled out by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in 2011. This decision has since been extended four times and is still in effect today (Sarturi and Arumingtyas 2017).

Closing the data gap and the OneMap Initiative

The more recent impetus towards recentralization and cross-sectoral integration of forest governance and spatial planning has also been accompanied by a push toward collecting standardized and accurate data and establishing reliable information systems regarding the country's land area. Many actors believe that doing so will help to minimize hermeneutic flexibility and political contestation and resolve the conundrums of decentralized/centralized governance, allowing for rational land use decisions to be made to serve the interests of most if not all relevant actors (Mulyani and Jepson, 2016). For example, the process of identifying specific areas where concessions would not be granted has been a major criticism of the forest moratorium policy in terms of bemoaning its ineffective implementation. An indicative map of such areas was first published in mid-2011, but it has been constantly revised given conflicting information available from different state institutions, in addition to certain areas being exempt from the moratorium if they are "deemed 'vital' for national development goals, such as food security" (Anderson et al, 2016, 33). What this shows is that even *if* we are to accept that definitions of "primary forest" and "peatland" can be defined relatively neutrally and that such areas can be identified accurately, justifications (some of which may be perfectly valid) can be deployed to not "protect" them. This cannot be merely attributed to "bad" governance, poor coordination or lack of technical capacity. Rather, producing seemingly "truthful" knowledge about land does not mean that its acceptance and legitimacy is

guaranteed, let alone does it result in the clear definition of appropriate responses.

Nevertheless, some would lament that the lack of “objective” spatial data (e.g. biophysical information on forest cover as well as administrative boundaries) and institutional fragmentation would result in bad outcomes. It could allow sub-national state institutions to engage in corrupt practices including improper allocation of concessions. I am not arguing that gathering more spatial data and making them public cannot lead to “good” outcomes. One example that demonstrates how non-transparency clearly hinders changes to land tenure arrangements is the constant rejection by the National Land Agency (NLA) of “requests for the data they have on commercial leases and absentee land ownership. There is a connection between the inadequacy and nondisclosure of these data and the lack of government interest in reducing land concentration” (Lucas and Warren, 2013, 73). Such calls for release of data engender accountability and can potentially change considerably who has access to and control of land based on demonstrating illegality of the concession allocation process and arguing how state bureaucracies do not conform to existing laws. The most prominent NGO in Indonesia engaged in such efforts is Forest Watch Institute. Most of its advocacy efforts are focused on calling on relevant central government ministries to publicly release data on existing HGU permits, suggesting that with this information, permit revocation can be carried out if it is found that proper procedures in the licensing process were not followed (Rochmi, 2017). Such an approach is effective to counter those who “profit from retaining the ambiguity of forest spatial information” (Astuti and McGregor, 2015, 2279). However, I am also interested in the discursive effects of the claim that obtaining and consolidating such data is a neutral practice.

In this regard, similar to how the emergence of environmental activism during the late Suharto era succeeded because it could be framed in ways that were not explicitly ideological, the upsurge in production of spatial data in recent years, primarily of maps, has become one of the main strategies agreed upon by many state and non-state actors to work towards better forest governance. The clearest manifestation of this intention to “close the data gap” is the ongoing effort to make the One Map Initiative (OMI) a success. Given mounting pressure to deal with multifaceted negative impacts resulting from deforestation, in part due to negative international attention on the issue, the government embarked on this initiative by passing Law No. 4 of 2011 on Geospatial Information. This law also established the National Geospatial Agency (BIG), an institution alongside BAPPENAS that have been tasked with coordinating the process to ensure coherence of information collected across vertical and horizontal levels of government. The final product that is envisaged by the end of the decade is a single map at a 1:50,000 scale (consisting of 85 thematic maps) that will integrate information from spatial plans, development plans, village boundaries, concession licenses, gazetted forestry estate boundaries involving 18 government agencies at the sub-national and national levels that will be consolidated into “one standard, one reference, one geodatabase, one portal” (Shahab, 2016). There is a broad understanding that the derivation of this map will “address issues of overlapping concession areas, corruption, land-related conflicts, and social unrest” (Mulyani and Jepson, 2016, 2). The prioritization of this effort from the central government towards contributing to “better” forest governance and government decision-making more broadly is clear given the

desire by the current President Jokowi to prioritize and accelerate the finalization of the map based on Presidential Regulation No. 127 of 2015 (Mulyani and Jepson, 2016).

However, the process of collating and standardizing spatial data has faced numerous obstacles ranging from the difficulty to institutionalize technological infrastructure and information systems across the country's 35 provinces spread out over a vast geographical expanse. In addition, vertical and horizontal coordination between different government bureaucracies who may have different visions regarding how land should be exploited, distributed or protected and hence will put forth contrasting versions of maps even if underlying formats and forest and land classification schemes are uncontroversial (e.g. production-oriented bureaucracies can be expected to have different views from protection-oriented bureaucracies). In this regard, there remains unresolved questions regarding who decides what maps to accept or reject (i.e. most consequential being the process of harmonizing national-level maps with provincial-level maps that are approved by provincial governors) and if this process should be transparent and coordinated amongst a wide range of government bureaucracies and other non-state actors or solely controlled by senior bureaucrats within BIG and BAPPENAS as well as those who are part of the high-level coordinating body that directly reports to the president (Sahide and Giessen, 2015).

Participatory mapping

Despite being framed as a seemingly technical process, there is widespread acknowledgement by many state and non-state actors that the success of the OMI cannot purely be a top-down driven process and requires some extent of community participation

for it to be legitimate (Mulyani and Jepson, 2016). Much emphasis has been placed on producing participatory maps at the village or community level. At one level, this practice is not new and has already been used by rural populations in the late 1980s to assert territorial claims in parts of Indonesia where local livelihoods were being threatened by large-scale concessions (Peluso, 1995). However, such efforts have intensified in recent years as the political space for non-state actors, especially indigenous peoples' movements has increased.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, in addition to peasant organizations, a proportion of land occupations that took place in the aftermath of May 1998 were carried out by adat communities. Subsequently, social movement organizing on the basis of indigeneity intensified. A focus was placed on state recognition of customary legal communities (*masyarakat hukum adat*), with the hope that the resulting devolution of control over resources and legitimization of customary practices will allow for policies that are more responsive to local needs and particular circumstances (Tyson, 2010). Such a community is defined as a “group of people who for generations have lived in a certain geographical area in the Republic of Indonesia because of ties to ancestral natural resources and have traditional governance institutions and an indigenous legal structure in their traditional territory” (Fay and Denduangrudee, 2016, 95). Provisions in the 1945 Indonesian Constitution gave the state the ability to recognize these communities, but they never did so until 1999 when the Ministry of Agrarian Affairs published a ministerial regulation laying out the procedures these communities would need to follow to gain such recognition (Bedner, 2016, 72).

As concerns expressed by indigenous peoples gained clout nationally, their

advocacy efforts consolidated around a new organization called *Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara* (AMAN). At its first national meeting in March 1999,

AMAN activists contended that adat communities had managed their lands for many generations, adat communities existed long before the Indonesian state did, and therefore the state should not presume to control adat lands. The thirty-five years since Suharto had come to power, purportedly in the name of the Indonesian people, AMAN argued, had only caused suffering for many original landowners. AMAN insisted on the reinstatement of property rights to adat communities and the abolition of all state policies that assigned primary rights to the state. They argued for revision of the relevant sections of the 1960 Basic Agrarian Law, the 1967 mining, forest, and foreign-investment laws (Afiff and Lowe, 2007, 84).

In the intervening years, AMAN has strengthened its efforts nationwide and as of 2016, has 21 regional chapters, 108 district chapters and 2,302 member communities (Fay and Denduangrudee, 2016, 100). The language of human rights became one of the most effective tools to frame wide-ranging issues that negatively affect the country's indigenous peoples, as demonstrated in a groundbreaking study published by *KOMNAS HAM* in 2016 (Nuraini et al, 2016).

AMAN's most significant advocacy breakthrough came in 2013 with a successful challenge brought by them to the country's Constitutional Court. The court's decision (henceforth, MK35) stated that adat territories within the forestry estate would no longer be considered owned by the state. As a result, adat communities recognized by the state could remove their territories from the forestry estate, which would be followed by receiving formal communal land ownership rights (McCarthy and Robinson, 2016). As will be discussed in the next section as well as in the next chapter, much of activism undertaken by AMAN since this decision has been focused on pressuring different state institutions (in particular, district governments) to develop procedures to formally identify and legalize customary legal communities and adat territories.

These demands made by AMAN and its allies on the Indonesian state and subsequent advocacy successes would not have been possible without participatory mapping. Over the last decade or so, alongside organizations such as the Network for Participatory Mapping (*Jaringan Kerja Pemetaan Partisipatif* or JKPP) and the Ancestral Domain Registration Agency (*Badan Registrasi Wilayah Adat* or BRWA), AMAN has worked in 20 provinces. They have submitted adat territory maps on over 7.4 million hectares of land to relevant state institutions and aim to map an additional 30 million hectares of these areas by 2020 (Fay and Denduangrudee, 2016, 101). These efforts illustrate the political nature of territorial claims-making by adat communities, legitimized on the basis of the submission of bottom-up participatory maps. As these communities become legible to the central government, there will be discrepancies with existing maps produced by different government ministries especially at the provincial and central levels. No technical fix exists to resolve overlapping claims (i.e. adat territories located within the forestry estate or on existing concessions), but rather requires political decisions to be undertaken, backed up by political will and legal frameworks emanating from the highest levels of government.

Attempts at agrarian reform after the passage of the Parliamentary Directive on Agrarian Reform and Management of Natural Resources (TAP)

After widespread discontent with Suharto's policies was expressed through land occupations and public protests, pressure was placed on the government to prioritize agrarian reform, culminating in the passage of TAP directive as discussed earlier. Since then, various non-state actors have concertedly engaged the bureaucratic-legal arena at all levels of government to attempt to realize meaningful changes to the country's land

tenure arrangements, that would entail “convert[ing the TAP] into a clear framework of law, policy, and practice that could resolve disputes and drive transformative change” (Lucas and Warren, 2013, 325). During the intervening years, coordinated multiscale advocacy involving alliances between different civil society actors has become the norm, especially given that these changes were not going to merely occur from activism at the village, district or even provincial level (i.e. because of decentralization of corruption and patron-client arrangements that emerged after the political and bureaucratic reforms of May 1998). After years of wrangling, the first high-level policy breakthrough after TAP took place under the presidency of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in 2007 (Rachman, 2011). The NLA launched the National Agrarian Reform Programme or PPAN, which intended to redistribute 9.25 million hectares of land, with 1.1 million hectares from the non-forestry estate and 8.15 million hectares targeted to be released from the forestry estate. Another 7.35 million hectares of “so-called abandoned [or neglected] lands (*tanah terlantar*), state lands that had been unused, misused, or used by private companies in ways contrary to government regulations” (Rachman, 2011, 66) were also identified for possible redistribution.

On the other hand, despite the seemingly high ambition that was laid out with this policy, doubts appeared regarding the prospects of its meaningful implementation. Many activists “argued the program was only a maneuver to gain support in the 2009 election and that it surreptitiously incorporated in a new format privatized land distribution as part of a program bundle that would cement the hold of neoliberal land policies over Indonesia” (Lucas and Warren, 2012, 331). On the one hand, while the head of the NLA, Joyo Winoto explicitly expressed that the NLA’s orientation would change from one that

prioritized the strict and “orderly” implementation of existing land laws and land administration procedures towards a focus on “improving the welfare of Indonesian people... [to] realiz[e] distributive justice in relation to land access, use, control, and ownership” (Rachman, 2011, 71). On the other hand, the Ministry of Forestry refused to release the 7.35 million hectares that it controlled and instead promoted its own social forestry program, *Pengelolaan Hutan Bersama Masyarakat* (PHBM), which would grant access permits (but not ownership rights) to communities who have settled in the forestry estate (Lucas and Warren, 2012). In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Finance refused to provide necessary funding both to process claims or to provide agricultural credit for recipients of newly redistributed land. The heterogeneity in views amongst central government state institutions in terms of how post-TAP land tenure and land use policies should be oriented was not resolved. As a consequence, PPAN focused on scaling up individual land titling rather than meaningful land redistribution and democratization of land control (Rachman, 2011). Such titling of individual land plots on areas within the non-forestry estate had already existed for many years, especially after the institutionalization of the Land Administration Project (LAP), funded by the World Bank beginning in 1994. Many civil society actors such as KPA have long argued that the LAP contributes to a “liberalizing market model in which land and resources go to the highest bidders, irrespective of social need or productive use” (Lucas and Warren, 2013, 98). Rather than promote communal control of land, the acceleration of such types of titling through programs such as the LAP or PRONA would only serve to make the rural poor vulnerable to dispossession (i.e. selling of land out of desperation), which would exacerbate existing unequal land tenure arrangements. In addition, while Government

Regulation 11 of 2010 on Neglected Lands clarified procedures for *tanah terlantar* to be recovered by the state and subsequently redistributed, any meaningful allocation has yet to occur (Lucas and Warren, 2013, 337).

Given that these failures can partially be attributed to differences between the views of central government ministries, efforts have been made to harmonize policies across different state institutions. As briefly alluded to earlier in the chapter, one important development was the merger of the Ministry of Forestry with the Ministry of Environment to form the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF) when President Jokowi took office in 2014. In addition, as part of the new President's reorganization of national level institutions, the NLA was also "given ministerial status, becoming part of the Ministry of Agrarian Affairs and Spatial Planning, in an attempt to address the sectoral interests that allegedly prevented reform in the past and to empower an agency that has been widely viewed by many activists as an institutional ally" (Neilson, 2016, 254). All state institutions are now also obliged to develop regulations and guidelines to ensure compliance with MK35. The breakthrough came when the Ministry of Home Affairs released Regulation 52 of 2014 on Guidelines for the Recognition and Protection of Customary Communities, which lays out procedures for district governments to institutionalize working groups to assess land tenure claims of adat communities (Fay and Denduangrudee, 2016, 104).

Joint Ministerial Regulation 79 of 2014 on Procedures for Settling Control of Land within the Forest Zone serves as the basis for non-adat claims within the forestry estate to be made. It was considered a breakthrough as for the first time, the Ministries of Home Affairs, Forestry and Public Works and the National Land Agency jointly released

a regulation. Crucially, it institutionalizes teams (Team Listing the Control, Ownership, Use and Utilization of Land or *Tim Inventarisasi Penguasaan, Pemilikan, Penggunaan dan Pemanfaatan Tanah*, or IP4T) consisting of bureaucrats in state institutions at all scales to process and verify land tenure claims of rural populations (Bedner, 2016, 79). These attempts to harmonize land tenure and land use policies across government ministries at different scales demonstrates that a degree of heterogeneity within the Indonesian state regarding these issues has always existed. Therefore, it becomes important not to presuppose the ability of top-down mandates to fully determine local realities even during the Suharto era. In this regard, I would contend that the more explicitly visible fragmented nature of the Indonesian state in the post-Suharto context highlights that struggles between different actors arguably can be indicative of meaningful contestations may result in the legitimization and realization of alternative imaginaries of rural economic development. The fact that new national-level presidential/ministerial instructions, decrees and regulations are constantly released to deal with issues of land tenure and land use, does not necessarily indicate that state institutions continue to somehow be technically deficient and incapable of providing enabling conditions for timely policy implementation to take place. Rather, without downplaying how plantation, logging and mining interests have an outsized influence in determining relevant policies and the negative impacts of ongoing political corruption at all levels of government, such sustained changes reflect how the state continues to consider and arbitrate between different visions, including ones that have been historically marginalized, on how land should be allocated, used and/or protected. Therefore, by recognizing the impossibility of deriving optimal policies that will align with the interests

of all relevant actors, any formal institutionalized policy framework will always be a contingent conjuncture, and which may hold together or come apart over time. As a consequence, any effort towards working towards complete coherence should be seen as utopic as a clear end-point will unlikely be achieved.

What resulted from these dynamic policy and legal developments that are aimed at developing a relatively coherent central government approach to attempt once again to realize goals set out in the TAP directive is the RAPS framework. It was released in January 2015 as an integral part of President Jokowi's 2015-2019 National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN). This plan, popularly termed *Nawacita*, more broadly sets out the newly-elected President's policy priorities for his term in office. It is explicit regarding the promotion of development from the village and district level within the framework of the singular nation-state (*Membangun Indonesia dari pinggiran dengan memperkuat daerah-daerah dan desa dalam kerangka negara kesatuan*), reflecting a commitment by the central government to some extent, to continue with political decentralization, despite its noted problems. Simultaneously, the plan is also forthright in its desire to continue to actively produce subjectivities to reinforce patriotic values and nationalist sentiment (*Melakukan revolusi karakter bangsa*), reflecting the continuity of the relevance of invoking *Pancasila* principles to sustain a baseline meaning of Indonesian citizenship that can resonate across the country's wide-ranging contexts (Aritonang, 2014).

Notably, existing schemes that failed in earlier years were packaged together under RAPS. The PHBM program that began under the previous President morphed into the social forestry or *perhutanan sosial* scheme (henceforth, PS) aims to allocate access

permits lasting for 35 years (but extendable) covering 12.7 million hectares to local communities whose livelihoods depend on areas in the forestry estate. Specific mechanisms to implement the policy were formalized in MoEF's Ministerial Regulation 86 of 2014 on Social Forestry. There are four different possible options for local communities to receive access permits under the PS scheme: *Hutan Kemasyarakatan* (HKm), *Hutan Desa* (HD), *Hutan Tanaman Rakyat* (HTR) and *Kemitraan* (Banjade et al, 2017; Sulisty, 2017). For HKm, access permits are allocated to farmers' organizations or cooperatives (*kelompok tani*) at the sub-village level while for HD, they are allocated to village institutions. For these two types of permits, the extraction of certain non-timber forest products and planting of diverse agroforestry crops can take place in both protection and production forests, while controlled logging activities are allowed in production forests. For HTR, cooperatives are designated as holders of access permits and this scheme legalizes silvicultural and controlled logging activities in production forests. Lastly, the *kemitraan* option allows a local community to partner either with the state-owned or private companies, and are modeled on existing arrangements wherein "big plantations employ small farmers in such schemes as contract farming and the "inti-plasma" (core-satellite) plantation model" (Lucas and Warren, 2013, 333). Importantly under the PS scheme, the state retains ownership of areas covered by these access permits and local communities must maintain forest function as defined by existing conservation and environmental laws, not to mention the authority to revoke these permits if violations occur. Notably, the planting of oil palm is explicitly not permitted under the PS scheme. This type of centralized-decentralized arrangements is also reflected in the establishment of a new institution called *Balai Perhutanan Sosial dan Kemitraan Lingkungan*

(henceforth, BPSKL) housed under the MoEF, created in 2016 to facilitate the processing and verification of PS access permit claims. While local communities have the option to seek approval of their claims from the provincial government, they are also able to submit their proposals directly to the national-level MoEF through one of the five BPSKL regional offices across the country. PS access permit proposals must contain a list of all heads of households who belong to the specified local community, clearly identifying who is allowed to access demarcated areas in the forestry estate and who is not.

In addition, all local communities have to work with Forest Management Units (FMU) to develop annual and decadal work plans. Generally, they contain information and timelines regarding plans to finalize boundaries of work areas, prepare detailed participatory maps/landscape surveys, identify agroforestry crops and native species to be planted, identify ecosystem services to be maintained, determine community patrolling requirements and set out capacity building requirements. Having replaced district-level forestry institutions, FMUs operate at the sub-provincial level and not only have jurisdiction over monitoring and regulating activities in areas in the forestry estate, but also are explicitly mandated to engage local communities to collaboratively co-manage land and natural resources (Bae et al, 2014). While their institutional status was formalized with Government Regulation No. 6 of 2007 on Forest Planning, the acceleration of their establishment across the country has only taken place in the last few years, in part because approval must be sought from provincial governors (Ardiansyah et al, 2015). Nevertheless, the establishment of new relationships between FMUs and local communities does not guarantee the achievement of win-win outcomes, given longstanding distrust of the state by rural populations as well as the fact that the

Indonesian state still retains formal ownership over areas where access permits have been allocated to local communities (Sahide et al, 2016).

The other main component of RAPS is termed *Tanah Obyek Reforma Agraria* (TORA) consisting of a land redistribution and an asset legalization element. The former consists of 4.1 million hectares of land identified for release from the forestry estate (land use includes dryland agriculture, mixed gardens, rice fields, unproductive production forest, urban settlements) and 0.4 million hectares of abandoned and neglected land not in the forestry estate was also identified for a total of 4.5 million hectares. This figure represents about a quarter of the 16.6 million hectares that were initially proposed for land redistribution under the previous President. The latter consists of transmigrant land certification and PRONA land titling, also totaling 4.5 million hectares. Other than areas allocated for urban settlements current within the forestry estate, transmigrant settlements and PRONA land titling, access permits and ownership rights under RAPS are predominantly communal and cannot be bought or sold on a land market. It is unclear how the government derived these figures and identified targeted areas where land tenure arrangements can formally be changed. However, based on conversations I had with various civil society actors, it was noted that some of the information contained are derived from participatory maps submitted to the government by JKPP and its partner organizations over the past few years. Importantly, this information can be regularly revised (every six months for PS) to ensure “accuracy” of these indicative areas.

Conclusion

In conclusion, attempts to meaningfully realize agrarian reform since Indonesia’s

independence and up until today can be interpreted in a pessimistic light. Despite high hopes from the mid-1940s until the mid-1960s, the first part of the chapter traced the history of how issues relating to land tenure, land use and, in effect, rural development were framed in overtly ideological ways during the first two decades of Indonesia's independence. Since then, events did not result in the democratization of access to and control of the country's land. In addition, despite BAL having the primary intention of redistributing land to rural populations, it also reinforced the system of concession licensing, which resulted in privileging large-scale commercial activities as the primary basis of rural development.

When President Suharto came to power in 1965, his vision of capitalist modernization was underpinned by top-down control of and access to the country's vast forested and agricultural landscapes and had a mix of authoritarian and technocratic tendencies that banished and criminalized leftist ideas from political discourse. During his 30 years of rule, not only did the implementation of the BAL cease, but the benefits resulting from the exploitation of the country's landscapes disproportionately accrued to plantation interests (and government bureaucrats/military officials who benefited from patronage arrangements). The attempted political reforms and policy changes that were made after 1998 have not yet led to any semblance of substantive shifts to formal land tenure arrangements nor has it effectively dealt with negative social and environmental consequences. At the same time, as decentralization failed to achieve its intended goals, the central government's reassertion of its authority to determine appropriate land use practices and land tenure arrangements has been justified on the basis of expert-driven technocratic approaches and epistemologies. Such efforts build on the top-down approach

of the BFL and spatial planning laws to argue that land allocation and land use decision-making and resolution of land conflict can and should take place based on seemingly neutral scientific and technical criteria.

However, this narrative of constant failure to meaningfully achieve agrarian reform over the past seventy years does not do justice to longstanding, concerted efforts by civil society actors and social/mass movements to articulate variegated justifications for the democratization of access to, control and ownership of land, providing some extent of resistance against state policies and dominant political-economic arrangements that have marginalized the interests of rural populations for many years. By attributing agency to those who attempt to assert alternative paradigms towards realizing economic well-being, it becomes important to not overemphasize structural forces, top-down governance frameworks and expert epistemologies given that their legitimacy as I have shown, have up until today, not been totalizing or permanent.

In this regard, the propensity of bottom-up social mobilization, protest and mass participation is not something alien to Indonesia's political culture, despite President Suharto's many decades of authoritarian rule. Such impulses started during anti-colonial struggle and only intensified upon independence when visions for nation-building had not yet been determined and remained up for robust debate. Despite the failure of the implementation of BAL, its initial passage would not have been possible without the influence of left and leftist political forces that were able to organize themselves to assert demands from the local to national level. Sentiments of agrarian injustice that accumulated across the country over many years were also key reasons behind the downfall of Suharto in May 1998. They also led to the establishment of agrarian reform

as a policy priority in the subsequent years with the passage of the TAP directive.

Without dismissing the continuing dominance of plantation, logging and mining interests and their ability to incorporate or co-opt certain individuals and groups of individuals into participating in concession economic activities, these examples indicate that any political-economic system should be seen as contingent and unstable, leaving open the possibilities of realizing “different” or “better” land tenure arrangements.

Hence, it is fascinating how the current entrenchment of technocratic framings of issues of land use and land tenure and lack of explicit ideological critique (i.e. language of class) of how Indonesia’s rural economy is currently structured is taking place at the same time as the (some) expansion of political space is being leveraged by civil society actors to work at different scales to transform formal land tenure arrangements. As will be discussed in the next chapter, while civil society actors recognize the importance of bottom-up mobilization of local communities as a necessary component of the RAPS implementation process, they also focus their activism at the national level to implore the central government to ensure that sub-national state institutions do not actively hinder policy implementation. Ultimately, this multiscale advocacy strategy recognizes the malleability of the Indonesian state and hence is aimed at reconstituting state-society dynamics in ways that directly contribute towards achieving goals of democratizing access and ownership of land and/or maintaining forest cover and conserving biodiversity. Nevertheless, given that different state and non-state actors have different ideas regarding what they want to realize, the derivation of a set of abstract “good” outcomes based on these goals agreed to by everyone is unlikely to occur. Therefore, paying attention to how *seemingly* non-ideological, technocratic discourses can be

signified with specific meanings and deployed for different purposes by these different actors is suggestive of the inescapability of open-ended contestation, deliberation and negotiation over specific ways to (re)territorialize land as changes to formal land tenure arrangements are sought after through the implementation of RAPS framework.

The continued fragmentation of the Indonesian state in the post-1998 political context and the pitfalls of both centralized and decentralized governance illustrates how institutional design cannot but be politicized. As “policies and programs to decentralize frequently create opportunities for the central authority to expand their political influence over key local institutions” (Sahide et al, 2016, 89), such power struggles by different actors within the Indonesian state at different scales illustrate that the implementation of the RAPS framework taking place at the subnational level will not be linear or straightforward. Such continued contestations are inextricably linked to heterogeneous interests at the provincial, district and village levels. Therefore, these ongoing struggles over legitimizing and institutionalizing specific ways of allocating, using and/or conserving land over others may produce “new” or even “better” outcomes as historical top-down attempts at standardizing the administration of villages as well as governing land and rural populations, continue to not be fully “successful.” As will be further elaborated in Chapter 4, given that questions of how land is territorialized are an integral component of determining the meanings of the Indonesian nation and Indonesian citizenship, the fact that they remain unsettled illustrates how RAPS implementation interweaves questions of rural development and economic justice with cultural and national identity.

Chapter 3: Situation of RAPS implementation in North Sumatra

As mentioned in the introduction, the focus of my fieldwork was making sense of how the RAPS framework is currently being implemented in the province of North Sumatra. In this chapter, I will first discuss further the history of land politics in this specific province, highlighting how contestations of some form over how to know, represent, demarcate, allocate, use and govern land have always existed in this province since the Dutch colonial era and have been and continue to be more pronounced than in other parts of Indonesia. I will also discuss how the province has historically been and continues to be a crucial site of mass movement and civil society organizing regarding issues of land use and land tenure. Such intertwined ecological, demographic, political, cultural complexities result in seemingly irreconcilable worldviews and interests amongst different state and non-state actors who may have different opinions regarding what kinds of production practices and conservation efforts should be promoted or discouraged. The province continues to be known not only for persistent political corruption, but also for a commitment to regional and national economic imperatives and incentives (expressed through provincial-level spatial plans) that reinforce extractivist-oriented capitalist modernization. Therefore, the implementation of RAPS affords an opportunity for civil society actors to catalyze potential transformation land tenure arrangements in the province and in effect, the future trajectory of its rural economy.

Given this reality and by elaborating on my fieldwork experiences and observations, I argue in this chapter that provincial level civil society actors recognize that meaningful engagement with different state institutions in the bureaucratic-legal

arena is currently taking place to implement the RAPS framework despite longstanding challenges to changing existing land tenure arrangements. Nevertheless, given differences between different civil society actors regarding what RAPS framework should achieve, a gap exists between the rhetoric of deriving solutions that aim to satisfy the interests of all actors and the actually existing interactions between the different state institutions and civil society actors.

In this regard, I emphasize how non-deterministic, non-linear trajectories (i.e. steady, predictable incremental progress towards achieving quantitative targets) of attempts to change land tenure arrangements through the implementation of the RAPS are not necessarily “bad,” but reflect how state-society interactions will always privilege the views and interests of certain actors over others. Hence, any outcomes that emerge are irreducible to self-evident understandings of “success” or “failure” (answering sub-question b). Nevertheless, persistent heterogeneity and malleability of state institutions highlight how the strength of dominant perspectives may be non-totalizing and contingent, opening up possibilities for continued shifts to existing land tenure arrangements to occur. In this regard, given the broad recognition of the importance of “participation” in the post-1998 political context that in part indirectly draws on and is influenced by the history of ideologically-inflected confrontations against dominant political-economic arrangements, we should expect the RAPS implementation process to be open-ended and messy. Therefore, the inability to follow the dictates of seemingly neutral proceduralist bureaucratic rationalities should not be perceived negatively. Crucially, these discursive micropolitics also involve material practices, especially through the production of (participatory) maps as well as other representations of land

tenure claims (and accompanying data infrastructures) that substantively mediate the interactions between diverse state and non-state actors. I will show how they play important roles in the effort to destabilize a seemingly pre-defined and constrained “non-ideological” political space and meaningfully oppose the control of land by dominant interests (answering sub-question a). Nevertheless, if unresolved differences amongst indigenous, peasant and conservation interests become too significant, not to mention the persistence of patronage arrangements, institutional fragmentation would only serve to reinforce longstanding unequal land tenure arrangements and stifle any plausible semblance of meaningfully implementing RAPS.

History of land politics in North Sumatra during Dutch colonial rule

Discussions regarding contemporary land politics in North Sumatra have to take into account the longstanding practices of monoculture plantation production and large-scale exploitation of the province’s forested landscapes since the Dutch colonial era that began in the mid-19th century. On the island of Sumatra, the “development of commercial crops began in 1863 when Nienhuys, a Dutch tobacco cultivator, and his colleagues opened the first tobacco estate in northeast Sumatra. Nienhuys was able to obtain a 4,000 bouwl parcel of land from Sultan Mahmud, the ruler of Deli [near the present-day provincial capital, Medan], on a twenty-year lease at an extremely low rental” (Sairin, 1996, 2). Over time, most of the expansion took place in what was termed the “plantation belt” located in current-day North Sumatra and by 1942, covered an area of one million hectares (Stoler, 1985). Tobacco was the first cash crop that was introduced and dominated until rubber production began around 1910. Oil palm

plantations also appeared around this time and became ubiquitous by the 1930s (Li, 2017). By the early 1950s, 85% of the 240,000 plantation workers were located in North Sumatra and 96% of plantations were foreign-owned (Lindblad and Post, 2009). Notably, Deli tobacco gained an international reputation and was exported and used worldwide by the early 20th century. The province would also come to dominate Indonesia's palm oil production in the early years of the country's independence (Penny, 1967).

It is important to note that from the outset, relative instability of labor availability defined the plantation economy. Over time, "Javanese and Chinese peasants were imported as coolie labor for the foreign-owned plantations and mines, creating a mutinous population" (Kuddus, 2017, 47), partially due to the inability to coax local populations, especially those who owned land to engage in such work from the early 20th century onwards. Initially, "unfree" labor was required to ensure smooth plantation operations. The use of "indenture contracts prevent[ed] workers from absconding to seek better wages elsewhere, or accessing land to farm independently" (Li, 2017, 270) sustained for some time a docile and stable workforce. The 94,000 strong workforce in 1902 was governed under the

the Coolie Ordinance, first imposed in 1880 (phased out after 1911). [C]ontract infractions such as failing to show respect, weak effort, attempted desertion, and insurrection exposed workers to penal sanctions including flogging, imprisonment, and death by hanging. Tobacco cultivation and processing was detailed work and closely supervised. Workloads were extremely demanding, and food, health, and hygiene conditions were poor, which led to high rates of mortality (Li, 2016, 253).

However, the maintenance of the harsh conditions described above did not last long. As plantation companies encountered difficulties controlling their workers, providing for subsistence needs and maintaining high labor productivity, some of these workers began to attempt to squat and occupy on areas of land not allocated for plantation development

in the early 20th century. As plantation wages of “free” laborers fell drastically, concerted attempts were made to delink livelihood reproduction from the plantation economy (Li, 2016). Importantly, such efforts not only took place when labor and peasant organizing began to strengthen, but also when anticolonial sentiment intensified as opposition against Dutch rule was inextricably intertwined with plantation estates that were predominantly owned by foreign companies (Stoler, 1988). For example, Gerakan Rakyat Indonesia (GERINDO) that promoted both anticapitalist and anticolonial sentiment was established in 1937 and not only mobilized Batak smallholders, but also received support from Javanese plantation workers (Stoler, 1985).

Nevertheless, at the moment of decolonization, the plantation economy had become entrenched, especially in what today are the northeastern portions of North Sumatra, directly or indirectly structuring in substantial ways how livelihood reproduction was to be realized. The demographic situation changed drastically over a century when “the area went from being sparsely populated in 1800 to having over half a million people in 1905 and almost 1.7 million in 1930. According to the census of 1930, more than 42 percent of the total population of northeast Sumatra were Javanese. Ten per cent were Chinese, and about 22 per cent consisted of members of other Indonesian ethnic groups” (Sairin, 1996, 3). In addition, plantation crops grown in this small area generated more than half of the country’s foreign exchange earnings by the mid-20th century (Pelzer, 1957). The prevalence of the plantation economy would not disappear upon country’s independence despite significant changes to labor, land tenure and company ownership arrangements that were made due to nationalist sentiment and

persistent protest from labor and peasant organizations who subscribed to left-leaning or leftist ideologies.

Political developments upon independence in relation to land politics

As alluded to in the previous chapter, many instances of peasant occupation of plantation estates and debates regarding nationalization of foreign companies that took place after Indonesia's independence were located in North Sumatra. Beginning in the early 1950s, a number of peasant organizations organized plantation workers as well as squatter households who came from other parts of the province to occupy plantation lands (van Langenberg, 1982). What eventually transpired was “changing conditions of production at foreign-owned estates in North Sumatra during the 1950s [that] included a dramatic increase in labor unrest as a result of trade union militancy and rising expectations” (Lindblad, 2009, 91). These mass movement organizations, led by SARBUPRI were able to achieve gains for both permanent and casual workers in terms of pay and better conditions for social reproduction (Li, 2017). Furthermore, over 115,000 hectares of plantation land had been occupied by over 500,000 people by the mid-1950s (Pelzer, 1957). An emergency law passed in 1954 gave non-permanent use rights to some of these occupiers on around 180,000 hectares of land (Kaputra et al, 2014).

Finally, aided by radical leftist peasant movements and political parties, including BTI and PKI, President Sukarno's subsequent policy on nationalizing foreign owned companies eventually led to the nationalization of over ninety Dutch owned rubber, tobacco and oil palm estates in North Sumatra (Lindblad and Post, 2009). However, it is

important to note that the influence of labor and peasant movements was curbed when state control of plantation estates was firmly established, diminishing any possibility of lasting broad consciousness of class politics. The Indonesian central government was “conspicuously quick to wrest the initiative from the unions and ordered all seized estates to be placed under direct military supervision....to forestall control over vital economic assets by communist-inspired trade unions” (Lindblad, 2009, 98). The claim that the state always acted in the interest of “the people” was used not only by Suharto, but also Sukarno, despite his leftist sympathies when he suspended direct elections and inaugurated the era of Guided Democracy in 1957, which took place not so coincidentally around the same time when nationalization of foreign companies had peaked. This line of reasoning was used to justify top-down decision-making to stifle any opposition that would hinder the realization of his vision of Indonesian socialism. Sukarno’s desire to “ensur[e] the orderly takeover of estates and maintain export revenue” (Li, 2016, 256) not only illustrates a commitment to rural industrialization as a key element of postcolonial nation-building, but also ensured that the state, including military elites would be directly involved in the operation of these plantations, reducing the amount of land available for redistribution. The concomitant quelling popular of discontent with state policies can be illustrated by the rapid decrease in the number of strikes in North Sumatra from over 700 in 1956 to 38 in 1960. A new law in 1960 that was strictly enforced by the military also explicitly criminalized land squatting, allowing for eviction without court order. As Stoler (1985) states,

the barrage of statistics attesting to vast union membership, new labor legislation, huge losses for foreign enterprises and an unparalleled number of labor actions in the 1950s should not overshadow the fact of an

underlying and persistent opposition to popular forms of protest nurtured along with independence itself (129).

As will be discussed later, current debates regarding implementation of RAPS in North Sumatra involve protracted land conflict between state-owned plantations that were nationalized during the late 1950s and local communities.

Events of 1965 and New Order rule

The nationalization of foreign-owned companies in North Sumatra would continue into 1965. In February of that year, “SARBUPRI plantation workers tried to occupy plantations owned by the US Rubber Company in North Sumatra. Sukarno and his ministers informed US Rubber and Goodyear that the government would take temporary ‘administrative control’ of foreign-owned rubber plantations” (White, 2016, 5). However, the political situation shifted dramatically after the events of September 1965. The regional military commander Brigadier General Darjatmo who was said to have leftist sympathies, was replaced by Brigadier General Sobiran, a fervent anti-communist barely a month after the G30S events (Robinson, 2017). Subsequently, a “wave of killings, swept through the plantation regions of Sumatra, targeting officials and members of SARBUPRI, between October 1965 and March 1966, with plantation companies providing the vehicles to transport prisoners to places of execution” (White, 2016, 7) It has been documented that “rivers had been clogged with the bodies of [plantation] workers, and that sons of SARBUPRI officials were forced to watch their fathers’ execution” (White, 2016, 8). Eventually, North Sumatra was one of three provinces in the country (Bali and East Java being the other two) where most of mass killings took place (Collins, 2002). Suharto’s rule eventually came to consolidate direct

state control of significant expanses of land. Violent seizures of land abetted by the police and district military officials accompanied the issuance of concessions, leading to protracted instances of land conflict given that many community or customary claims to land were disregarded by the Indonesian state. Such dispossession was justified on the basis that local communities did not have any formalized written evidence of ownership rights. The threat of violence against anyone engaged in land occupations has also been recorded (Kaputra et al, 2014). As Suharto entrenched his rule in the subsequent years, diverging interests between labor and capital were minimized in the name of order and maximizing economic growth. Nevertheless, those who were able to hold on to a formal job in the plantation sector enjoyed good working conditions. However, as labor requirements diminished over time (e.g. oil palm production is not particularly labor-intensive compared to rubber), the permanent workforce of the sector reduced by more than half by the late 1970s. Therefore, rural populations more and more could not depend on permanent plantation work as a stable livelihood strategy (Li, 2016). What this demonstrates is that as plantation economy became increasingly ubiquitous during Suharto's rule, demands made in the early two decades of the country's independence were negated as resubjection of peasant consciousness towards conformity, compliance and precarity took place with the repression of mass-based organizations.

Nevertheless, North Sumatra remained a key node where activist organizing regarding issues relevant to land tenure took place especially as discontent with Suharto's rule emerged as described in the previous chapter. In 1993, consolidation of informal efforts at a meeting in Medan of NGO activists formed a movement network called GRA-Sumut in response to growing incidences of land conflict in the province. In 1994, Henry

Saragih, a prominent student activist at the University of North Sumatra in the 1980s played an important role in forming the North Sumatra Peasants' Union or SPSU. Much of its advocacy efforts was inspired by leftist politics of the 1950s and 1960s. Shortly after the events of May 1998, SPSU in coordination with their counterparts in West Java, established *Federasi Serikat Petani Indonesia* (FSPI). When La Via Campesina, the global food sovereignty movement moved its headquarters to Jakarta in the mid-2000s, Henry Saragih would go on to become its coordinator. However, internal dynamics over time within FSPI led it to split in 2007, in part due to provincial level movements desiring to assert their autonomy, despite their common critique of industrial agriculture and neoliberal economic policies. SPI North Sumatra emerged as a key node of the peasant movement in the country. In addition to peasant organizing that were robust during the anticolonial and Sukarno eras and was revived after the downfall of President Suharto, the increasing influence of indigenous movements on issues related to land tenure need to be taken into account (Bachriadi, 2010).

Indigeneity in North Sumatra

As discussed in the previous chapter, land tenure claims made in the name of adat have become ubiquitous across Indonesia, especially over the last decade or so with the emergence of AMAN. North Sumatra has played a significant role in the movement's success over the past decade or so. Its immediate past secretary general is Abdon Nababan, who self-identifies as a Toba Batak and in addition, its fifth National Congress since its founding in 1998 was recently held in Medan in March 2017. However, mass mobilization in the province based on adat is not new and can be traced back to 1953

when Malay, Karo, and Simalungun community leaders formed the Organization for the Struggle of the Guardians of the Land in Indonesia (BPRPI) to claim plantation lands that were controlled by the Dutch during colonial rule. Over the next decades, BPRPI organized several attempts to occupy and cultivate land and was often stifled by police and local governments (van Langenberg, 1982). However, even as these mobilizations call attention to the long history of contentious confrontations between local communities and the state since Indonesia's independence regarding the injustice of existing land tenure arrangements, efforts at claims-making in the name of indigeneity remains controversial until this day. As will be discussed later in the chapter, unresolved questions of both the possibility and desirability of reconstituting communities (and formalizing them as legal subjects) tied to demarcated territories contribute to the difficulties of implementing RAPS in North Sumatra.

Importantly, there is evidence for and against the historical existence of self-defined communities of individuals amongst the different Batak sub-groups and Malay populations with customs, rules and political institutions. For example, even during the 19th century, it was noted that a clear articulation of Pakpak identity was not possible.

Many

confuse Toba and Pakpak kinship terms and are often unable to distinguish elements of Toba and Pakpak adat....Many Pakpak work as laborers in Toba and Karo areas, marry local women and settle matrilocally [and] these individuals adopt a patrilineal name and speak the language of the area. Rarely does a Pakpak take pride in his identity as Pakpak. The Pakpak take spouses, customs, and words from neighboring groups; rather than being enriched by such borrowings, Pakpak society and language are being progressively diluted....Intermarriage with other ethnic groups, revolutionary changes in the communications network, a new political organization, and the disappearance of material culture now provide the background for social relations which diverge significantly from the pattern of relations in the past....They express an awareness of the

dissolution of their traditional society and some believe that adat will disappear during the course of the next generation (Viner and Kaplan, 1981, 102-104)

On the other hand, it is also true that many Karo Batak communities were largely self-contained and self-sufficient before Dutch colonial rule in 1915 in part because they did not engage in cash crop production except for pepper and wage labor was not practiced. Disposal and use rights to land did exist, but they could be only transferred to those identified as Karo Batak (Penny, 1967). In the case of the Karo Batak communities who were settled in what became the plantation belt, clear distinctions with other different ethnic groups persisted into the period of Dutch colonial rule even as the region's economic structures underwent transformations.

Between 1870 and 1942 the territories and populations of some forty-one principalities located on the northern and central east coast of Sumatra, comprising three main ethnic communities--Malay, Karo Batak, and Simalungun Batak--were incorporated into the Netherlands East Indies empire. Contractual agreements were entered into between local rulers and the Indies government, whereby the principalities were granted nominal status as "self-governing states," given fixed territorial boundaries, and eventually linked together as the Residency of Sumatra's East Coast. The Malay, Karo, and Simalungun Batak communities were together granted recognition by the new colonial authorities as the "native" population of the residency, with special rights to land (*tanah*) and preeminence in customary law (Pelzer, 1957, 3).

In this regard, the constitution and preservation of discrete ethnic groups with clearly-defined territories aligned with the imperatives and interests of colonial rule as governance arrangements for indirect rule also benefited the leaders of these communities. There were even efforts to extend these forms of rule during the period after Indonesia's formal independence in 1945, when the Dutch, allied with these local elites and attempted to reoccupy estate lands from the Japanese who had controlled them during World War II to establish East Sumatra as an independent nation-state separate

from Indonesia. Before and after Indonesia gained its independence, it was noted that especially amongst ethnic Malay communities, there was an increasing “consciousness of being ‘sons of the soil,’ [which would engender] a nascent East Sumatran ‘nationalism’ in the face of the large immigrant population that had grown up in the residency since the 1870s” (van Langenberg, 1982, 9). In addition, “strong displays of support for the Dutch by certain indigenous groups....[contributed to] the Malay elite and European community reclaim[ing] privilege and power” (Stoler, 1988, 241) when East Sumatra was formed in December 1947. Before being dissolved and reintegrated back into Indonesia in 1950, the viability of an East Sumatra state was premised upon prolonging exclusionary “traditional” ethnic-based hierarchical structures that in fact could be conducive for large-scale plantation production, demonstrating the double-edged sword of making claims on the basis of custom or adat.

Nevertheless, during the 1950s after the dissolution of East Sumatra, many Malays, Simalungun and Karo populations saw themselves as the original people (*orang asli*) of the eastern portion of North Sumatra and felt that the influx over many decades of Javanese, Chinese, as well as Toba Batak immigrants, threatened their livelihoods (van Langenberg, 1982). BPRPI during this time emphasized that the claims of adat communities must be prioritized, which stood in contrast to peasant organizations that felt that Javanese and Toba Batak were also entitled to land rights as Indonesian citizens (Pelzer, 1957). These differences between indigenous-based movements and peasant organizations in North Sumatra would re-emerge once again in the years after President Suharto’s downfall, most clearly when BPRPI left FSPI in 2007 when it officially became a member of AMAN. As discussed in the previous chapter, FSPI held to a

position that maintained the paramountcy of the BAL to underpin any land reform policy while BPRPI had criticized it for not emphasizing the specific situation facing adat communities (Bachriadi, 2010). SPSU, who played a key role in constituting FSPI “supported farmers from every ethnic background, including Javanese descendants of former Dutch plantation workers” (Afiff and Lowe, 2007, 88). As I will elaborate in the next chapter, this phenomenon highlights how contemporary claims made on the basis of custom (i.e. articulation of this is not always clear or possible) must take into account how potential outcomes do not necessarily guarantee land tenure arrangements that lead to more equitable distribution of economic benefits given the potential marginalization of the interests of individuals and communities who do not identify as adat, and of cooptation by elites in communities that do.

In this regard, ideas, discourses and policy frameworks from “above” regarding the land use and land allocation and in effect, economic arrangements have always largely influenced, but not fully determined local realities. Attempts to rationalize and control forested landscapes to produce tropical commodities beginning in the Dutch colonial period in North Sumatra have always been dialectically intertwined with complex labor and land politics, characterized by an always shifting combination of coercion, control and power differentials (Stoler, 1985). On the one hand, plantation interests have historically benefited disproportionately from large-scale opening up of landscapes given factors such as the availability of cheap labor for plantation development sourced from outside Sumatra, lack of land available for independent production, lack of alternative job opportunities and decreased labor intensity of production over time, not to mention specter of the state violence and repression,

especially during the Suharto era. In effect, the control and use of landscapes in North Sumatra have always been tied to controlling and organizing a pliant, stable and productive labor force and preventing smallholder control of large areas of land. During the colonial era for example, “physical and verbal abuse, arbitrary transfers, dismissals and wage cuts” (Stoler, 1985, 91) were deployed to achieve such goals. On the other hand, we should appreciate that beginning with the anticolonial struggle, the emergence of peasant organizations, labor unions and political parties (e.g. both communist and anti-communist labor unions existed), albeit not always in unified ways and to different degrees of success, fought plantation interests to counter repressive working conditions and advocated for democratized access to land.

Hence, labor and land tenure arrangements have always been contested given the contingent legitimacy of government policies and plantation practices. As I will discuss in the next section, the recent emergence of indigenous movements and conservation NGOs over the last 20-30 years bring additional dynamics to counter the negative consequences that have arisen from the dominance of the plantation (and logging and mining) economy in the province. In this regard, while the concession economy has defined North Sumatra’s history in fundamental ways, concerted organizing by political parties, mass movements and civil society actors at different moments over the past century have been successful to some extent at remedying negative consequences resulting from extractivist and exploitative logics and envisioning livelihood reproduction strategies based upon expanding access, management and control of land to local communities.

Given this combination in North Sumatra of the long history on the one hand of land use policies that have privileged large-scale plantation and commercial interests and which continues until this day and on the other hand, mass mobilization, social movement and civil society organizing throughout the past century or so, the ongoing implementation of RAPS in this province provides a fascinating look at the contemporary prospects of potentially destabilizing dominant political-economic structures to realize alternative imaginaries of environmental and economic futures. In this regard, narrowly characterizing efforts to bring about these shifts in the province as “non-ideological” do not give justice to the historical legacy of political radicalism that haunts current forms of political expression. Therefore, current contestations, irreducible to rational deliberation and consensus-making within bureaucratic-legal arena produce unintended effects, highlighting the likelihood of the non-linear trajectory of implementation of the RAPS policy framework in the province.

Nevertheless, open-ended conceptualizations of such contestations, made possible with the widening of political space since President Suharto’s downfall in May 1998 has so far not led to significant transformations to land tenure arrangements in North Sumatra. Intransigent difficulties remain with regards to overcoming egregious corruption, predatory interests and patronage arrangements that continue to characterize the exercise of political authority in the province. Any envisageable change will have to overcome the dominance of existing power arrangements that are partly underpinned on the basis of direct or indirect control of land and continued depoliticization and demobilization of populations, which are maintained through a combination of repressive

and productive means. Tans (2011) suggests that in North Sumatra, the ability of such power arrangements to persist, primarily rests on the following factors:

First, politicians frequently appeal to national, ethnic, religious or community identities to convince groups that they will advance their collectively perceived interests. Identity appeals often stoke fear and prejudice, but they also promise preferential benefits for the group....Second, incumbent politicians distribute patronage in the form of special community development projects, perquisites for village leaders and projects tendered to NGOs or other organizations (26-27).

Unsurprisingly, such efforts by politicians to gain popular support does not only take place on the basis of targeting and convincing populations who subscribe to specific identities, but crucially have become effective with the threat or even manifestation of violence. North Sumatra is notoriously home to various predatory non-state actors, and many of them are identified as “*preman* (gangsters), typically linked to youth/crime organizations, have emerged as increasingly important political actors” (Hadiz and Robison, 2005, 235). One of the most prominent of these organizations is the *Pemuda Pancasila*, with a history that can be traced back to the 1950s. They were fervently anti-communist and linked up with certain factions of the military to stifle mobilization efforts of SARBUPRI from 1959-1965 and were also involved in the killings in the province after the G30S events. It has been argued that “no region matches North Sumatra in terms of the sheer political power and influence of the *preman*....Leaders of paramilitary youth organizations played the role of political enforcers during the New Order period, providing an unofficial service of intimidation for the regime and its officials in concert with the security apparatus proper” (Hadiz, 2003, 127). What this demonstrates is that: “goons and thugs are particularly well placed in a system of power in which the capacity to deploy, or at least threaten, violence is important in securing control of the local

apparatus of state” (Hadiz, 2003, 128). The linkage between maintaining these power arrangements to the control of land and production of plantation crops is clear. In parts of the province with longstanding plantations, local businessmen have been able to take advantage of increasing global demand for palm oil and have successfully enrolled local bureaucrats, criminal and paramilitary organizations that began during the Suharto era, into mafia-type arrangements (Tans, 2011). It is this broader political context, characterized by longstanding vested interests in the plantation, logging and mining industries and whose legitimacy has been sustained in part by enrolling opportunistic predatory or entrepreneurial actors and co-opting rural populations to depend on them for livelihood reproduction. Such circumstances have to be considered when we discuss the prospects of “successful” implementation of RAPS framework in the province.

The challenge of transforming land tenure arrangements in the province cannot be overstated. As of 2014, estimates suggest that around 23% (1.63 million out of 7.17 million hectares) of land in North Sumatra is covered by concession licenses (Kaputra et al, 2014). However, based on public data available and compiled by Hutan Rakyat Institute or HaRI (i.e. the NGO that facilitated my fieldwork) as of 2018, licenses to areas outside the forestry estate cover around 568,000 hectares while licenses to areas within the forestry estate cover around 359,000 hectares (total of around 927,000 hectares). This discrepancy may be due to licenses that expired since 2014 as well as lack of full transparency from NLA regarding their unwillingness to release all of this information.

	Forestry estate (ha)	Non-forestry estate (ha)	Total (ha)
Adat	26,876	264,749	291,625
Non-adat	7,215	9,988	17,203
Total	34,091	274,737	308,828

Table 1: Current extent of land conflict with private and state-owned corporations in North Sumatra

The table above shows the current documented extent of land conflict between local communities and both private and state-owned corporations as compiled by KPA, AMAN and HaRI. The total spatial extent of land conflict covers approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ of the area where concession licenses have officially been allocated. BPRPI, as a member of AMAN in North Sumatra are focusing their current advocacy efforts around coordinating claims of adat communities in the non-forestry estate in the districts of Deli Serdang, Serdang Bedagai, Toba Samosir and Simalungun. Many of these affected areas are claimed to have been controlled and used by adat communities before they were taken over by the Dutch and converted into tobacco plantations and before they were nationalized by the Indonesian state in the 1950s. While litigation is ongoing, police and military personnel continue to be involved to ensure that the use of these areas by local communities does not occur. In addition to the BPRPI's efforts in areas in and around the former "plantation belt," AMAN also works to resolve conflict situations in the parts of the western highlands in the districts of Toba Samosir, South Tapanuli, Humbang Hasundutan, Asahan where adat communities who have long settled in areas in the forestry estate have claims against PT TPL and its affiliated companies (Siagian and Harahap, 2016).

In a ceremony in December 2016, President Jokowi oversaw the first-ever allocation of adat territories to 9 adat communities after the landmark MK35 decision. The local community that had largest claim of around 6000 hectares was Pandumaan-Sipahuta, located in Humbang Hasundutan district in North Sumatra (Bevins, 2017). However, the finalization of the community's claim only took place in August 2018 when the regulation from the district head recognizing the community as a customary legal community was published after many years of struggle (personal communication). For non-adat communities, claims of right to use under the BAL or had initially been under a 1954 emergency law that had temporarily allocated to smallholders a portion of Dutch plantations that were not nationalized (Kaputra et al, 2014).

It is expected that some of these areas overlap with those identified in current TORA or PS indicative maps. However, in my conversations with provincial civil society actors, many conflict areas remain unacknowledged in any official maps where changes to existing land tenure arrangements can be made. In addition to areas where explicit instances of land conflict have been documented, a proportion of the rural population whose livelihoods depend on agricultural or forestry activities does not have formal land tenure (i.e. access permits or individual/communal ownership rights granted by the national-level state institutions). In some cases, ownership or access rights are issued by village or sub-district governments, but are not recognized by the central government (e.g. Sporadik titles in Jambi province) (Kunz et al, 2016). In other cases, state institutions at the district level and above are not able to effectively dictate and regulate access to and control of expanses of land, allowing local communities to engage in informal customary practices of land use and land allocation. This is not to suggest that

hierarchies within local communities or “external” threats do not exist. As will be discussed later in this chapter and the following chapter, ascertaining the extent of such tenure insecurity is not a straightforward process. In addition, I will also elaborate why it is also important to suggest that individuals or communities gaining formal tenure can be seen in both a positive or negative light. Similarly, not attaining a formal access permit or individual/communal ownership right may not necessarily be detrimental to the interests of rural populations.

During my fieldwork from June to August 2017, BPSKL of Sumatra Region was ramping up implementation of claims under the PS scheme. It had also taken on the responsibility of processing claims of adat communities that are currently located within the forestry estate. However, given that specific mechanisms and procedures for implementing the TORA scheme remained unclear, there were few actual claims being processed during my time in Medan, though conversations regarding its operationalization did take place. In North Sumatra, based on information provided by HaRI, 272,343 hectares of land have been identified for release from the forestry estate (currently categorized as either production or protection forests) under the TORA scheme. Over 215,000 hectares (6% of the forestry estate in the province) are categorized as land that contains “dryland farming and mixed plantation that have become the main source of people's livelihood” (*pertanian lahan kering dan kebun campur yang jadi sumber mata pencaharian rakyat*). This figure could be higher as PS access permits can be given for land with similar characteristics (i.e. the boundary between what constitutes “dryland farming and mixed plantation” and “production forest” and may not be discernible or meaningful to local communities). Figures are not available for the amount

of land allocated under the TORA scheme already in the non-forestry estate. However, it would be safe to assume that a very limited amount of neglected land has been identified for allocation given that the total figure for the entire country is 0.4 million hectares. The figures for the PS scheme are substantially higher as seen in the following table that shows the extent of land that has been included in the initial national indicative map (PIAPS) released in January 2017.

	<i>Hutan Desa, Hutan Kemasyarakatan, Hutan Tanaman Rakyat</i>				<i>Kemitraan</i>	Total
	Protected Forest (ha)	Production Forest (ha)	Convertible Production Forest (ha)	Limited Production Forest (ha)	All forestry estate areas (ha)	
PIAPS	76,964	197,395	10,412	192,386	73,730	550,887

Table 2: Extent of land area in North Sumatra identified for PS scheme as of January 2017

The total figure covers around 1/3 of the size of the forestry estate in the province. In addition, approximately 36,966 hectares (as of end of 2017) has already been already issued with formal access permits (Dewantoro, 2018).

Convergence between advocacy efforts of KPA, AMAN and WALHI

Over the course of my fieldwork, it became clear that a broad alliance consisting of provincial representatives and local member organizations of KPA, AMAN and WALHI in North Sumatra had formed, given the similar ways of envisaging what RAPS should achieve. Fundamentally, they ground their advocacy efforts on the premise of the persistence of inequitable land tenure arrangements that have marginalized indigenous and non-indigenous communities since the Dutch colonial era. They view the central

purpose of RAPS as realizing in a substantive manner, the transfer of management, utilization and control rights, if not full ownership rights to these communities. Repeated allusions were made to a long history of failed attempts at land reform since the passage of the BAL in 1960. Many, especially those affiliated with KPA, expressed that the intent of the law remains a powerful rhetorical tool to strengthen contemporary struggles of achieving its original goals (e.g. land to the tiller), which still resonate and are relevant to today's context, despite its many well-known flaws (e.g. no explicit provisions for communal land ownership).

However, they are concerned that confusion amongst civil society actors, local communities and even state actors regarding the choice of appropriate scheme may hamper its realization on the ground or result in non-genuine land reform taking place. There is a broad recognition that ensuring coordination between and support from various state institutions at different scales remains a challenge, despite the fact that official approval of access permits and ownership rights is only required from a few of them. Achieving clarity regarding how a community chooses the most suitable scheme is necessary given that they do not support all components of the RAPS agenda. Unsurprisingly, these civil society actors do not approve of individual land titling under PRONA, as it serves to either give formal ownership rights to farmers who informally have medium to large landholdings or incentivize those with small landholdings to sell their plots, especially during times of financial distress, which could make them even more precarious. In addition, they also push back against how a focus on PRONA would strengthen formal land markets. Such reinforcement of the commodification of land and marketization of rural livelihoods would further weaken communal practices and modes

of social organization that are the basis of imagining and realizing alternative rural development trajectories. Skepticism was also expressed from an agrarian justice, environmental justice and adat rights perspective regarding the allocation of PS access permits to well-established and well-functioning local communities who do not face any threat from any external parties (colloquially known as “clean and clear”), mainly due to the fact that the state would retain an unnecessary oversight role. In this regard, for KPA, AMAN and WALHI, only the following scenarios constitute “genuine land reform” and should be prioritized by the state as the focus for RAPS implementation:

1. Resolution of conflict between local communities (adat and non-adat) and plantation, logging and mining companies
2. Recognition of adat territories currently located within forestry and non-forestry estate
3. Release of land from the forestry estate that already contains significant agricultural activities and/or urban settlement
4. Redistribution of *tanah terlantar* and areas that were previously covered by expired or illegal concession licenses

Therefore, they identify the lack of secure land tenure as the basis of agrarian injustice. Given that much of the rural population (both adat and non-adat) is unable to benefit from directly accessing, using and intervening on the landscape, the exacerbation of rural poverty leads to increased reliance on markets for subsistence needs and increased incentives for individuals to migrate to urban areas in search of jobs. At the same time, benefits accrue to large-scale plantation, mining and logging industries, who in addition

cause widespread environmental damage, imperiling for example the water supplies of local communities.

Seeking to resolutely deal with inequitable land tenure arrangements by emphasizing how the RAPS framework is an opportunity to resolve rural injustice and diminish the spatial extent where extractivist-oriented economic activity can take place therefore motivates much of AMAN's advocacy efforts in the province. In speaking with and observing his public presentations, Abdon Nababan emphasized that language politics is important given the framing of issues facing adat communities is part of the struggle itself. One important element is the utilization of vocabulary of rights as a strategy for seeking redress at different scales of government. One example he gave is leveraging references to collective and communal rights in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) to define new legal and political contexts at national and sub-national level. In this regard, he acknowledges that defining and identifying adat communities is not always straightforward given the policies of Dutch colonial rule and the postcolonial Indonesian state that have weakened such consciousness amongst populations. At the same time, he mentioned that the history of different Batak ethnic sub-groups and their cultural identities have always been tied to specific territories and have not always been linked to traditional hierarchical authority structures (i.e. kingdoms and sultanates) before the rule of the Dutch colonial forces. Nevertheless, rather than attempting to retrieve a romanticized, static past, he sees AMAN's continued advocacy efforts, premised on language of rights as a means to reconstitute adat communities and by historical and cultural connections to land that can serve to imagine alternative ways of economic well-being. Hence, the recognition and

formalization of adat territories is foundational towards dormant knowledge and cultural frameworks (including communal management and ownership practices) being revived, sustained, enhanced, transferred to future generations. The scale of change to how land is distributed that Abdon Nababan imagines is significant as he suggests that in North Sumatra, up to 2.2 million hectares of land or over $\frac{1}{3}$ of the province's entire land area has a high probability of having substantial presence of indigenous peoples and therefore should be reconstituted and recognized as adat territories.

The leader of one of AMAN's provincial affiliates also expressed similar sentiments as Abdon Nababan. Throughout my conversation with him, he repeatedly reiterated that there is ample documented evidence of adat communities in North Sumatra whose ancestors had robust connections to bounded territories. Their weak present status can be attributed to land tenure and land use policies of the Dutch and as well as of the postcolonial Indonesian state that up until today, has delegitimized and criminalized small-scale livelihood activities including farming, hunting and planting. At the same time, the privileging of the interests of state-owned and private corporations over many decades has made individuals within adat communities foreigners on their own land. Such a narrative emphasizes the need to struggle against the gradual reduction of expanses of land areas available for livelihood reproduction that began during the Dutch colonial era.

Unsurprisingly, the centrality of adat communities securing complete ownership rights to their territories is seen as the overarching aim of AMAN's continuing advocacy efforts. Achieving full ownership of land is seen as fundamental given that such legal protection would prevent state institutions from allocating concession licenses on adat

territories to private or state-owned corporations in the future. Obtaining such rights on a permanent basis will also serve as the basis for imagining and realizing bottom-up visions of livelihood reproduction. In this regard, he articulated that genuine control of the land would not be achieved through the PS scheme given that the state has the ability to take away access permits without robust justification. He emphasized that adat communities must not settle for receiving access permits despite the protracted process involved in attaining full communal ownership rights over territories. He criticized efforts by conservation NGOs promoting the PS scheme as impeding ongoing efforts to strengthen adat consciousness that was deliberately weakened during the Suharto era. Given the numerous conservation laws that apply under the PS scheme, merely attaining access permits still imposes unjust obligations on adat communities and is seen to be detrimental to the realization of genuine autonomy and self-determination.

There are real tensions between AMAN and conservation NGOs with regards to how they envisage the implementation of RAPS (and specifically the PS scheme). In my conversations with Abdon Nababan and an AMAN leader at the provincial level, the term “conservation” mainly had a negative valence. They mentioned that the state partners with conservation NGOs to moderate demands of adat communities to obtain full communal ownership rights. They suggest that paradigm of conservation is authoritarian (i.e. reliance on top-down government regulation) and is distrustful of the actions and behaviors of adat communities and remains largely focused on the protection of individual animal species. Nevertheless, it was emphasized that given that natural resources and ecosystems form the basis of rural livelihoods, it would not be in the interest of adat communities to “damage” or “destroy” them. Therefore, revitalizing

historical linkages of adat communities to their territories and formalizing full ownership rights would therefore be the first step towards ensuring these “environmental” outcomes can be maintained in the long-term.

WALHI North Sumatra has similar views as AMAN in terms of an emphasis placed on promoting communal land ownership as well as pushing back against the notion of local communities (both adat and non-adat) being a main contributor to forest destruction and environmental damage. They work closely with AMAN to ensure that areas in the forestry estate that can potentially be recognized as adat territories do not overlap with areas where access permits under the PS scheme could be allocated. In addition, they suggest that some areas currently categorized as “production forests” should be fully controlled and owned by non-adat communities and formally removed from the forestry estate. As an organization that only receives funds from individual and foundation donors, they critique conservation NGOs who receive funding from corporations (e.g. corporate social responsibility) and who are focused on making individual projects successful rather than oriented toward long-term empowerment of local communities and transformation of rural development trajectories. Unlike their counterparts in conservation NGOs, WALHI North Sumatra does not see the necessity to ensure that the spatial extent of the forestry estate be maximized in the long-term, suggesting that state ownership and management of forests do not necessarily result in good environmental (and economic) outcomes. The PS scheme should be used to prioritize the resolution of conflicts between local communities and companies that continue to hold on to illegal plantation, logging and mining licenses rather than target areas in the forestry estate where small-scale farming and agroforestry activities are

already taking place. In this regard, the allocation of PS access permits should be a tool to stop environmentally destructive corporate behavior rather than used to control, regulate and surveil the livelihood activities of local communities.

Perspective of SPI North Sumatra

As mentioned earlier, SPI North Sumatra emerged out of the dissolution of FSPI, which had played a significant role in post-1998 debates about agrarian reform that culminated in the passage of the TAP. In my conversation with one of the movement's representative, similar views to their counterparts in KPA, WALHI and AMAN were expressed, though the organization was minimally involved in the RAPS implementation process. Once again, direct control and management of and access to land by local communities was emphasized as foundational to the success of RAPS. Interestingly, my interlocutor would explicitly and consistently talk about the interests of indigenous communities at the same time as peasant communities. This suggests that at least in North Sumatra, there may be an acknowledgment of the need to embrace a common struggle against dominant political-economic structures that continue to favor large-scale interests, rather than allow differences of views between peasant and indigenous organizations and movements to stifle the potential for substantive shifts in the province's land tenure arrangements being achieved.

Despite previous failures, there was a recognition of the significance of RAPS (including the PS scheme), especially given the long history of local communities having been unable to benefit from forest resources (*secara historis memang sudah sangat lama pemanfaatan hutan ini juga menjauhkan masyarakat pedesaan dan masyarakat adat*).

Therefore, local communities must take advantage of this policy opening to secure access, if not control and management of land. At the same time, emphasis is placed on continuous struggle so as to ensure that the state remains responsive to the needs of local communities and fulfills its promises that it has (rhetorically) committed to by ensuring that RAPS is maintained as a priority on the national political agenda in the coming years. Hence, the main success indicator of RAPS is rural communities attaining genuine control of land, which can result in livelihood needs being met through the production of diverse food crops (i.e. food sovereignty) and away from monoculture agriculture that have long been entrenched in this province. In addition, strategic engagement in the bureaucratic-legal arena is seen as essential to resolve the contradictions between the implementing regulations of RAPS and other relevant laws at the district, provincial and national levels. Similar to WALHI, they present a critique of capitalist modernization, asserting that the control of forests by corporations that greatly accelerated during the Suharto era, has had a significant negative impact on the meeting the livelihood needs of local communities.

The view from conservation NGOs

Compared to KPA, WALHI, AMAN and SPI, conservation NGOs operating in North Sumatra have a different conceptualization of what RAPS should achieve. As discussed earlier, decades of rampant large-scale plantation development has taken a significant toll on the ecological condition of tropical ecosystems in the province. From the perspective of conservation science and ecology, there is an understanding that a large proportion of “primary forests” (defined as “natural forests consisting of native tree

species that have not been cleared and converted to other land uses” that can either be “intact” or “degraded”) in the province has disappeared. Margono et al (2012) provides one of the most prominent studies documenting a decrease in primary forest cover from 2.53 million hectares to 1.93 million hectares from 1990-2010 or around 26.4% of the province’s land area. Notably, the eastern lowlands where plantation development began during the Dutch colonial era contains practically no primary forest cover today. Interestingly, the study identifies not only large-scale commercial activities (pulp-paper and oil palm) as drivers of these dramatic changes, but also “spontaneous migrant activities,” “smallholder clearance for tree crops” and “illegal logging.” It does not discuss the different extents to which these individual drivers contribute to forest loss nor does it make sense of complex historical, political-economic and cultural factors that influence land use decision-making (e.g. disruption of traditional livelihood activities leading to involvement in “illegal” activities). Rather, the study merely attributes the underlying cause of this change to “expanding global markets for pulp, timber and oil palm” (12) in addition to “breakdown of centralized political authority in early 2000[s], and the inability of provincial governments to adequately enforce forest codes” (13). In addition, it does not consider how this understanding of landscape change or forest loss may have different meanings to different actors and local communities. This declinist narrative of environmental change is typical amongst many conservation actors and justifies top-down governance approaches that emphasize effective enforcement of laws and “improved management of existing forest land use allocations” (14).

This understanding of forest degradation and destruction aligns with many of the views of conservation NGOs I interacted with. While conservation efforts are practically

non-existent in the eastern parts of the province including the former “plantation belt” other than mangrove restoration in coastal areas (Karokaro, 2017a), many conservation NGOs are present in the western and northwestern parts of the province. They have termed these highland areas the Batang Toru Conservation Corridor and the Western Toba Landscapes where most of the remaining intact primary forests are located. Efforts to prevent habitat fragmentation and ensure ecosystem integrity have recently been bolstered by the recent “discovery” of a new species of orangutan (i.e. Tapanuli Orangutan as genetically distinct from other two existing species in Indonesia, the Kalimantan and Sumatran Orangutan) (Arumingtyas and Karokaro, 2017). In addition, the interest amongst many of these NGOs in ensuring landscape contiguity in these areas is their potential contribution to protecting the Leuser Ecosystem, which in recent years has gained significant attention internationally given that its unique ecological characteristics are increasingly under threat. It has been placed on the UNESCO World Heritage in Danger list and is approximately 2.6 million hectares in size. The ecosystem straddles the North Sumatra and Aceh provincial border (most of it is located in Aceh province while a small portion that is located in North Sumatra is relatively close to the eastern lowlands and the former plantation belt) and comprises of a core that is legally classified as a national park with most of its other areas categorized as protected forests located within the forestry estate (“In Berlin this month,” 2017; Kimmett, 2017; Hanafiah, 2018).

While dependent to some extent on foreign donor funding (both public and private) that stem from international concern regarding the negative impacts of deforestation, many of these organizations are almost completely staffed by Indonesian

nationals. At the same time, in my conversations with these individuals, the framing of solutions remain predominantly depoliticized given the emphasis placed on increased research and monitoring as well as awareness raising and education that operates within a managerial framework to achieve conservation outcomes. The desire to characterize these concerns as “neutral” is similar to the motivation behind the articulation of environmental concerns during the late 1970s when the influence of non-state actors was virtually non-existent. There is a broad understanding that more detailed and comprehensive data about ecological characteristics regarding these areas can translate into collaborative and consensual decision-making especially in terms of potentially changing the forest categorization of certain areas (i.e. increasing spatial extent of area with protection or conservation forest status) and more effective enforcement of conservation laws (i.e. illegal hunting, land clearance and logging). Nevertheless, even though many of these organizations remain focused on conserving specific animal species there is a broad recognition that the language of conservation has to also take into account the needs of local communities. Thus, there is an acknowledgment that some form of community participation, engagement and outreach is necessary for any conservation efforts to be successful and be seen as legitimate. Discourses regarding “ecosystem services,” especially water provision that highlight how forests are source of livelihoods (*sumber hidup*) are increasingly becoming common and hence, protection of habitats can simultaneously protect fauna as well as directly contribute to livelihood reproduction (Karokaro, 2017b).

It would seem that these conservation NGOs are well suited to implement the PS component of the RAPS framework and they do in fact play an integral role in BPKSL’s

efforts to facilitate the claims-making process as I will discuss shortly. At the same time, I would argue that their primary motivation is not one that seeks to realize a radical change to the nature of land use and unequal land tenure arrangements. Rather, developing strategies for the achievement of conservation outcomes that includes a desire for strong and capable state bureaucracies to be able to enforce relevant laws to the furthest extent possible is what differentiates them from environmental justice, peasant and indigenous perspectives. In my conversations with leaders of prominent conservation NGOs in the province, it was interesting to note how the fear of unregulated economic activity is the primary motivation that drives their advocacy positions and conservation strategies. There is a broad agreement that current forms of institutionalized forest governance that is grounded upon the framework established through the BFL is sufficient in theory to combat current environmental problems associated with land use. In this regard, they pinpoint the lack of capacity for relevant state institutions to effectively enforce existing conservation and land use laws as the central obstacle towards realizing good outcomes.

These leaders portray forest destruction and agricultural expansion as inevitable aspects of capitalist modernization and developmentalism and therefore what is needed is effective and robust regulation based on conservation science of anyone who uses or settles on areas within the forestry estate. Illegal encroachment and agricultural expansion by anyone especially opportunistic individuals need to be minimized if not eliminated. While they do not adhere to a strict fortress conservation paradigm, these NGOs remain committed to a top-down approach towards combating multifaceted threats to slow down high rates of forest loss and forest conversion that continue to persist. Many of these

NGOs themselves engage in their own patrolling efforts to catch illegal loggers and wildlife traders as well as identify small companies and entrepreneurial smallholders who have illegally settled on state forests and have planted cash crops, especially oil palm. In this regard, they do not only target large corporations that may be breaking existing environmental laws and who may operate on the basis of illegal permits, they also recognize that the smaller-scale economic activities have a negative impact on the province's forests.

Hence, I would interpret the interest of conservation NGOs in making the PS scheme a "success" as being less focused on transforming the province's rural economy characterized by unequal land tenure arrangements. Rather, they are centered around connecting the regulation of livelihood activities of local communities on limited expanses of state forests with the protection to the largest extent possible of other forested areas where minimal or even no human activity should take place. Unlike AMAN, WALHI and KPA, there is wariness of allocating PS permits in protected forests, let alone in conservation forests or national parks, worrying that doing so will send a signal that economic activities will be allowed on areas with high levels of biodiversity, even as they note that eviction of existing communities from these areas will unlikely happen. Nevertheless, they want to ensure that in the long term, the spatial extent of the forestry estate (especially conservation and protection forests) is not reduced as a result of the PS scheme. Some conservation NGO representatives I spoke with made a clear distinction between the acceptability of the extraction of non-timber forest products and the rejection of certain types of agroforestry activities in protection forests (especially lucrative cash crops such as coffee, cocoa and rubber). Support for formalizing adat territories was not

enthusiastic given their perception that weakened customary rules and institutions cannot adequately sustain forest cover and biodiversity, especially given that some leaders of adat communities have links to logging and plantation interests. Emphasis is placed on formal institutionalization of mutually agreed work plans with clear timelines on what to grow, how much to produce and sell and by whom as well as monitoring mechanisms with the maintenance of forest functions as the prerogative.

While WALHI, KPA and AMAN emphasize how the success of RAPS should be defined on the basis of democratizing direct control, management and ownership of land to a larger proportion of the rural population, conservation NGOs that I spoke to ground their support for the policy framework on its potential to regulate the activities of rural populations more effectively so as to ensure that forest cover can be maintained and biodiversity can be conserved.

(Re)molding the Indonesian state

Thus, as RAPS moves from a national-level policy framework to being concretely implemented at the provincial and local levels, there is acceptance by all non-state actors mentioned above of the need to engage state actors in the bureaucratic-legal arena, though their strategies and desired outcomes differ amongst them. Importantly, such interactions are aimed at continuing to reconstitute the state, in part by redefining its role in relation to issues of land tenure, land use and conservation. For conservation NGOs, close cooperation with BPSKL is not unsurprising given that they feel that granting PS access permits to regulate the livelihood activities of local communities can produce legitimacy in relation to goals of reducing deforestation and biodiversity loss.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, BPSKL is primarily tasked with facilitating the timely processing of claims under the PS scheme. As a relatively new institution, its direct involvement in the claims-making process of the PS scheme suggests a further recentralization of authority, reflecting a desire to continue to remedy problems that arose after the decentralization of forest governance that I have noted in the previous chapter. In my conversation with the head of BPSKL Sumatra Region, the implementation of the PS scheme established through MoEF's Ministerial Regulation No 83 of 2016 was meant to simplify and standardize procedures for local communities to legally access forestry estate areas for the first time. Debureaucratization was a major theme that he raised with regards to contributing to the success of the PS scheme, pointing to the continued reorganization of the MoEF that he felt would streamline the permit processing process. By eliminating the need to engage with district or provincial governments, he emphasized that local communities would not have to deal with messy particularities of sub-national legal and governance frameworks, as well as prevent vested interests (local elites and other predatory actors) from hampering them from attaining PS access permits.

More broadly, he clearly articulated how the central government sees the PS scheme as a national priority that has the potential to meaningfully shift the control of land and natural resources to local communities and expects that the budget allocation for the implementation process would significantly increase in the coming years. He explicitly expressed how the PS scheme marks a paradigm shift in terms of the country's forest management and land use policies that since 1970 has predominantly been characterized by the prioritization of medium and large-scale commercial concessions, noting that many provinces in Sumatra have recently stopped issuing new licenses for

such activities. He commented on how the information contained in PIAPS provides a different and powerful way of visualizing how the areas within the forestry estate can be managed and controlled. However, at the same time it was reiterated how the FMUs would have significant role in not only co-managing, but also monitoring areas covered by PS access permits with local communities, highlighting how he envisaged the state retaining a substantive oversight role to ensure that any threats to forest cover coming from within or outside local communities can be dealt with. The allocation of PS access permits is perceived as a means to clarify how specific communities (and the individuals within them) use specific demarcated areas in a clearly defined manner. Doing so would minimize conflict within and between communities and would result in increased economic production/productivity and the reduction of poverty. The economic benefits of the PS scheme for local communities was mentioned throughout my interactions with him as he repeatedly pointed out the centrality of business development, coordinated by different state institutions including FMUs after access permits were allocated. Nevertheless, the imperative of maintaining forest functions was equally emphasized, pointing out that the state can revoke these PS access permits if violations of guidelines are found so that broader conservation goals are not threatened.

This complex sentiment is evident when I spoke with the head of one of the province's FMUs. He discussed the longstanding weak relationships between relevant state institutions and local communities. As someone who worked for many years in district and provincial forestry bureaucracies before the recent institutionalization of FMUs in the province, he mentioned many local communities have long settled in and around areas contained in the forestry estate (including before the passage of the BFL)

and state institutions have been unable to remove them. Given the lack of clarity regarding the legal status of many areas (e.g. final gazettement of many areas in the forestry estate in North Sumatra has yet to occur) coupled with lack of resources for patrolling, forestry officials working at the sub-national level have been unable to successfully clamp down on “illegal” activity. In this regard, he centered our discussion around the notion that a dominant governance paradigm of strictly enforcing abstract legal frameworks from above will not be effective given the need to take into account the livelihood needs of local communities (especially given population growth of recent decades) who live in and around the areas within the forestry estate. He expressed hope that the PS scheme not only can explicitly clarify what kinds of landscape interventions are permitted on specific demarcated areas of land, but also result in the establishment of relationships between his bureaucracy and local communities. In addition, the allocation of access permits to local communities would also reduce the need for forestry officials to exercise discretion as illegal, unauthorized and environmentally destructive behavior can be more clearly identified. The allocation of PS access permits presents an opportunity for FMUs to assert its authority over the forestry estate in a more legitimate manner as relationships with local communities are built during the process of formulating and institutionalizing work plans.

In addition, I had the opportunity to be an observer at two forums hosted by BPSKL Sumatra Region, which focused on accelerating the implementation of the PS scheme in the province. One took place in preparation of a four-day process that was called “Groundcheck,” which involved all of the North Sumatran FMUs, provincial government officials and civil society actors (mainly conservation NGOs) to collect and

verify relevant information about specific locations all across the province where PS claims could be formalized. The second forum took place after this process was completed and it was an opportunity for the different participating actors to share their experiences of assessing local conditions and interacting with community members to make sense of how PS claims would be processed going forward. It also allowed BPSKL to consolidate data that was collected and verified during the “Groundcheck” process, giving everyone a clearer picture regarding the prospects of what ramping up province-wide implementation meant in practice.

During the first forum, the language of synergies and partnership was emphasized with the implementation of the PS scheme being perceived as an opportunity to finally reorient land tenure arrangements that would benefit rural communities. In addition, the term “collective action” and the phrase ‘*ini saatnya untuk rakyat*’ or ‘it’s time for the people’ were guiding mantras of the forum, highlighting the importance placed on the need for enhanced collaboration and building long-lasting ties between all relevant actors so as to achieve win-win environmental and economic outcomes. Explicit reference was made to how trust and cooperation between the state institutions and local communities has historically been low due to the lack of communication and which has resulted in dysfunctional governance arrangements and negative environmental and economic outcomes. In a sense, BPSKL finds it useful to idealize the establishment of new state-local community relationships with the process of allocating PS access permits, suggesting that excessive contestation and politicization would distract from the achievement of mutually beneficial goals. Nevertheless, it was reiterated that local communities must not be passive actors who merely follow policy guidance from above,

but rather they must feel that they have a direct stake in contributing to broader national-level goals of economic development and environmental conservation. The potential for ‘communities only becoming objects’ (*masyarakat hanya menjadi obyek*) and for the PS scheme to be perceived as ‘charity work’ were identified as pitfalls to be avoided.

During the second forum, the challenges of preparing the approval of PS access permits was a major theme. On the one hand, the breakthrough nature of the PS scheme was emphasized and that all relevant actors need to work together to take advantage of this policy framework institutionalized from above so as to change the trajectory of forest governance and forest management in the province. On the other hand, the difficulty of coordinating implementation tasks amongst different state and non-state actors working at multiple scales was noted as well as a lack of awareness of the PS scheme at the village and community level. Some conservation NGOs emphasized the need to gain buy-in from provincial and district governments for implementation to be successful while others felt that direct engagement with local community leaders or village heads was the most important priority. Nevertheless, the desire for “change” was constantly invoked, not only in terms of the increased benefits that would accrue to local communities, but also regarding the nature of the bureaucratic state that would be more responsive to local concerns.

Some FMUs had reported that some areas that they visited during “Groundcheck” were planted with lucrative cash crops such as cocoa, oil palm or rubber (perceived by many conservation NGOs as environmentally destructive) or were open agricultural fields (e.g. rice and corn crops planted on areas that had no tree cover) that were managed informally on an individual basis. It was explicitly noted that some areas legally

categorized as protected forests were already found to be in “secondary forest” condition, signaling to FMUs and conservation NGOs that encroachment and expansion activities by local communities have had negative environmental impacts. Nevertheless, landscapes containing diverse agroforests were also reported and it was not completely clear to everyone if existing practices were necessarily causing forest degradation or destruction. Hence, conservation NGOs strongly felt that the allocation of PS access permits and the subsequent formalization of a workplan needs to lead not only to regular monitoring of community activities, but also explicit identification of the kinds of crops and non-timber forest products can or cannot be planted and extracted. Some were concerned that the legalization of previously illegal activities will embolden individuals to expand rather than sustain existing forest cover, with one conservation NGO representative expressing concern that MoEF’s Regulation No. 79 of 2014 sends the wrong signal given that it legitimizes current practices and deems further economic activities within the forestry estate acceptable. Another conservation NGO representative emphasized that it must be made clear to local communities who receive PS permits that they only have management and access rights, given that state remains the owner of the areas covered by such permits.

In this regard, for conservation NGOs and BPSKL, the allocation of PS access permits remains predominantly framed as a benefit conditionally granted by the state and not an inherent right that local communities are entitled to possess. Overall, it seemed to me that conservation NGOs and BPSKL are unable to resolve the tension between how they on the one hand believe that win-win outcomes can be achieved if rural populations who settle and rely on areas within the forestry estate can recognize the need to comply

with relevant conservation and land use laws and on the other hand, acknowledge that such mandates cannot be merely “imposed” on passive local communities.

Perspectives regarding how the state should be transformed through the implementation of RAPS and the kinds of relationship it should establish with rural populations are markedly different for KPA, AMAN, WALHI and SPI. These civil society actors that operate at the provincial level contend that if the state is truly committed to transform the province’s land tenure arrangements to benefit local communities, the shift from privileging the interests of plantation, mining and logging companies needs to be made more apparent. While the RAPS framework provides an opportunity to realize goals set out in the TAP, progress remains inadequate and therefore, there is a need to constantly hold the state accountable and ensure that its actions continue to be responsive to the concerns and demands of rural populations. In this regard, these civil society actors repeatedly discussed how the RAPS framework is not solely the result of central government initiative given that it would not have emerged if not for persistent pressure from them and their like-minded allies over the last twenty years that built upon struggles that began during the Dutch colonial era. Therefore, while engagement and cooperation with the state can lead to progress on achieving shared goals, the positioning of these actors that I observed centers on the need to be constantly vigilant of its actions (or inaction) and being cautious of the rhetoric and promises that it espouses. This ambivalent sentiment is characterized by an acknowledgement of the need to simultaneously collaborate with the state to accelerate the processing and verification of land claims while also be willing to criticize it when it is clear that “genuine land reform” is not being pursued.

One aspect that stood out in my conversation with Abdon Nababan was a discussion regarding how AMAN prioritized a strategy of confrontation during the first few years after Suharto's downfall, when direct dialogue and engagement with state institutions was minimal. However, this strategy changed in 2007 as their concerns were gradually taken into account and accepted by the state and this culminated in the MK35 decision. This decision fundamentally changed the trajectory of struggle regarding indigenous land tenure in Indonesia. Since then, many of AMAN's movement affiliates who operate at the sub-national level have been focused on building on this national-level decision to work with provincial and district level governments and bureaucracies to develop and deploy formal mechanisms and procedures to recognize adat communities as customary legal communities and grant them full ownership rights to their territories. Importantly, Abdon Nababan emphasized that the act of legalizing adat territories must be framed as returning to adat communities what has always been rightfully theirs and not as a favor or benefit given to them by a benevolent state. Fundamentally, these contemporary struggles are about the Indonesian state and adat communities mutually recognizing each other. AMAN fully acknowledges the existence and legitimacy of the unitary Indonesian state and works on the basis of the country's constitution to demand that the current government guarantee the existence of adat communities as customary legal communities entitled to have full ownership and control of land. The phrase "if the state does not recognize us, we will not recognize the state" continues to ground and frame the dynamic between indigenous peoples and the Indonesian state, highlighting that being made legible to and recognized by the state is essential for their interests to be protected and realized.

Given that RAPS is a policy priority of the central government, AMAN recognizes that its implementation provides an opportunity to leverage the rhetoric of agrarian reform to secure adat territories and build upon its successful advocacy efforts over the past two decades. The relationship between the state and the indigenous peoples' movement have shifted in recent years to the extent that specific individuals and like-minded allies involved in the movement have not only taken up mid- and high-level positions in bureaucracies across the Indonesian state, but also have stood as candidates for legislative positions at the district, provincial and national levels. He mentioned that having sympathetic allies inside the state can also provide the movement with information regarding internal policy debates, allowing for identification of obstacles that can inform advocacy strategies. What this shows is AMAN's acknowledgement of the malleability of the state and the potential for internal contestation to result in policies that can change the nature of the relationship between the Indonesian state and adat communities. Such a characterization of the state as a heterogeneous and multi-faceted entity is seen by what drives AMAN to continue to have a degree of confidence in engaging with it.

Nonetheless, attaining such positions and changing the state from within continues to be no easy feat. In July 2017, Abdon Nababan himself attempted to run for governor of North Sumatra, but was not able to raise enough money and collect enough signatures to be listed on the ballot (personal communication). In the subsequent months, he came out publicly stating that land mafias in the province attempted to offer him fake lists of signatures in exchange for favors if he was to be eventually elected, highlighting the persistence of dominant political structures and predatory actors, especially at the sub-

national level that prevent further transformations to the state that may be able to better secure the interests of adat communities (In July last year, 2018). Furthermore, the fact that the RAPS framework does not have formal quantitative targets to recognize adat territories signaled to AMAN that concerted efforts are still needed to galvanize all relevant state institutions to guarantee the land rights of adat communities. During the KPA-hosted forum that I observed, Abdon Nababan explicitly mentioned that AMAN has worked actively over many years at the local level to organize and identify adat communities and submit participatory maps to the central government, but he expressed concern regarding the lack of subsequent concrete steps that need to be undertaken for the recognition of adat territories to be granted.

In this regard, given the lack of progress in formalizing customary legal communities and adat territories in North Sumatra and elsewhere, AMAN is currently pushing for a comprehensive indigenous peoples' law that will force sub-national state institutions to take concrete steps to provide such recognition. For Abdon Nababan, existing regulations and top-down guidance remain insufficient and only demonstrate the continuing difficulty of ensuring that the Indonesian state fulfills its constitutional obligation. There is a clear acknowledgement that the success of their advocacy efforts cannot merely occur through organizing at the local level, but rather needs also to be driven by central government actions. AMAN's approach is reflective of the recognition of the necessity to constantly engage and articulate its demands to different state institutions at different scales rather than strive to configure the Indonesian state on the basis of abstract and idealized principles of "good" institutional design. However, the reliance on top-down governance and centralized authority to obtain desired outcomes is

recognized as a double-edged sword by Abdon Nababan himself. During the KPA-hosted forum, he reminded the audience of the fundamental injustice not only of President Suharto's disregard for the interests of indigenous peoples when he was in power, but also of the passage of the BFL that formalized the legal dichotomy between areas that were considered to be "agricultural" and areas considered to be "forested," which criminalized the livelihood activities of many adat communities.

This mix of cautious optimism and acknowledgement of persistent intractable challenges to concretely transform the country's land tenure arrangements was also reflected during other discussions at the KPA-hosted forum. The two senior officials from national level NLA and MoEF who gave presentations clearly and explicitly acknowledged that the prioritization of large-scale plantation, logging and mining interests over many decades has been detrimental to the interests of many rural populations. Though Article 33 of the Indonesian Constitution was mentioned as inviolable, indicating an effort to reiterate to civil society actors present of the ultimate authority of the state to dictate how best land should be allocated, distributed, managed, used or even owned, both bureaucrats suggest that the RAPS framework represents a historic breakthrough in terms of land tenure policy in the country, which would have significant ramifications on the livelihood strategies of rural populations. By stating that RAPS is explicitly placed on the *Nawacita* agenda and is not merely any ordinary policy, they emphasized that political will from President Jokowi had already been expended. In addition, a determination was expressed to avoid the failures of the PPAN policy of the previous administration given the importance placed on inter-agency policy coordination (especially between NLA and MoEF). They highlighted how the work of IP4Ts in

determining the appropriateness of land tenure claims would be enhanced with the institution of *Tim Reforma Agraria*, emphasizing how such efforts would continue to promote policy consistency across different state institutions at all scales and which would be overseen by the Office of Presidential Staff and Coordinating Minister of Economic Affairs at the highest level of government. Nonetheless, they also pointed to the weak capacity of communities to prepare formal claims and the lack of awareness of the RAPS policy framework even amongst village leaders rather than focus on the heterogeneity of viewpoints within the state as a major obstacle towards policy implementation. They explicitly called on civil society actors to be actively involved to assist the government in accelerating the implementation of the RAPS framework by collecting ground-level data and facilitating the claims-making process to ensure that necessary procedures are followed. Similar to BPSKL, the rhetoric of the need for increased cooperation and synergization is deployed by NLA and MoEF to suggest that effective implementation merely requires stronger connections to be established between local communities and relevant state institutions.

In response, the KPA representative did not disagree with the need to ensure vertical and horizontal integration and coordination of policy implementation given the persistent gap between rhetoric of “land for the people” and actual achievements of transforming existing land tenure arrangements. However, she sought to explicitly politicize the efforts to build coherence amongst local communities, civil society actors and state actors by emphasizing that the ultimate objective of “genuine land reform” must always be kept in mind. She insisted that the invocation of the language of cooperation and other communitarian vocabularies must not obscure the reality that many state actors

at different scales may have vested interests to prevent transformations to land tenure arrangements. Therefore, even as KPA and its allies are actively working at the sub-national level to document the extent of claims of both adat and non-adat communities, she felt that onus remains on senior-level bureaucrats and politicians in the central government at the highest level to ensure that relevant sub-national state actors acknowledge the structural problem of inequitable land tenure arrangements. She lamented that existing efforts of IP4Ts of identifying areas where local communities could be granted formal land tenure has not yet translated into large scale granting of access permits or ownership rights. She attributed this reality partly to continuing obstruction by district governments, many of which remain wary of formalized land use of local communities at a large-scale on areas currently within the forestry estate. What we see here is a multiscale advocacy strategy that recognizes that bottom up mobilization of local communities and documentation of “accurate” claims does not immediately translate into actual allocation of access permits or ownership rights. Given this reality, she implored the representatives of national level state institutions to ensure that adequate procedures are in place so that timely processing of such claims can happen and that deliberate thwarting by sub-national actors does not occur.

One specific evidence of the inadequacy of the RAPS framework that KPA pointed out is the current lack of concrete mechanisms available to resolve land conflict as well as the low level of ambition to redistribute *tanah terlantar* and land previously covered by concession licenses. Concern was expressed that political will is lacking at all levels of government to deal with these land conflicts, many of which have lasted for decades between local communities and state-owned (and private) corporations as noted

earlier in the chapter. Rather than identify lack of communication and cooperation between state institutions and local communities and insufficient technical capacity as the primary obstacles towards resolving these conflicts, they point to persistent intransigence of different state institutions to release data about existing concession licenses as an indicator that the state as a whole has little desire to deal with inequitable land tenure arrangements. Such lack of decisive action amongst national level institutions to determine the legality of concession licenses and to confront plantation, mining and logging interests leads KPA to fear that focus would be placed on accelerating individual land titling through the PRONA scheme and which would lead to a repeat of the failures of genuine land reform that had taken place under the previous president.

Hence, for KPA, WALHI and AMAN and their allies working in North Sumatra, the response to the continued vertical and horizontal fragmentation of the state is not to find a “right” combination of centralized and decentralized rule to achieve good outcomes framed in an abstract manner. Rather, these efforts should be focused on ensuring that any coordination between state institutions is oriented towards translating commitments set out in the RAPS framework into concrete realization of transforming the province’s land tenure arrangements, focused on transferring control and ownership of land (i.e. not only giving access) to local communities. Key strategies of taking advantage of current conjuncture offered by the RAPS framework to reorient the nature of the Indonesian state include leveraging post-independence discourses regarding democratized land control, invoking past attempts at land redistribution and ensuring that it fulfills its constitutional obligations towards adat communities. In contrast, conservation NGOs are focused on working towards envisioning state institutions that are

competent, capable and effective in implementing relevant laws so that regulated land use as defined by conservation science can be secured.

Production of subjects and the (re)constitution of local communities through *sosialisasi* activities

As alluded to already, state and civil society actors recognize that the implementation of RAPS does not take place in a linear, deterministic and spontaneous manner, but rather requires active and persistent mobilization. In this regard, the need for ongoing interaction amongst local communities, state institutions as well as civil society actors was emphasized not only in order to translate abstract quantitative goals defined at the national level into actual implementation at the local level, but to ensure that desired outcomes are achieved in the months and years after ownership rights and access permits are formalized. Many actors refer to this process as *sosialisasi* or socialization. Notably, the common invocation of vocabularies of collective action, synergization and collaboration are coupled with explicit reference to terms such as movement, acceleration, preparation and building. What this suggests is that rather than take for granted that desired outcomes will be achieved naturally, there is broad recognition of the need to actively shape attitudes as the claims-making process attempts to redefine the relationship local communities have with land and with state institutions. In addition to encouraging the uptake of specific economic and environmental behaviors, there are also attempts to foster specific forms of cultural expression and reinforce nationalist sentiment. Such a focus on the production of subjectivities reflects the broader goals contained in President Jokowi's *Nawacita* agenda of raising productivity and realizing a mental revolution amongst the nation's populace in the hopes that they will meaningfully

feel enrolled in the collective project of 21st century nation-building. In effect, the implementation of RAPS is not only an attempt to restructure land tenure arrangements for the benefit of a greater proportion of the country's rural population, but it also contributes towards maintaining the stability and legitimacy of the unitary Indonesian nation-state. However, different actors have different conceptualizations of the suitable scope of *sosialisasi* activities and what such interactions should ultimately achieve. The variegated nature of what is meant by *sosialisasi* demonstrates the persistence of competing and potentially incommensurable visions of what the state-society dynamic should look like and of different visions of societal and political order more broadly.

A common concern raised by FMUs during the "Groundcheck" forums was how some local communities were not aware of the existence of the PS scheme and the possibility of obtaining access permits to benefit from this policy. For many conservation NGOs and BPSKL, awareness raising of the PS scheme needs to be prioritized as an important first step before any claims are prepared. At a basic level, *sosialisasi* would entail establishing regular contact with village heads and local community leaders and disseminating printed information to individual households to ensure that misunderstandings about the content and objectives of the PS scheme would be minimized. In this regard, rather than underscore the potential for legalized access to the forestry estate to transform rural livelihood reproduction strategies, it was repeatedly emphasized during the forum that *sosialisasi* activities gave an opportunity to reiterate to rural populations the authority of the state as the owner of all areas contained within the forestry estate. Relatedly, ensuring that local communities are cognizant of the obligations (i.e. not only privileges) associated with PS access permits was another major

theme raised during the second forum given the imperative to maintain forest and ecosystem functions defined by conservation science cannot be undermined. It was also mentioned during the forum that the PS scheme should be perceived by local communities as people-oriented and people-centered, highlighting at least a rhetorical desire to orient the interests of local communities with conservation NGOs and FMUs as substantive long-term connections are established.

Nevertheless, it seems to me that such idealization of win-win outcomes and the repeated allusions to cooperation and collaboration obscures how *sosialisasi* activities are grounded in the goal of seeking acquiescence from local communities and producing responsible subjects given the sustained reassertion of state ownership on areas within forestry estate and the prerogative of conforming to existing conservation laws. Despite invocations of those receiving access permits to not be passive and not become objects as alluded to in the previous section suggesting some scope for bottom-up initiative, flexibility and negotiation in terms of what activities are permitted, *sosialisasi* activities aim to ensure that local communities understand the necessity to ensure that their actions align with conservation goals defined at the provincial, regional and national scale. In this regard, the materialization of rhetorics of synergization and collaboration through *sosialisasi* activities are seen as a means to achieve common understanding of regulations over time through capacity building, formal education initiatives and training sessions as well as an opportunity to clarify the management and monitoring roles of FMUs and other forestry institutions as legalized, but regulated access to the forestry estate becomes mainstream.

For conservation NGOs and FMUs, *sosialisasi* activities only intensify after the granting of PS access permits, given the need to formalize workplans and monitor their subsequent implementation. Given that realizing conservation outcomes and maintaining ecosystem functions remain paramount, emphasis is placed on workplans needing to be explicit about the land use rules that clearly distinguish between illegal and legal activity. Many NGO representatives I spoke to mentioned that many local communities have no experience in preparing formal management and business plans and most do not speak the language of conservation. This lack of formalized and written documentation of their interventions in forests is perceived as an indication that mismanagement has resulted in negative environmental consequences. Given the recognition of the protracted process of translating management best practices and inculcating specific behaviors, *sosialisasi* activities must work towards the elimination of misunderstanding amongst as any ambiguity regarding the regulatory intent of the PS scheme is perceived as risking further agricultural expansion/encroachment and forest destruction. Therefore, regular interactions between FMUs/conservation NGOs and local communities are needed to ensure that workplans contain clear timelines of specific tasks to be accomplished in the short and medium term as well as to ensure that arrangements regarding division of labor and revenue allocation, can be successfully implemented. Doing so successfully would require the identification of specific individuals from within local communities to become proactive and motivated leaders who will be able gradually to convince others of the need to support regulated access to demarcated areas within the forestry estate and contribute to larger-scale conservation goals.

Such an emphasis placed on encouraging community responsabilization becomes most apparent in the component of workplans that deal explicitly with patrolling activities. Representatives of conservation NGOs I spoke with mentioned that FMUs and the organizations they work for do not have the capacity of ensuring that illegal activity does not occur if the target of granting access permits on over 500,000 hectares in North Sumatra is achieved in the coming years. Rather, local communities themselves must initiate and take charge of such policing efforts so as to ensure that predatory actors and other “outsiders” do not cause forest destruction. These efforts at producing conservation subjectivities are arguably distinct from efforts during the Suharto era of standardizing village governance to cultivate passive, compliant populations focused on maximizing economic growth at all costs. Rather, these *sosialisasi* activities can be seen as an example of how communitarian vocabularies that are excavated of explicit ideological valences aim to actively enroll local communities to contribute to science-based forest conservation goals. Given that conservation NGOs, BPSKL and FMUs repeatedly reiterated that work plans cannot be forcibly imposed on local communities, there is widespread recognition that legitimacy is an important element given the co-management orientation of the PS scheme and which requires an extended period of time to be achieved.

Nevertheless, such emphasis placed on top-down capacity-building and guidance before, during and after the claims-making process aimed at changing the behavior and mindsets of rural populations of those living within the forestry estate does not mean that pre-existing livelihood reproduction strategies and modes of social organization should necessarily be idealized. In fact, even how local communities are defined on the ground

and bounded territorially is not self-evident in many instances. During the second “Groundcheck” forum, a number of FMUs mentioned that farmers’ cooperative (i.e. *kelompok tani*) or similar types of institutions at the sub-village level or village level do not exist or are weak. Yet, precisely determining what constitutes a “local community” and identifying its members is fundamental given that civil society actors recognize the imperative of being clear regarding who was to be holder (“subject”) of an ownership right or access permit as well as the specific demarcated territory (“object”) each claim would be linked to. A broad consensus exists amongst civil society actors that careful processing of claims needs to happen because there may be a potential for both PS and TORA to be shadow schemes wherein ownership rights or access permits are allocated to predatory actors from “outside” local communities. Therefore, there is a common understanding that *sosialisasi* activities taking place during the claims-making process not only can (re)constitute local communities, but also result in the weakening of internal hierarchical structures especially at the village level as well as reducing dependence on external patrons and extractivist-oriented logging, mining and plantation economic activities for livelihood reproduction.

Nevertheless, the focus that AMAN, WALHI and KPA places on ensuring the identification of “accurate” subjects and objects is oriented towards maximizing the allocation of full ownership rights to adat and non-adat communities (rather than for them to merely obtain PS access permits), which would require some areas to be released from the forestry estate. *Sosialisasi* activities are important to make sure that local communities specifically know the legal status of the land they currently live and depend on so as to determine the appropriate course of action (i.e. in most cases, obtaining a

communal ownership right under the TORA scheme). In addition, *sosialisasi* activities should not be directed at producing rural subjectivities to contribute to science-based conservation goals that are defined at larger scales, but rather must be focused on strengthening communal and customary practices/norms, local knowledges and local institutions at the village and sub-village level that have remained dormant over many decades. In this regard, by politicizing vocabularies of cooperation and collaboration, they take up an explicitly ideological approach towards shaping the consciousness of rural populations so that they are able to assert local initiative and secure inherent rights to territory on the basis of either ancestral claims or land to the tiller philosophy that was institutionalized in BAL over half a century ago. Especially in cases of land conflict, WALHI, KPA and AMAN regards the implementation of the RAPS framework as an opportunity to ensure rural populations do not perceive themselves as mere pliant subjects of the Indonesian state, but rather as citizens entitled to inalienable rights enshrined in the country's constitution and human rights laws.

In addition, attempts at (re)constituting and transforming local communities through *sosialisasi* activities at the local village and sub-village level must also simultaneously build mass support for strengthening peasant and indigenous movements at the regional and national scale. Even as specific contexts and circumstances differ within and between provinces, importance is placed on the identification of a broad common vision of articulating an alternative vision of rural development that can resonate with a wide swath of the country's adat and non-adat communities demonstrating that the continuing struggle requires interventions at the local, provincial, regional and national scales. Doing so is no easy feat especially in North Sumatra given

the long history of provincial rural economy structured on the basis of plantation agriculture and the demobilization of rural populations that took place after the events of G30S during the Suharto era. In addition, the continued threat of violence and repression carried out by state and predatory actors at the same time facilitates the enrollment of local elites (i.e. village leaders, sub-district and district officials) into patronage relationships with them. Nevertheless, given strong awareness amongst many of the rich history of land occupations and struggle against powerful state and non-state actors since the Dutch colonial era in the province, *sosialisasi* activities have the potential to build strong networks between peasants, indigenous peoples and activists from the local to the national-scale towards achieving overarching objectives of calling into question the legitimacy of extractivist-oriented economic activity.

For KPA and its allies, the language of constant struggle, constant movement-building, constant mobilization is recognized as essential for momentum to be sustained to ensure that intentions set out in the RAPS framework can be achieved. Therefore, strengthening of internal organizational capacities is seen to be as important as overcoming external obstacles. One central question raised is the clarification of the nature of the relationship between national secretariat of KPA and its member organizations and allies at the regional and provincial level so as to ensure that multiscale advocacy strategies can be both effective at engendering change that is responsive to specific contexts while also contributing to broader struggle of transforming land tenure arrangements and realizing alternative rural development trajectories nationwide. During the KPA forum, discussions focused on division of roles of different member organizations, identification of regional coordinators and the strengthening of

mechanisms to effectively share information, strategies and experiences of struggle so that solidarity can be built, and political power can be consolidated. In addition, it was underscored that success would not be possible if it merely involved the leaders of KPA and its member organizations. In this regard, there is a recognition that actions against the state must be organized by rural populations themselves, without necessarily always being mediated by urban-based activists. Such conversations highlight tensions between finding a balance between local initiative of asserting demands from the bottom-up and the need for “outsider” activists to be part of efforts to engage in everyday activities of education and consciousness-raising to convince rural populations of the benefits of communal practices and communal land tenure. These complexities of organizing local communities so as to strengthen peasant and indigenous peoples’ movements at the provincial and national scale only demonstrates that the articulation of rural injustice does not spontaneously arise, but needs to be actively (re)produced by numerous actors.

Similarly for AMAN, *sosialisasi* activities play an important role not only in terms of grassroots organizing to effectively articulate demands for recognition as customary legal communities and territories, but also to (re)generate indigenous consciousness at the local level. Doing so is especially important as the adat communities need to demonstrate “evidence” of their indigeneity, which in many cases is not always obvious and unequivocal. The MK35 decision provides an important impetus to combine the movement’s political goals with cultural goals. At the AMAN discussions, the process of seeking recognition of adat territories is seen as an opportunity to emphasize to members of adat communities that land under their control must always prioritize local economic well-being and self-sufficiency. Therefore, it also affords an opportunity for the

reassertion of cultural dignity as the exercise of customary practices on ancestral territories is relegitimized and not deemed antithetical to the ideals of Indonesian citizenship. The mobilization of young people to adopt indigenous identities to feel proud of their cultural heritage is also an important component of these efforts of politicizing ethnicity to ensure that future generations can continue to assert their inherent rights to their territories. Even as past customs and identities are retrieved and revitalized, many movement representatives also expressed that doing so does not mean romanticizing a static culture. Rather, by emphasizing dynamism, mobilizing and reconstituting adat communities can promote the production of “new” knowledge frameworks that can be instrumentalized to counter the acquiescence of rural populations to dominant modes of livelihood reproduction and forms of social relations.

Therefore, many of the discussions underscored the importance of ensuring that individuals within adat communities are made aware of the long history of oppression and exploitation as AMAN in North Sumatra desires to emphasize a narrative that suggests their presence in the province before plantation companies, capitalist economic system and the Indonesian state. This specific historical experience should not only engender sentiments of healthy distrust regarding the intentions of the state and corporations, but also can be deployed to ensure that feudal, hierarchical structures within adat communities are avoided at all costs as internal rules and regulations are (re)developed. It was mentioned that leaders of adat communities must not be seduced by power and use it for ends that are counter to the goals of democratized control of land. Nevertheless, they should use their leadership positions to ensure that state institutions (i.e. legislatures and bureaucracies at all scales) can be more responsive and not apathetic

to concerns of the communities they represent and serve. At the same time, while each adat community has its own characteristics and circumstances that cannot be generalized at larger scales, the need to strategize at provincial and national scales is also seen as imperative. Abdon Nababan expressed that the future direction of the overall movement needs to be based upon realizing a medium and long-term vision of seeking the fundamental reterritorialization Indonesia's vast landscapes that would serve to demonstrate the viability and legitimacy of adat communities so as to enable the envisioning of alternative trajectories of livelihood reproduction on the basis of communal land ownership and autonomous decision-making around the country.

In sum, *sosialisasi* activities that take place through the implementation of RAPS do not only aim to make populations legible to the state. Rather, it affords an opportunity to actively produce "new" subjectivities amongst individuals, (re)constitute local communities as well as develop "new" connections and relationships between them and other state and non-state actors. Nevertheless, given that different state and civil society actors have different perspectives regarding what constitutes acceptable behaviors, cultural identities and economic/environmental practices despite the common invocation of communitarian vocabularies, it is likely that such efforts at constructing rural society will be open-ended with no optimal, ideal outcomes or necessary final resolution. In addition, especially in North Sumatra, it is important not to idealize the possibilities of realizing completely harmonious and self-sufficient local communities disconnected from extractivist-oriented economic activity and patronage structures. Given existing structural political-economic imperatives and/or incentives for individuals to become illegal loggers, wildlife poachers, plantation workers or even participate as members of mafias

or gangs, the difficulty of remolding and restructuring rural social relations around communal land tenure and customary practices should be underscored and not seen as easy to achieve.

Material practices of planning and mapping

Implementing RAPS and achieving broader objectives identified by various state and civil society actors would not occur if not for material practices of collecting and verifying data before, during and after the claims-making process. Throughout my time in Medan, both state and civil society actors constantly discussed the importance of claims made on the basis of “accurate” data (i.e. collation of “accurate” subjects and objects and identification of appropriate scheme for claim to come under). However, how “accuracy” is ascertained is neither self-evident nor neutral, but rather performed. Notwithstanding, it does not mean claims are “invented,” but rather, they are negotiated during the course of *sosialisasi* activities. Therefore, the data that is produced does not merely reflect and record an underlying, already existing reality, even as such processes are discursively represented as such. Rather, even as certain continuities are expected when claims are accepted and formalized, they are enactive of “new” ways of constituting local communities, defining who are members and who are not, establishing “new” relationships to land and forming the basis of future trajectories of livelihood reproduction. Consequently, which claims to accept and which to reject cannot be seen to be carried out on the basis of objective technical criteria, but reflect the strength of specific ways of recognizing what kinds of land use are deemed desirable and acceptable.

During the first Groundcheck forum, BPSKL articulated how the process of formalizing an access permit under the PS scheme should be linear and follow a set of pre-determined, uniform bureaucratic procedures and carried out in a fast and efficient manner. The process would entail identifying the boundaries of individual claims (or verifying them by counter-checking with information contained in PIAPS) as well as so as to ensure that proper crops are grown, land use practices change, specific ecosystem function, forest cover can be maintained. Thereafter, this information would be compiled and submitted by the local community itself to the MoEF (or provincial governor). The subsequent process of “technical verification” (*verifikasi teknis*) ideally involving officials from relevant state institutions at all scales would result in the allocation of the access permit in due time. However, this characterization idealizes the *sosialisasi* process and blackboxes how negotiation and contention is a central component over how the granting of access permits is perceived as legitimate or not within local communities. In addition, even if scientific information about land cover can be ascertained in a seemingly objective manner, such understandings may not resonate with members of local communities, suggesting that “accurate” biophysical information about land does not automatically translate into a clear course of action of how to change formal land tenure arrangements. Even as FMUs came to the second Groundcheck forum with land use and land cover information of potential claimants recorded in a standardized format, many commented that the further processing of claims and convincing all community members to agree to participating in the PS scheme is not a straightforward process. Therefore, the need to account for existing informal land use practices that may currently be “illegal,” complicates any clear trajectory of granting access permits.

For KPA, WALHI and AMAN, “accurate” data collection is envisaged as a process that is “political.” Unlike conservation NGOs, they do not focus on gathering biophysical information, but rather emphasize compiling socio-economic information from the bottom-up, in a participatory manner so as to leverage the possibility of releasing land from the forestry estate as well as prioritize the resolution of land conflict. By doing so, they work towards attempting to minimize land tenure claims under the PS scheme, allowing for the maximization of areas where communal land titles can be allocated. Therefore, there is widespread lamentation that many conflict areas remain unmapped and that existing information about concession licenses have not been released by relevant state institutions. Having such information can contribute to exposing illegality of concession licenses, especially in cases where the land mafia and other predatory actors control land, as well as becoming aware of the potential to reallocate land to local communities once concession licenses expire in the coming years. In addition, as not all areas in the forestry estate have been formally gazetted, these civil society actors place importance on determining “errors” in existing official maps, so as to ensure that areas with longstanding rural populations can be taken out of the forestry estate.

As will be discussed in the next chapter, the emphasis of ensuring that the collection of “accurate” subjects and objects directly involving local communities is not only something that is political, but also performative. In other words, the process of data collection regarding land tenure claims does not merely reflect and make visible already existing or past realities, but rather allow for desired futures to be articulated. Therefore, given that AMAN, KPA and WALHI lament that the determination of maps lies with

bureaucrats in provincial and national level state institutions and is relatively unknown, they mention that constant vigilance needs to occur when official maps (e.g. gazetted forestry estate boundaries, indicative maps for both the PS and TORA schemes) are released to ensure that any participatory maps submitted from the bottom-up by local communities becomes formally recognized by the state and officially taken into account.

Chapter 4: RAPS implementation as an open-ended struggle without guarantees

In the last chapter, I detailed how despite the national-level RAPS framework providing an opportunity for various civil society actors to concertedly engage with various state institutions to change land tenure arrangements, its implementation in North Sumatra continues to face numerous challenges in a province where inequitable access, control and ownership of land has been a characteristic feature since the Dutch colonial era. I highlighted the difficulty of realizing the goals set out in RAPS in North Sumatra can be attributed not only to a rural political economy that remains dominated by plantation, mining and logging interests, sustained in part to the persistence of patron-client relationships and the specter of violence perpetrated by both state and non-state actors. In addition, the implementation process has to also take into account different conceptualizations of how land is to be used, managed and sustained and by whom (i.e. identification of clear “subject” linked to a clear “object” with the claim made under appropriate scheme) as well as what kinds of subjectivities should be promoted (i.e. peasant vs indigenous vs conservation). Though strategizing amongst different civil society actors can occur to pursue shared interests (i.e. the convergence of advocacy efforts by KPA, AMAN and WALHI to develop a critique of rural development premised on allocation of large-scale concession licenses), it is unlikely that the heterogeneity in such viewpoints can be completely resolved and which results in different definitions of what “successful” implementation means.

In addition, such divergences in views regarding how land is to be known, demarcated, used, accessed and/or conserved do also exist amongst different state

institutions at different scales, despite efforts over the last decade or so to develop coherence through coordination efforts especially at the national level. Therefore, its continued lack of “success” cannot be merely attributed to continued non-transparency and completeness of information, “ineffective” institutions and “bad” governance. In this chapter, I argue how such seemingly intractable differences amongst civil society actors as well as fragmentation within state institutions with regards to the derivation of coherent approach to govern the country’s vast landscapes should not necessarily be perceived in the negative light. Rather they allow for meaningful deliberation regarding the desirability and possibility of realizing systemically different trajectories of rural development, especially as viewed at the local level. Therefore, the process of implementing RAPS at the provincial and local levels is simultaneously about broader questions of determining what “new” kinds of subjectivities (adat vs peasant vs conservation), “new” meanings of Indonesian citizenship as well as “new” configurations of state institutions and political order are deemed broadly appropriate and legitimate. That being said, I also argue in this chapter, given dominant political-economic structures and ideologies that have over many years structured the way state institutions function and produce pliant rural subjectivities, though their permanence going into the future is never guaranteed (answering sub-question c).

Unsurprisingly, conundrums surrounding the transformation of land tenure arrangements are to be expected as impartial decisions over how to allocate land do not seem to be possible. Existing scholarship in the sub-field of critical agrarian studies suggest that attempts at characterizing such efforts as neutral obscures how some actors are able to articulate their claims regarding how land should be accessed, used and

owned, more successfully than other actors (Borras and Franco, 2010). Therefore, by paying attention to actually existing contestation taking place during the implementation process, one comes to appreciate that power relations between different actors are inescapable and result in privileging certain perspectives and interests over others. In this regard, the implementation of land tenure and land use policies is also about who is able to wield the power to make decisions that may benefit specific interests over other interests. Nevertheless, it is important to note that

land-based social relations remain in a continuum and are ever-changing long after a land titling project or a land reform programme has officially ended....Land-based social relations are not automatically changed when official documents are changed....Conversely, actually existing land-based social relations may dynamically change, while official documents remain unchanged (Borras and Franco, 2010, 9).

What such complexities highlight is the need to closely scrutinize how the intention of distributing access and ownership rights to land and of shaping the behavior of rural populations in specific ways will always leads to heterogeneous and unexpected outcomes given constant contestations over what constitutes “proper” use of land even as certain views are likely to dominate. Therefore, closely attending to the multiplicitous effects (including non-effects) of attempts of implementing land tenure policies will allow us to make better sense of how broader changes to rural economic trajectories may or may not occur and the views of different state and non-state actors regarding such shifts or non-shifts. Given that changes to land tenure arrangements are unlikely to satisfy the interests of all actors, it becomes essential to recognize the inevitability of certain forms of exclusion as “even the poorest people, farming collectively and sustainably cannot make use of land without some assurance that other people will not seize their farms or steal their crops....[A]ll political perspectives on land relations---from the most

conservative to the most radical---take some form of exclusion to be positive” (Hall et al, 2011, 4). Any allocation of access permits or ownership rights to land will always at least in theory have to be based on specific criteria that legitimizes and privileges the land use practices of certain individuals or groups of individuals. Given that such criteria is not pre-given, but rather is constructed and remains contested, the likelihood of definitive answers to questions such as the following: “which feature weighs more: class-based, ethnicity-based, gender-based social justice, or productivity considerations?” (Borras and Franco, 2010, 16), are quite low.

“Truthful” knowledge about land as constituting societal and political order

The sub-field of the politics of environmental knowledge and the field of science and technology studies (STS) more broadly pay attention to the historical, political and social context that influences how “truthful” knowledge is produced and legitimized. One of the central themes in the field concerns the intimate “connection between the settlement of civil authority and the social organization of knowledge production” (Shapin and Schaffer, 1985, 296), suggest that what is defined as “true” knowledge has direct implications on how authority is legitimized and institutionalized. On this basis, one can argue that dominant and seemingly neutral epistemological assumptions that influence how land is known results in the prioritization of allocating specific forms of land tenure as well as defining acceptable land use practices that rural populations must in theory internalize and adopt. Recent scholarship has suggested how longstanding epistemological frameworks that influence how knowledge about land is produced have directly justified giving access, use and management rights to large-scale actors, to the

detriment of smallholder farmers and local communities (Li, 2014b; Pritchard et al, 2016; Goldstein and Yates, 2017). Given that there is a “long history of colonial and postcolonial practices, [of] claims to certain kinds of expertise—from agronomy to engineering to cartography—[that has] serve[d] to legitimize and facilitate dominant forms of land management and control” (Pritchard et al, 2016, 618), there is a need to acknowledge that the privileging of certain forms of land tenure (i.e. long-term concessions), justified on the basis of achieving desirable goals of economic development and modernization have neither been benign nor necessarily positive for many rural populations. Rather, the knowledge produced over hundreds of years by “naturalists, surveyors, geologists, soil scientists, and others were part and parcel of conquest, settlement, extraction, and exploitation—politically, economically, and ecologically” (Pritchard et al, 2016, 619) distributed economic and environmental harms and benefits in highly uneven ways. Concomitantly, land use practices of small farmers and forest-dependent communities in many cases were marginalized, criminalized and delegitimized over time as the knowledges they were based on were deemed “non-scientific” and “untruthful” and perceived as threats to dominant political and social order.

Socio-legal studies and the dynamicity of state-society relationship

By placing this analysis in conversation with the sub-field of socio-legal studies, we come to realize that demarcating and distributing land to specific individuals or groups of individuals is not a straightforward and neutral process (i.e. justifications for exclusion are political). Rather, in emphasizing a relational understanding of property, this combined analytical framework points to how specific normative configurations of

rules, obligations, duties and responsibilities, justified on the basis of seemingly objective knowledges about land, give rise to specific ways of territorializing space and defining appropriate land use practices and behaviors that rural populations should adopt (Kennedy, 2011; Peluso and Lund, 2011; Blomley, 2016). Given that “there is nothing in the world of spaces, places, landscapes, and environments that is not affected by the workings of law” (Delaney, 2015, 99), it becomes clear that any land tenure arrangement directly structures how individuals, groups of individuals relate with one another as well as other state or non-state actors and influences decisions made to use, manage and intervene on specific areas of land. In many instances, these constitutive exclusions arguably result in the privileging and sustaining the interests of large-scale actors as “enclosures and evictions...[are] sanctioned by law and development plans, and...(re-)possession of land is sanctioned by titles, concessions, and other instruments” (Peluso and Lund, 2011, 674).

Nevertheless, while it may be true that inequitable land tenure arrangements can be sustained for long periods of time as “territoriality produces and maintains power relations among governed environmental subjects and between subjects and authorities” (Peluso and Lund, 2011, 673) that are manifestly unequal, it does not necessarily mean that such realities cannot be challenged. As scientific and legal frameworks that underpin how land is known, demarcated, allocated, managed and sustained are not inherent and pre-given, but rather are socially constructed, their viability and legitimacy has to be continuously reproduced, thus opening up space for dominant epistemologies and institutions to be resisted against. Even as some form of exclusion is always inevitable, existing land tenure arrangements that may privilege certain actors and uphold

“appropriate” land use practices should not be perceived as permanent. In fact, it is because “exclusion [is] both a necessary element in the orderly and productive use of land and a threat to [the] lives and livelihoods” (Hall et al, 2011, 12) of others, that some degree of contestation and change becomes unavoidable. In addition, it is also often the case that national level government policies related to land tenure that in theory either privilege large-scale concession interests or attempt to democratize access and ownership of land to a larger proportion of the rural population, do not work out as planned when implementation occurs.

As I have discussed in the previous chapter, “while legal-institutional categorized property relationships cast a shadow on real human interactions, the multiplex nature of human lives means that the way that property relationships act ‘on the ground’ never quite match the shadows thrown by the legal-institutional layer” (Wiber, 2015, 446). Given the mutability and dynamicity of social relations and human behavior, a mismatch between what is intended by official policy and the messy reality of how individuals, albeit in constrained ways, organize themselves into local communities and intervene on landscapes according to contextual influences and circumstances is to be expected. What this demonstrates is that “the social translation of space as an abstract category into territory as a socially meaningful quotidian reality” (Dawson et al, 2014, 2) does not always take place according to pre-determined trajectories. Hence, rather than understand the implementation of official policy frameworks as a mechanistic and linear process and able to completely standardize how individuals or local communities gain access, use and relate to land, it should be expected that the involvement of different actors who have diverging motivations and perspectives will lead to disagreements and mistranslations

(Delaney, 2015). Given that such endless contestation is fundamentally about “convincing people that one’s view of the world is the right one” (Hall et al, 2011, 19), the lack of any final resolution of determining the “right” approach to allocate land and dictate appropriate land use practices, will plausibly lead to unintended configurations of land tenure arrangements that are a result of the “interaction between local and large-scale forms of understanding and organizing space” (Dawson et al, 2014, 3). Rather than assume the stability of existing land tenure arrangements, it may be more accurate to suggest that “what constitutes a good claim at one moment may be less viable at another and may not resonate with what is generally or politically accepted. Similarly, what is perceived as legal or as illegal may change over time without any change in legislation” (Sikor and Lund, 2010, 7). This observation demonstrates that how land tenure arrangements and land use practices are deemed illegal or legal, acceptable or unacceptable, legitimate or illegitimate is not self-evident, but rather always in flux and negotiated. On the one hand, it is no doubt true that dominant ideologies and institutional frameworks can over time constrain the possibilities of meaningful contestation. Yet, “because hegemony is processual, contingent and contested, it can never be total or complete” (Moore, 2005, 11). It is only by subscribing to such open-ended conceptualization of struggle over land involving various state and non-state actors that the overdetermination of the legitimacy of existing land tenure arrangements can be avoided. Doing so will also allow attributing agency to those who navigate political-economic structures and interact with state institutions that have historically marginalized their interests.

Considering land tenure arrangements as always political and fluid rather than

neutral and permanent, results in conceptualizing the state as a heterogenous, dynamic and mutable entity that is responsive, at least minimally to the demands made by rural populations. Therefore, as formal land tenure arrangements are constantly contested, state-society relationships are also simultaneously in the process of being remade. Given such active processes that continually reconstitute political and social order, non-deterministic and unpredictable reterritorializations are always possible. Rather than take for granted the legitimacy of state authority and state decision-making, acknowledging “that all sovereign claims are performative and...that such performances are inherently speculative” (Barker, 2013, 260) necessitates paying close attention to how rural populations acquiesce, agree with or resist and organize against existing policies. By foregrounding how “creative and diverse roles people can play to actively bring the state into their lives, [potentially] on their own terms...[it can be argued that] states are constituted situationally and are entangled in peoples’ everyday lives” (Herriman and Winarnita, 2016, 132) rather than being an inexorable, external force that forcibly imposes its will on populations it claims authority over. This way of thinking would grasp “rights and political authority [as] contemporaneous, [given that] the control exercised by institutions over resources and political subjectivities does not represent a pre-existing authority. It produces authority. (Lund, 2016, 1202). Such a conception of the state-society dynamic as dialectically constituted calls into question the “spatial and scalar image of a state that both sits above and contains its localities, regions, and communities” (Ferguson and Gupta, 2002, 982), drawing attention to its invariably contingent nature. No doubt, we should not downplay the fact that especially in the context of land tenure politics in Indonesia that I detailed in Chapter 2, the agency of individuals or groups of

individuals to assert their demands remains constrained as the elicitation of adequate responses from the state is never guaranteed.

Nevertheless, as the complexities of the RAPS framework demonstrates, “central and local government agencies and functionaries [can have] diverse and often contradictory agendas, rules and enforcement procedures, [which] complicate[s] the notion of a singular national policy context” (Hall et al, 2011, 5) that is able to be implemented in a straightforward manner. It is this institutional fragmentation that opens up the possibility for challenges made by rural populations and civil society actors within the bureaucratic-legal arena and which may result in outcomes that do not necessarily sustain existing formal land tenure arrangements. Given that “struggles over property and citizenship are therefore as much about the scope and constitution of political authority as they are about access to resources and membership of polities” (Lund, 2016, 1201), the stability of existing land tenure arrangements arguably has a direct link to the stability of political order and which is inextricably intertwined with economic and social order. Therefore, the need for the legitimacy of the state to be constantly reproduced necessitates paying attention to everyday mundane bureaucratic practices and how they come to structure subjectivities and change how individuals or populations interact with specific state institutions over time (Ferguson and Gupta, 2002).

The implementation of RAPS in North Sumatra as I have described in the previous chapter is one example of such agonistic and prolonged struggles between civil society actors and state institutions to strive for the restructuring of the province’s land tenure arrangements so as to achieve goals of democratizing access and ownership of land and/or maintaining forest cover and conserving biodiversity. Even as current forms

of territorializing space have not benefited the vast majority of the province's rural populations and has arguably resulted in significant environmental damage since the Dutch colonial era, I have noted that civil society actors in North Sumatra do not express futility of advocating and struggling within the bureaucratic-legal arena to pressure various parts of the Indonesian state to concretely act in ways to prevent further exacerbation of negative economic and environmental outcomes. As discussed in Chapter 2, longstanding contentious debates related to issues of land tenure and land use have been an integral part of Indonesia's political discourse since the country's independence and which continues until this day, despite many decades during President Suharto's rule when the central government attempted to impose a vision of capitalist modernization premised in part upon extractivist-oriented economic activities in the country's rural areas, which would not have been possible without the allocation of large-scale concessions.

Nevertheless, as described in Chapter 2, resistance against President Suharto's policies that began in the 1980s and culminated in May 1998 demonstrates that the legitimacy of state authority is never permanent, especially if it is dependent on repressive and authoritarian practices. Since then, sanctioned involvement of various civil society actors in the public and policymaking sphere has resulted in a more responsive central government that since the passage of TAP directive, has formulated policy frameworks that in theory, attempted to democratize formalized access, control and ownership of land to a greater proportion of the country's rural population (Rachman, 2011). On the one hand, "successful" implementation of these frameworks (including RAPS) by any meaningful measure continues to remain elusive, can be partly attributed

not only to the persistence of political-economic structures that continue to disproportionately benefit plantation, logging and mining interests, but also to the increased enrollment of rural populations, often on adverse terms into commodity crop value chains, especially palm oil (McCarthy, 2010). On the other hand, the continued stagnation of translating abstract policy goals into concrete allocation of access permits and (communal) ownership rights can also be connected to unresolved debates within the state and between different civil society actors regarding how rural populations should intervene on the landscape as well as which behaviors and identities individuals and group of individuals should adopt. Such fragmentation should not be necessarily perceived as inherently negative and it does not suggest that attempts to forge consensus or produce consent and legitimacy are not taking place. Rather, it points to the constant contestation and likely irresolvability over different visions regarding what kinds of subjectivities and landscapes should be produced as well as how “new” relationships between the state and local communities should be structured. By stressing this persistent non-totalizability of singular visions to fully determine local realities, I suggest that structural transformations, even if perceived as desirable from a left-ideological standpoint are hardly ever guaranteed. The historical trajectory of land politics in North Sumatra attests to such given that longstanding discontent, advocacy and resistance from below since the Dutch colonial era has not been able to fundamentally alter the province’s rural economy oriented around the allocation of concession licenses. Nevertheless, an embrace of uncertainty and permanent dynamism that emphasizes non-linearity of struggle and possibility of unexpected outcomes may in fact be more effective at making sense of contemporary prospects of changing existing land tenure

arrangements through the RAPS framework.

Inescapability of regimes of governmentality

Therefore, Michel Foucault's notions of governmentality provides an appropriate analytical lens to make sense of how specific ways of producing rural subjectivities and territorializing space are made legitimate and can become dominant, though their permanence is never assured and can be destabilized and contested over time. Legg (2005) provides an excellent definition of this term: "the conduct of conduct, those attempts to shape, guide or affect personal action without the use of physical force" (147). What this analytical lens suggests is that the exercise of effective state power over its populations does not simply occur in an arbitrary top-down fashion, but rather involves "training, fostering, inciting, and if needs be, coercing individuals to adopt self-regulating behaviors and to govern themselves as if they were free" (Huxley, 2008, 1640). As a result, looking at how logics of governmentality and territoriality may be inextricably interlinked emphasizes how the constitution and stabilization of state-society dynamics are grounded upon land tenure arrangements that aim to produce specific spatial configurations that make populations amenable to being governed on the basis of seemingly neutral regimes of "truth" (Elden, 2007). What results is generalized societal depoliticization as knowledges about land that seem to be incontrovertible produce consent to specific ways of understanding, organizing and using space. By "decentering...our power geometries, to examine how power works to constitute distinctive spaces and how, conversely, the arrangement of space generates the effect of power" (Li, 2005, 385), we should come to appreciate that such indirect modes of control

that have explicit material effects do not require overt repression. Rather, “enclosures and territorializations [that] bound spaces and identities [simultaneously] create[s] new kinds of environmental subjects” (Lund and Peluso, 2011, 677) so that the promotion of specific norms can minimize resistance against land tenure arrangements that unevenly distribute environmental and economic harms and benefits.

At the same time, this analytical lens also suggests that intended and pre-supposed outcomes of land tenure policies that disproportionately benefit certain actors should not be seen as necessarily stable and enduring. Rather, the notion of “counter-conduct” suggests that contestation over the legitimacy and viability of such policies are always a latent possibility, as the different actors shape non-deterministic trajectories of social change. Therefore, counter-conducts should not be perceived as “additional or reactive mechanisms, which we might embrace, acknowledge, or omit in our analyses of modern political governmentality, but wholly immanent and necessary to the formation and development of governmentality” (Cadman, 2010, 540) or “simply a passive underside, a merely negative or reactive phenomenon, a kind of disappointing after-effect” (Davidson, 2011, 27). Instead, by underscoring the agency of those who desire to realize specific goals as policy frameworks are implemented, such agonistic contestations over the nature of the state-society dynamic suggests that the permanence of land tenure arrangements can never be achieved. Yet at the same time, it is important to recognize that “there are no subjects outside power” (Li, 2005, 384) and push back against the notion that it is “somehow illegitimate that some should seek to guide the conduct of others” (Ferguson, 2011, 63), given the inherently normative character of ways in which actors seek to define how individuals and local communities should relate to and intervene on

landscapes. As different actors compete to actualize specific desires, outcomes are neither inevitable nor predetermined. Accordingly, by underscoring the processual nature of contestation, we should understand different actors articulating their demands as evidence “not of refusing power, but rather exercising it in a way that would be provisional, reversible, and open to surprise” (Ferguson, 2011, 67) to the extent that in doing so, it may possibly “transforms one’s relation to oneself and to others” (Davidson, 2011, 32). This de-essentialized conceptualization of the views of specific actors would allow for potential convergence of interests, though the persistence of incommensurability may also be a possibility.

In this regard, the process of translating the RAPS framework from abstract policy at the national level to concrete realization at the provincial and local level simultaneously “produce[s] fragmentation of the state [and]...regimes of administration and governmentality [that] continue to do their homogenizing work” (Barker, 2009, 7). Therefore, the uneven application of procedures to grant access permits or ownership rights demonstrates that attempts at standardizing how land is known, demarcated, distributed, used and maintained according to a predefined set of formal guidelines, regulations or laws can never fully occur, given the lack of clarity (or even deliberate intransigence by specific state institutions) of how to alter land tenure arrangements on some areas of land. Nevertheless, by paying attention to the “rich world of actual social and political practice, the world of tap-turning and experimentation...where the landscape of political possibility and constraint that we have come to take for granted is being redrawn” (Ferguson, 2011, 68), we can suggest that non-linear trajectories of implementing RAPS should not be associated with inherent institutional deficiencies.

Rather, they can be attributed to how the articulation of alternative imaginaries of rural livelihood reproduction remains a work in progress especially given the continuing dominance of political-economic structures that have privileged plantation, logging and mining interests and produced pliant and depoliticized rural subjects for over a century especially in the North Sumatran context. In addition, the ubiquity of local elites (e.g. land mafia, protection rackets) who can either deploy the threat of violence or establish clientelist relationships with specific individuals or groups of individuals also complicate any push towards transforming rural social relations. Nevertheless, given that such logics should not be seen as totalizing and by “stress[ing] shifting alignments and contingent constellations of power rather than a single ruling rationality” (Moore, 2005, 7), actually existing heterogeneity can be leveraged to potentially change informal or insecure land tenure arrangements. At the same time, they influence and are influenced by changes to rural subjectivities, knowledges of as well as relationships to land, internal organization of local communities and relationships between local communities and other external actors. Arguably, civil society actors are using the implementation of RAPS framework to reshape the state, so it can fulfill the demands of “the people” in plausibly meaningful ways even if “countermovements do not have a singular source or rationale, nor do they represent a coherent set of interests” (Hall et al, 2011, 9). Rather than seeking distance from the state, continued faith that these actors have in mobilizing rural populations and articulating their demands in the bureaucratic-legal arena as I discussed in the previous chapter, suggests that “people seek to be governed, but with a distrust of government, and a desire to make government work for them” (Herriman and Winarnita, 2016, 135).

“Assemblage” and “articulation” to make sense of contingent conjunctures

The terms “assemblage” and “articulation” used by Tania Li and Donald Moore respectively highlight how the framing, legitimization and implementation of state policies are never straightforward, but always require the contingent convergence of specific elements and factors including particular epistemologies that are recognized to be “true” by different state and non-state actors. For Li, she sees an assemblage as a

complex of knowledge and practice in terms of which certain kinds of problems and solutions become thinkable whereas others are submerged, at least for a time. The goals and desires of particular social groups contribute to the emergence of a discursive formation, but such a formation is not the preserve of one social group, and it does not necessarily serve the interests of a dominant class. It is formed within relations of power, but it is not conjured up *ex nihilo* by a sovereign will. Assemblage is itself an ongoing process, and a discursive formation is never complete or finished. In fact, neither is it really singular: It is always subject to contestation and reformulation by a range of pressures and forces it cannot contain (Li, 2005, 386).

Moore’s definition of “articulation” similarly calls attention to the open-ended nature of contestations over state policies, emphasizing how they are shaped by complex cultural and historical forces and calling into question the possibility of resolution through simple technocratic fixes. He understands the concept as:

opens[ing] up questions of how conjunctural contingencies emerge in particular histories and geographies, about the heterogeneity of practices and cultural forms they foment, and about how these linkages inform the cultural politics of place, identity and subjection...[A]rticulation foregrounds how power relations and historical sediments formatively shape contingent constellations that become materially and discursively consequential...[T]he question of effective articulations--of provisional linkages that enunciate identities, rights and political positions--hinges on contingent cultural politics. Not all articulations gain traction. Nor do they necessarily enact intended outcomes (Moore, 2005, 25).

Above all, these two concepts point to the constant shifts in policymaking and policy implementation over time are to be expected, given how various actors, albeit in

constrained and uneven ways, are able to contribute to shaping trajectories of social change in unexpected and non-linear ways. At the same time, we should recognize that the realization of “better” or emancipatory outcomes are never guaranteed as Wittayapak and Baird (2018) suggests in the context of communal land titling in Northern Thailand.

In the rest of the chapter, I analyze current conjuncture of RAPS implementation in North Sumatra to suggest that fragmentation within the Indonesian state that is a result of post-1998 “democratization” and “decentralization” reforms has opened up space for civil society actors to actively assert demands for different land tenure arrangements, something that was virtually unthinkable under the Suharto regime. The emphasis placed by all state and civil society actors envisage *sosialisasi* activities as a means to forge new realities in the province’s rural areas. Therefore, attaching different valences to communitarian vocabularies demonstrates how interactions in the bureaucratic-legal arena are highly politicized given that different civil society actors desire different state institutions to recognize specific visions of how land should be territorialized, what kinds of identities, subjectivities and behaviors rural populations should subscribe to and how local communities should be constituted and organized. While such contestations may possibly result in realizing shared interests and common goals, competing viewpoints between different actors can remain incommensurable and can stifle the policy implementation process and allow for dominant political-economic structures to persist and inaction by various state institutions to continue to be unchallenged. Nevertheless, fragmentation of views amongst state and non-state actors and the impossibility of achieving a final resolution with regards to determining the “right” approach to allocating land and determining appropriate land use practices should not be necessarily perceived

in a negative light. Therefore, I argue that we should shift our analytical focus away from how “bad” institutions prevent changes to existing land tenure arrangements and towards closely tracking how multiscale advocacy strategies attempt to (re)shape the state and (re)constituting local communities.

Co-constitution of knowledge about and governance of forested landscapes

Nancy Peluso and Peter Vandergeest’s notion of “political forests” calls attention to how the effective exercise of authority of the Dutch colonial forces and postcolonial Indonesian state to territorialize and control land as well as regulate land use did not and has not merely occurred through coercive and repressive means. Rather, in defining the concept as areas of land that are “legislated, zoned, mapped, and classified as permanent forest and managed by professional, “scientific” government agencies” (Peluso and Vandergeest, 2011, 588), they point to how “forests” do not inherently exist, but become “real” as specific epistemological frameworks about such areas of land are constructed. Importantly, by framing such knowledges as neutral, state institutions “make their control of territorial formations...seem “normal” and “natural” (Peluso and Vandergeest, 2011, 604), underlining how the production of “truthful” knowledge about land is intimately linked with the maintenance of legitimate authority to control landscapes and populations, as mentioned earlier in the chapter. Beginning with the colonial era, “forest security [was secured] through various legal means, through the creation of forest police, and by the disciplining of the population to think about and act towards “the forest” in specific ways” (Peluso and Vandergeest, 2001, 764). One of the major developments was the “normaliz[ation of] the idea of “forests” as separate biological entities that required or

deserved separate forms of management from other forms of agriculture” (Peluso and Vandergeest, 2001, 780), which resulted in restricting the livelihood activities of rural populations, many of whom made no such distinction. In addition, the interventions of state institutions to establish control over vast areas of land and strengthen their authority were also justified on the basis of the perceived need to “transform jungles from peopled, untamed, dangerous mixtures of people and allegedly wild and separate natures into more orderly, state-managed, and integrated through differentiated forests and agricultural areas, with people settled neatly and securely in villages next to them” (Peluso and Vandergeest, 2011, 596). As bottom-up mobilizations to contribute to informing nation-building trajectories and the meaning of nationalism dwindled in the years leading up to the G30S events of 1965, the central government became more effective at asserting top-down control over land and which blunted efforts at meaningful land redistribution that was intended through the BAL.

As mentioned in the previous chapters, these forms of control exercised on the basis of classifying land into distinct categories remain institutionalized today through legal frameworks such as Article 33 of the Indonesian Constitution, BFL and Law 41 of 1999 on Forestry allowing the Indonesian state to retain ownership on around 70% of the country’s land area. Despite provisions available to release land from the forestry estate to give ownership rights to adat and non-adat communities, there is little evidence that the implementation of RAPS in North Sumatra is resulting in substantive changes to who formally is able to access or control land. Rather, it seems that the lack of meaningful shifts in land tenure arrangements will continue to “facilitate extraction and production of valuable forest products and facilitate the practice of scientific forestry” (Peluso and

Vandergeest, 2001, 802), entrenching a land management paradigm based upon effective implementation of seemingly neutral conservation laws and concession licensing procedures as well as continuing suspicion of mainstreaming legalized access of local communities on areas within the forestry estate.

At the same time, it is also essential to not overdetermine the ability of the Indonesian state to effectively assert its authority over landscapes and rural populations it seemingly desires to exercise control over. Instead, it has been argued that:

the actually existing state in Indonesia [is being]...spread thin. It is fragmented, overwhelmed, and ineffective—characteristics it shares with states in most other developing countries. Intense political forces traverse its various parts. We cannot understand the state if we insist on seeing it as a single bureaucratic colossus with monopoly powers. Indeed, we ought to investigate how such a shambled set of organizations has managed to create the impression in the first place that it is the only show around (Barker, 2009, 23).

Such a fragmented understanding of the Indonesian state does not necessarily only apply to the current post-Suharto era, but also to historical periods before and after the country's independence. During the Dutch colonial era, "territorial approaches to establishing the political forest were not immediately or inevitably possible" (Peluso and Vandergeest, 2001, 780) in places such as what is today West Kalimantan. In the postcolonial context, the capacity of the state to implement forestry laws should not be overestimated. In many contexts, "forest guards are hugely outnumbered by forest users and the terrain, often remote and mountainous, makes surveillance difficult. Laws that exclude people from forests are enforced sporadically and sometimes violently, but it has proven impossible for forest bureaucracies to enforce these laws in a consistent manner" (Li, 2007, 266). As discussed in Chapter 3, my interactions with conservation NGOs in North Sumatra align with this view as the allocation of PS access permits is perceived as

a means to enroll local communities in active processes of self-policing and self-regulation given the expectation of continued weakness of civil society or state actors to monitor land use activities on all land areas in the forestry estate.

At the same time, it is also crucial to realize that the legitimacy of knowledges underpinning forest categories have never been totalizing. Even as what are considered to be “truths” about land have direct normative implications on, the process of translating “factual” knowledge into effectively regulating land use is far from straightforward. Rather, we should conceptualize “management approaches [as being]... constructed from a mix of common understandings about human societies and the environment, scientific findings and technologies...political and economic prerogatives, and location-specific knowledges” (Goldman et al, 2011, 2). This non-linear trajectory of state institutions and rural populations agreeing with how land should be known, allocated, used and/or conserved should lead us to “not assume that the spaces that are thought or produced [in a top-down manner] necessarily have the effects that are intended” (Huxley, 2008, 1647), demonstrating that constantly evolving socio-political contexts have to accommodate the views and interests of marginalized rural populations to some extent. The inability of FMUs and conservation NGOs in North Sumatra to unambiguously follow a set of pre-defined procedures to process PS access permit claims demonstrates that seemingly neutral scientific knowledge about land does not always easily result in formalized management frameworks that are agreed to by all actors. Furthermore, given the desire of WALHI, AMAN and KPA to leverage the possibility of reducing the size of the forestry estate to grant communal ownership rights to adat and non-adat communities, one could suggest that biophysical and socio-economic information gathered about land through the

claims-making process is not predominantly descriptive, but rather is performative. The desire by certain actors (e.g. conservation NGOs) to implement the RAPS framework on the basis of abstract calls for transparency does not acknowledge the impossibility of producing unmediated and disinterested knowledge about land. Such an understanding means that information about subjects and objects deemed to be “accurate” do not only reflect pre-existing realities, but rather also contains normative elements of how changes to the landscape and characteristics of local communities are envisaged and which may not easily align with formal legal provisions. By recognizing that the construction of “reality” is a dynamic and contested process that is generated through “the everyday, face-to-face exchanges between individuals, in the formal and informal settings where state power is exercised, discussed, and contested” (Barker, 2009, 5), we come to realize that the state-society dynamic characterized by constant flux and fragmentation is to be expected as different visions of how land should be territorialized may never be resolved.

The lens of anthropology of bureaucracy

For this reason, one should not downplay the significance of contestations between various state and civil society actors within the bureaucratic-legal arena to potentially change formal land tenure arrangements, especially given how all relevant actors envisage *sosialisasi* activities constituting “new” subjectivities, promoting “new” land use practices and establishing “new” relationships between local communities and the state. By drawing attention to inherent politics of how bureaucracies carry out their functions, the widely accepted notion that they act as “objectivity machines, generating vision from nowhere and everywhere” (Hoag, 2011, 84) can be called into question. The

sub-field of anthropology of bureaucracy discusses how bureaucracies actually configure social order in specific, normative ways even as many of them maintain their legitimacy by characterizing their work as apolitical. Nonetheless, it is the inability of seemingly disinterested technocratic policy frameworks to fully structure local realities and influence the behavior of affected populations that allows for contestation to always be a possibility. Therefore, it is important to recognize that bureaucracies never actually function in an abstract and universal manner.

As a result, the[ir] ideals are always in deferral, and they can operate as depoliticizing technologies, masking the exercise of power in the guise of an always emergent—but never attained—perfect order....[B]ureaucracies generate collective agency, but it is achieved paradoxically through the elaborately detailed individuation of action, and bureaucrats' professional survival relies on their careful and continual eschewal of authorship (Hoag, 2011, 82).

On the one hand, the desire by different state institutions involved in the implementation of the RAPS framework to portray the claims-making process as neutral, allows for the demands of certain local communities (and individuals) to be successfully recognized given that (communal) ownership rights or access permits “establish and communicate a stable relation between discourse and individuals, actions, objects, and environments” (Hull, 2012a, 256). On the other hand, it is also important to realize that given that only certain desired “realities” can be successfully articulated, the notion that decisions to approve or reject claims are made on the basis of purely abstract, technical criteria should be dispensed with. Rather, by suggesting that the “accuracy” of subjects and objects is produced through contestation rather than being self-evident, we should recognize that the “the truth or falsity of documentary claims can be beside the point for individuals and for bureaucrats aiming to produce particular outcomes” (Hull, 2012a, 259). Therefore, if

successful granting of access permits or (communal) ownership rights is premised on the flexible adoption of standardized procedures, we should realize that “collectivization and individualization [are]...simultaneous functions of the same bureaucratic processes, taking neither the agency of the individual nor the organization as given” (Hull, 2012b, 130). *Sosialisasi* activities during the claims-making process should be perceived as attempts to contest, negotiate and potentially agree to specific future visions of how land should be allocated and used, casting doubt on the seeming impersonal nature of how rural populations and civil society actors interact with state institutions as attempts to forge new connections occurs. Therefore, the efforts by different civil society actors to engage multiple state institutions at different scales during the RAPS implementation process can be seen as aimed towards configuring the Indonesian state in ways that increase the likelihood that those directly involved in verifying the “accuracy” of claims will agree to the realization of goals of agrarian justice, adat territorialization and/or conservation as understood at the local village level.

Rather than only attributing the ineffectiveness of translating RAPS from abstract goals to concrete realization to intransigent state institutions unwilling to formalize already existing claims that clearly articulate the interests and desires of rural populations, the implementation process itself should be seen as enabling the galvanization and politicization of local communities to forge and resonate with “new” imaginaries of livelihood reproduction on demarcated areas of land. Therefore, “‘counter[ing]’ hegemonic production of space in participatory mappings lies less within the representation itself, but rather in the performative speakings-of and socially situated remakings of such maps” (Sletto, 2015, 941), guaranteeing a degree of dynamicity of

how landscape changes will take place and flexibility in terms of how best practices and procedures to formulate claims are to be understood and adopted. An understanding of documents that mediate the claims-making process (e.g. maps) as “not [being] merely read...[but] instead [are] given life through coproduction between individuals, social context, and textual inscriptions, and hence remade to make work in the world” (Sletto, 2015, 930) would confound the notion that “rational” and deterministic trajectories of land use can materialize spontaneously on the basis of self-evident “factual” and “transparent” information regarding land and the local communities who live and depend on them. Such ambiguity can also be expected even in cases where access permits have already been formalized given ongoing uncertainty over the ability of FMUs to monitor workplans, develop relationships with local communities and implement conservation laws as well as how newly constituted customary legal communities are able to govern adat territories they have jurisdiction over. As a result, non-deterministic remakings of socio-spatial configurations and state-society dynamics remain likely in all rural areas, where formal changes to existing land tenure arrangements will or will not take place. Given the ethnic and landscape diversity as well as the history of bottom-up resistance against unequal and exploitative land and labor arrangements in North Sumatra throughout its colonial and postcolonial history, it seems that the RAPS framework offers an opportunity for multi-faceted advocacy efforts to coalesce and assert demands in a generalized manner at the provincial level, as well as in a context-specific manner at the local level.

At the same time, it is important to reiterate that an open-ended conceptualization of social change in rural areas does not guarantee that “better” outcomes will necessarily

occur. I do not want to downplay the influence of political-economic structures and state policies at both the national and provincial level as identified in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 respectively that continue to privilege plantation, mining and logging interests and entrench patron-client relationships, resulting in (specific) rural populations continuing to acquiesce to the dominance of these industries, especially in instances when overt land conflict and violence do not occur. The commitment expressed by senior officials from MoEF and NLA at the KPA-hosted forum to establish vertical and horizontal inter-agency coherence so as to realize the goals set out in the RAPS framework may be more rhetorical than substantive, given that the paradigm of concession-oriented rural development is not being fundamentally called into question by different parts of the Indonesian state. In addition, I do not want to overstate the ability of local communities to assert claims over land and to imagine alternative livelihood strategies as it has been argued that the contemporary

combination of forces, [namely] right-wing militarism, conservative Islamic populism and the prevailing ‘dull compulsion of the market’ – has become a powerful instrument for the co-optation and/or destruction of genuine emancipatory rural initiatives....[thus to some extent] limiting grievances to the claim that incorporation into commodity production should be on more profitable terms (Larastiti, 2018, 3).

Given longstanding effects of the depoliticization of communitarian vocabularies in the name of social and national stability that was entrenched under Suharto’s 30 years of rule, it is crucial to avoid idealizing the possibilities of easily reconstituting local communities with non-hierarchical internal structures. The challenge of transforming subjectivities through *sosialisasi* activities that can lead to different livelihood reproduction strategies remains stark given that the country’s political culture described in previous chapters have promoted widespread acquiescence and remain entrenched up until today. It is

unlikely that realizing completely self-sufficient local communities disconnected from larger-scale economic systems will be possible or even desirable in all instances. Tania Li also raises the argument that given the ubiquity of capitalist ideologies, many rural populations have willingly structured livelihood activities on an individual household basis around market-oriented cash crop agriculture and she expressed doubts that communal land tenure can be a viable alternative that will resonate with many rural populations (Li, 2014a).

Taken together, it becomes imperative to recognize that “thorny matters of power, inequality, and representation have not withered away” (Wainwright and Bryan, 2009, 155) even as opportunities for formal changes to land tenure arrangements exist through the RAPS implementation process. Valid concerns exist over who exactly has the capacity and ability to participate in the mapping and claims-making process as well as who should represent and make decisions on behalf of the local community, especially given clientelistic ties between village and district elites (Ito, 2011). Given such realities, the multiscale advocacy strategy deployed by various North Sumatra civil society actors to transform the state and remake local communities demonstrates an attention to overcome structural obstacles both at the macro and micro level as described in Chapter 3. While many of the civil society actors I encountered allude to the long history of attempts to democratize access to and ownership of land as a means to decry the continued inability of the central government to live up to its own rhetoric of promoting bottom-up, people-centered development, much of their interactions with state institutions was focused on working towards envisioning and realizing “new” futures. Rather than attempting to retrieve a romanticized, lost past of harmonious, self-sufficient

and isolated villages, which in many cases, may be more a myth than actual historical reality, especially in North Sumatra where significant movements of goods and people existed well before the arrival of the Dutch (Andaya, 2002). Therefore, even as discourses of pre-colonial social relations and post-independence agrarian justice are leveraged to energize contemporary demands for RAPS to be implemented in a timely and meaningful way, there does not seem to be a focus on recovering past “authentic” identities as the sole basis of realizing less unequal land tenure arrangements.

Therefore, I would contend that civil society actors in North Sumatra do not underestimate the difficulty of realizing the abstract goals set out in the RAPS framework. On the one hand, in addition to political-economic structures that continue to privilege large-scale mining, plantation and logging interests, different worldviews of civil society actors may stifle the timely allocation of access permits and (communal) ownership rights especially in areas where knowledge about biophysical characteristics is more clearly debatable (e.g. should agroforests be considered “secondary forests?”), where existing land use categorizations cannot be effectively operationalized (e.g. significant human settlement and open agricultural fields in areas legally classified as “protected forests”) and where subjectivities of rural populations are in flux (e.g. ongoing determination if local communities have strong adat consciousness). On the other hand, all state and civil society actors in North Sumatra express a generalized discontent regarding the current land tenure arrangements and hence, attempts to contest them through the RAPS implementation process may produce outcomes that may be perceived at least by some to be desirable. In line with the notion of the inevitability of some form of governmentality to structure social relations and regulate behavior as discussed earlier

this chapter, it can be argued that rural populations in North Sumatra have to contend with “an already-mapped world where one cannot elect to live outside of sovereignty, territory, or the law” (Wainwright and Bryan, 2009, 156). As a consequence, legibility to the state becomes sought after as a means to attain formal recognition of specific economic livelihood strategies and land use practices.

At the same time, even if a clear vision of optimal future land use can be determined at the provincial, regional or national scales (i.e. through formal spatial planning processes), its legitimacy amongst rural populations at the local level is never guaranteed. Therefore, “map-making [should be seen] as a political – more than technical – process...[and hence, it is important] to ask questions about under what conditions map-making becomes not only possible but politically imperative” (Wainwright and Bryan, 2009, 170) so as to make sense of how and why local communities reject, acquiesce or consent to relevant policy and legal frameworks regarding how land should be allocated and used. For example, the submission of participatory maps and other relevant data by AMAN to the state regarding the possible extent of adat territories is an attempt to fundamentally contest the state’s claim to own and control 70% of the country’s landmass and in effect, challenge knowing such areas as “forests” and allocating land tenure on that basis. In contrast, conservation NGOs work towards identifying landscapes that currently or upon restoration, are able to viably sustain substantial levels of biodiversity. Submitting such information to the state would bolster their argument that human activity on specific landscapes should be minimized or effectively regulated through the granting of PS access permits.

Politics of the definition and recognition of “accurate” land tenure claims

Kregg Hetherington’s elaboration of attempts at implementing an agrarian reform policy in post-dictatorship Paraguay has many parallels to the contemporary situation in North Sumatra (and in Indonesia more broadly) that I have described in the previous chapters. He especially underscores how the process of campesinos (smallholder farmers) presenting “evidence” for their claims should be seen as highly politicized and not merely a question of adhering to pre-established bureaucratic procedures. Given decades of privileging the interests of large (soy) farmers, he characterizes them as being “altogether absent from the history of coded representations— campesinos may have made feeble personal imprints on the land, but they have made few if any in the public registry” (Hetherington, 2011, 129). Therefore, “accurate” claims do not merely reflect currently existing reality or represent a lost past, but are future-oriented attempts to articulate and realize specific desirable changes. The contentious nature of interactions with the state is not downplayed, but instead is embraced given that in many instances, “campesino communicative acts are not transparent to the law. Campesinos know that their attempts at communicating possession are not as strong as the attempts of soy farmers” (Hetherington, 2011, 126), demonstrating how they view the state not as a neutral arbiter between competing interests. Yet, similar to the situation in North Sumatra, there seems to be a commitment by campesinos to focus their struggle within the bureaucratic-legal arena, persevering to remake state institutions that will be responsive to their interests, rather than attempt to imagine a radically different political order. Even as they acknowledge that the Paraguayan “government [should be] known for cheating and lying...[given] a long history of theft and injustice...[t]hey would win this fight to

reclaim the rule of law by obeying the rule of law, and in so doing reestablish the dignity of the nation and the constitution” (Hetherington, 2011, 86). I contend that campesinos in Paraguay as well as civil society actors and local communities in North Sumatra are not wide-eyed or mistakenly optimistic regarding this conundrum of on the one hand, embracing the opportunities afforded by the widening of democratic space to challenge state policies and dominant interests, while on the other hand, accepting that the successful realization of their demands are never guaranteed.

Once again, in Paraguay, as in North Sumatra where *sosialisasi* activities are imagined as attempts to assert new realities regarding how land should be allocated, used and/or conserved, “it is not the fulfillment of the promise that mattered so much as the promise itself. It is not that standardized land measurement was the necessary infrastructure for redistribution, but rather that campesinos and functionaries could assemble under that premise” (Hetherington, 2014, 210). For rural populations in both countries, the lack of complete coherence of policies regarding land tenure and land use and the lack of clarity of how they are to be implemented given the state’s fragmented nature in the aftermath of authoritarian rule, are perceived as providing favorable circumstances for different socio-spatial configurations to possibly materialize. For this reason, it should come as no surprise that in Paraguay,

confusion [arose] about whether measurement was intended to make the territory fall in line with existing titles, or whether the important task was to make a title that fit the conflictive reality on the ground....[Nevertheless, there were] never...any arguments against measurement as such, and there seemed no end of people willing to hope that the right measurement, carried out in the right way, would end up with them being granted land, or having their land recognized.... When people did not know how to proceed with a complicated case, they almost always began measuring (Hetherington, 2011, 207-208).

What this predicament demonstrates is that while all actors recognize the necessity of engaging in the practice of demarcating boundaries and producing (participatory) maps to ensure that the possibilities of contesting the state can be sustained, not all such assertions of “reality” will be successfully recognized. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that the failure of certain claims cannot be attributed merely to technical deficiency or incomplete information. Rather, while the production of “accurate” claims involves “practices of representation that...creat[e] transparency, [they] are saturated at every turn with precisely that aspect of social life that they are meant to get rid of: politics” (Hetherington, 2011, 7), illustrating that they (even if implicitly) always contain specific ways of knowing and using land, not all of which will be recognized by relevant state institutions. This inescapability of contestation is also evident in the North Sumatran context, given the importance placed by KPA, WALHI and AMAN to ensure “accurate” subjects and objects are identified arguably testifies to how they view “documents [as] refus[ing]...to merely represent. [Rather, as]...centerpieces for all sorts of disputes about land, about the role of the state, about the relations that the state facilitates” (Hetherington, 2011, 173), the submission of such data plays an important role in their argument that genuine land reform (i.e. communal land ownership) should take place to the largest spatial extent possible, at the expense of granting individual land titles under PRONA and access permits under the PS scheme. Relatedly, the dynamicity of attempts at establishing “new” relationships between state actors, local communities and civil society actors through *sosialisasi* activities I describe in the previous chapter highlights how “the effectiveness of the alliance-making process is an achievement, a semiotic process that can fail, rather than simply a mechanistic procedure or construction”

(Hetherington, 2011, 134). While official policy frameworks (i.e. RAPS) do provide guidelines regarding the way state-society relationships should ideally be structured, their actual manifestation at the local level is fraught with numerous complications.

For this reason, the always contingent nature of constituting or maintaining these relationships is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, the failure of enacting and sustaining such connections results in the Indonesian state (especially the central government) broadly remaining unaccountable for its promises to democratize access to and ownership of land that is the undergirding philosophy of the RAPS framework. Such a reality may be indicative of the continued ability of existing dominant interests to maintain effective (not necessarily legal or formal) control on significant areas of land, resulting in the continuing marginalization of the interests of rural populations who are directly affected by land conflict. On the other hand, this instability and lack of permanence of relationships between state institutions and local communities should not necessarily be perceived in a negative light, as such fragmentation continues to ensure that a field of contestation remains operative either for different (and potentially “better”) socio-spatial configurations to potentially arise or allow for informal land tenure arrangements and land use practices to be maintained.

Non-totalizing logics of official forest management policies and practices

Finally, Andrew Mathews’ elaboration of the nature of forestry management on state forests in Oaxaca, Mexico shows that the inability of state institutions to fully regulate the livelihood activities of local communities can be perceived to be something positive. Crucially, he demonstrates how the persistent gap between abstract

conservation/land use laws and their implementation at the local level is productive of negotiations between local communities and specific representatives of state institutions and may result in these abstract provisions being operationalized in a heterogeneous manner or even evaded. Accordingly, in North Sumatra, as the PS scheme is rolled out, BPSKL and FMUs should be perceived to function in “a more halting, less seamless, and more collaborative form of power, a power that seeks the assent of its audiences even as its performers doubt it” (Mathews, 2011, 5). Rather than presuppose the ability of these state institutions to smoothly operationalize official guidelines and follow procedures, their interactions with civil society actors and local communities during the policy implementation process to verify claims should be characterized as a:

constant juggle between local context and sweeping generalization, between the locality of their audiences and the global knowledge, general regulation or national policy they claim to speak for...Officials may speak authoritatively, but they are haunted by a sense of vulnerability, as translating between the general and the local makes them vulnerable, worried about their lack of local knowledge (Mathews, 2011, 4).

Therefore, it becomes important to pay attention to this disparity between the seemingly apolitical rhetoric espoused by the head of BPSKL in his public statements and the actual non-straightforwardness of collecting “accurate” data about “subjects” and “objects.” On the one hand, the “public nature of anti-political performances...seek[s] to define who participates in knowledge-making and on what terms” (Mathews, 2011, 23) and hence restricts what are deemed as acceptable land use practices and limits who can successfully obtain PS access permits. Yet, even as “officials seek to entangle their publics, to produce assent to official knowledge claims and allegiance to official projects” (Mathews, 2011, 25), the success of such endeavors should not be presupposed and are never guaranteed. Rather, similar to the situation in Oaxaca where the regulation of rural

livelihood activities involved “skilled acrobatics that made use of silences, omissions, and concealments [as relevant actors] carefully interpret policy mandates and regulations and decid[e] whether to act on them or to ignore them discreetly” (Mathews, 2011, 180), conservation NGOs and FMUs’ inability in North Sumatra to collect biophysical and socio-economic data in unambiguous and systematic ways, which serve as the basis for the allocation of PS access permits, is indicative of the difficulty of strictly adhering to official guidelines. Such lack of clarity regarding how to formally alter land tenure arrangements especially in areas contained in forestry estate where the boundary between agricultural and forested landscapes is vague or not meaningful to rural populations and where adat consciousness might be relatively robust, opens the door for KPA, AMAN and WALHI to argue instead for the formalization of claims under the TORA scheme or as adat territories.

Even in areas where PS access permits have already been allocated, it could be argued that official “document[s] that presented a surface appearance of order could conceal dangerous disorder” (Mathews, 2011, 183). While the head of FMU I spoke with expressed confidence that work plans devised in collaboration with local communities with formal access permits can herald a new era of cooperation and result in the realization of shared goals of forest/biodiversity protection and economic well-being, the difficulty of efforts required to enroll and seek agreement from community members should not be underestimated given the historical distrust of the state by rural populations as described in previous chapters. Therefore, even as detailed work plans can enumerate specific livelihood activities that are permitted as well as how operationalization should look like, it is possible that these documents may also contain deliberate silences and may

not be interpreted or understood in the same way by all members of the local community. In addition, the enforcement of a work plan's explicit provisions may not be assured given if state capacity to police, monitor and surveil remains low or if internal self-regulation does not work out as expected. Lastly, it remains an open question how the changes over time to the structure, membership, internal dynamics of local communities and unexpected changes to landscapes will affect the validity and legitimacy of work plans. Such a complicated reality was a feature in Oaxacan forests where "rather than flowing seamlessly from the state, to the management plan, to the beliefs and identities of community members, knowledge was made and negotiated....[T]heories derived from forestry science encounter the material resistance of real nature [when] they are applied to forests by evasive and stubborn people" (Mathews, 2011, 232). Such an analytic suggests that while dominant and formal policy frameworks regarding land tenure and land use can influence and structure the behavior and subjectivities of rural populations, their non-totalizing and contingent character becomes the grounds on which alternative epistemologies may be legitimized and alternative livelihood strategies from below may be realized.

Open-ended struggle to define and produce societal and political order

By making visible the inescapability of (some level of) contestation between different actors not only throughout the RAPS implementation process, but also after formal access permits or ownership rights are allocated, it makes sense to think of how existing land tenure arrangements are not inevitable nor permanent. In Chapter 2, I discussed how the history of land use and land tenure politics in Indonesia as moving

from approaches that were broadly authoritarian (i.e. exemplified by top-down authoritarianism of the Suharto era) to decentralized (i.e. exemplified by allocating authority of certain functions to district and provincial governments after May 1998) to technocratic (i.e. exemplified by recent push to recentralize certain aspects of forestry and spatial planning governance to national-level state institutions and emphasizing the importance of scientific expertise) towards governing people and landscapes reflects how dominant governance frameworks should be seen as unstable and lacking complete legitimacy. Hence, the current conundrums faced by specific national-level state institutions of how best to implement the RAPS framework, which would require effective vertical and horizontal policy coherence and coordination, demonstrates how the multiscale advocacy strategy deployed by all civil society actors have had some effect towards remolding the Indonesian state even as it is pulled in different directions by different interests (including by those who object to the RAPS framework's broad goals of formally changing land tenure arrangements in a substantial manner).

Ultimately, given that the deployment of communitarian and nationalist vocabularies play a substantial role in forging new connections within and without local communities as access permits and (communal) ownership rights are sought after, the different meanings attached to these terms and different outcomes desired from their mobilization show how the politics of implementing the RAPS framework simultaneously concerns the desirability of specific forms of social order, national unity and national stability. As detailed in Chapter 2, these debates that have persisted since Indonesia's independence are inextricably tied not only to the contested meaning of Indonesian citizenship (i.e. different interpretations of the principles of *Pancasila*), but

also relate to competing imaginaries of development especially in the country's vast rural areas. Having demonstrated that dominant ideological and institutional frameworks are neither totalizing nor durable, but are rather prone to contestation and rupture, an open-ended conceptualization of social change allows us to make sense of how their continued resignification becomes generative of new contingent formations as these debates remain unsettled and will likely never be resolved. The implementation of RAPS framework proceeding in non-deterministic manner becomes an opportunity for such contestations to continue to play out into the future and may result in outcomes that are unexpected and unintended by dominant actors. Such debates at the provincial level that I witnessed in North Sumatra become crucial sites for determining legitimate visions of land use and rural development given the role they play in mediating between abstract national level visions of social order and lived realities and sentiment of rural populations who are situated in specific places.

In addition to President Jokowi's *Nawacita* framework that I discussed in Chapter 2 and the *sosialisasi* activities that I discussed in Chapter 3, broader debates regarding the meaning of nation-building or *pembangunan* in the years after the country's independence, point to how a major part of Indonesia's political culture has for many years been associated with explicit calls for active and constant (re)shaping and (re)production of subjectivities and social realities (Heryanto, 1988). Even as such efforts may be aimed at achieving shared goals (e.g. some form of nationalist sentiment) and disproportionately influenced by specific actors, they do not necessarily work towards pre-defined, self-evident outcomes, demonstrating that the project of nation-building is

always in process, always becoming, never static and therefore prone to rupture and constant change. Since it entered into societal discourse

in the context of the growth of nationalist thinking, the basic meanings of the word '*pembangunan*' [had already] revolved around the meanings of: (a) 'to arouse' [*membangkitkan*] that which was previously asleep; or 'to bring about' [*mengadakan*] that which previously did not exist (which becomes the fundamental meaning of 'to create' [*menciptai*]); or (c) to 'modernize' [*memperbaharui*], reorganize on a large scale that which had already long existed (Heryanto, 1988, 10).

Not only does the term connote conscious realization of "new" social realities (i.e. including socio-spatial configurations and state-society dynamic), it also has a future-oriented valence and hence, its invocation is not particularly aimed at retrieving and sustaining "authentic" identities and historical (e.g. pre-colonial) social formations. Arguably, this endeavor at creating something "new" is primarily justified on the basis of needing to unite the country's diverse peoples so as to enact some form of stable social order. Consequently, as conceptions of what such a project would constitute are not self-evident or singular, it becomes important to underscore that *pembangunan* is not something understood in the country's political culture as spontaneous. Rather, it refers to

a process of ENGINEERING, with primary orientation to the man-made or artificial PRODUCT which it yields, which has the characteristics of being NEW; or to the process of CREATING something which was formerly non-existent by mobilizing forces from OUTSIDE the object concerned (Heryanto, 1988, 16).

Given that land tenure arrangements are an important component of any nation-building project, emphasizing the inescapability of human or institutional agency involved in decision-making illustrates that the determination of socio-spatial configurations will always be political, belying the possibility that a technocratic fix can be forged to resolve disputes over how land should be territorialized.

As I have detailed in Chapter 3, even as conservation NGOs and state institutions frame the implementation of RAPS in a seemingly apolitical manner, they nonetheless concede the importance of gaining legitimacy from rural populations to agree to specific ways to use and/or conserve land, something that is not necessarily easily achieved. Therefore, the dynamicity of the nation-building project stems from an inherent and arguably irresolvable tension between, on the one hand, its determination by those who are close to or in positions of authority and on the other hand, the imperative to also take into account constantly changing viewpoints and demands from the country's masses. What I have described in Chapter 2 in terms of the non-totalizability and non-permanence of policy frameworks around land use and land tenure since Indonesia's independence shows how even as they have and continue to be influenced by "specialists/experts/technocrats [who] are given special rights to plan and determine the direction and path of *pembangunan* for the 'people' in general" (Heryanto, 1988, 22), some degree of legitimacy from rural populations is required to maintain the viability of specific visions for extended periods of time. While regimes of governmentality (and potential deployment of violence by state and non-state actors) described earlier in the chapter may produce widespread consent or acquiescence amongst local communities to land tenure arrangements that disproportionately favor interests associated with plantation, mining and logging actors, the possibility of counter-conducts and the successful articulation of desires for alternative socio-spatial configurations should never be foreclosed, especially in a province with a rich history of resistance from below.

At the same time, the fact that all civil society actors in concert with rural populations aim to convince the different state institutions to recognize different ways of

territorializing land through the implementation of the RAPS framework is indicative of the attempt to steer the country's overall nation-building trajectory in a different direction, rather than motivated by a desire to fundamentally question the legitimacy of their authority. As I have discussed in Chapter 2, communitarian vocabularies that over time were excavated of their ideological valences during the Suharto era, have since Indonesia's independence been primarily deployed to justify top-down forms of rule that mandated conformity to national-level policies, standardized how villages were to be structured and administered and limited the ability of rural populations to obtain formal access, control or ownership to wide swathes of land. Nevertheless, given the indeterminate meanings of these vocabularies, dominant governance frameworks were not able to sustain themselves and hence their current resignification within the bureaucratic-legal arena in the context of implementing RAPS that aims at imagining and realizing different land tenure arrangements and state-society dynamic should not be perceived as futile.

Therefore, given that the implementation of the RAPS framework in North Sumatra is characterized by the inescapability of contentious politics and populist forms of social mobilization, meaningful agency should be attributed to local communities and civil society actors who are seeking to transform how land is allocated, used, managed and governed even as such battles are mostly confined to the bureaucratic-legal arena. Even as different or better outcomes are never guaranteed, what is actually happening is not merely an inability to rationally enact and follow through on pre-determined bureaucratic and legal procedures. Rather, the adequacy of these procedures (e.g. implementing regulations) themselves are constantly reevaluated by state institutions in

response to discontent expressed by various civil society actors. By making sense of “change...less in terms of managed transitions, guided by policy and technocratic elites, and more in terms of unruly, relational, horizontal transformations and new forms of innovation and democratic practice” (Scoones et al, 2018, 12), the recognition of the non-totalizability of dominant political-economic and governance structures can open up possibilities of realizing unexpected and unintended outcomes. Such an open-ended and dynamic conceptualization of societal change aligns with Arjun Appadurai’s effective illustration regarding how on the one hand concerted, everyday struggles by marginalized interests over time can potentially lead to “context change rather than mere context compliance or context legibility” (Appadurai, 2015, 131). On the other hand, based on long-term observation of diverse examples of attempts at transforming different social and institutional contexts, he does not discount the challenge of doing so as he readily admits that structural conditions that such interests face “have generally been adverse, unfair, and unfavorable” (Appadurai, 2015, 128). Nevertheless, by underscoring non-deterministic trajectories of social change, it becomes important to not presuppose that status quo will necessarily be continually reproduced. Rather, paying close attention to “performative qualities [of situated struggles]...reveal[s] a certain logic of accumulation, context building, and altered subjectivity, which yields success out of a string of apparent failures” (Appadurai, 2015, 137).

This outlook of measured optimism can be specifically related to struggles over unequal land tenure arrangements. In the context of postcolonial Zimbabwe, Donald Moore describes rural populations desiring to gain control and ownership of land as “active agents yet not self-sovereign authors of their conscious will” (Moore, 2005, 3).

While not neglecting how dominant policies and ideologies can constrain the possibilities of societal transformation, drawing attention to processual, everyday nature of contestations over competing visions of how land should be territorialized demonstrates that “cultural politics of place pivot on provisional assemblages, emerging from historical sedimentations yet not dictated by them” (Moore, 2005, 22). This simultaneity of the possibility and non-inevitability of realizing formal land tenure arrangements that are less unequal also aligns with the double-edged nature of politics of populism.

In the North Sumatran and broader Indonesian context, the lack of historical experience of liberal rationalist practice of politics common in Western democracies arguably has made forms of populism an integral component of the country’s political culture since its independence, grounded in efforts to actively construct national identity, sustain nationalist sentiment and maintain political stability. Hadiz and Robison (2017) describe that today, “populist rhetoric and ideas have become part of struggles for power within oligarchy itself and are vehicles for the entry of new players into its ranks... [demonstrating that there is no] inherently progressive or retrogressive role for populist politics” (489). As I have discussed in the previous two chapters, one of the challenges to existing efforts of changing formal land tenure arrangements through the RAPS framework is the continuing strength of “personal ties between a leader and the masses, sections of which are incorporated into the state through clientelist mechanisms” (Scoones et al, 2018, 2), structured on highly unequal terms. Given that the politics of populism is centrally concerned about “who gets ‘included’ in and ‘excluded’ from definitions of ‘the people’” (Hadiz and Robison, 2017, 490), I would contend that *sosialisasi* activities undertaken by various civil society actors described in the previous

chapter are attempts to dismantle such anti-democratic arrangements and the subjectivities that maintain them. Instead, they work towards actively (re)producing peasant, adat and/or conservation subjects as their inclusion as legitimate constitutive fractions of “the people” becomes the basis to justify changes to formal land tenure arrangements.

At the same time, there is also a need to acknowledge that such undertakings to (re)constitute local communities do not necessarily prevent new hierarchies within and without them from forming. This double-edged nature of attempts to realize some form of social change is best exemplified by attempts to claim formal land tenure on the basis of indigeneity. Given that “the process of [local communities] becoming indigenous [should be seen] as a deliberate, selective and mediated political act” (Tyson, 2010, 155), rather than merely being an exercise to formally institutionalize already-existing social relations, no neutral criteria exists to identify legitimate expressions of indigeneity or determine territorial boundaries to their lands. As a result, endeavors by local communities as they are (re)constituted and work towards seeking formal recognition as customary legal communities entitled to demarcated areas of land, even if motivated primarily on the basis of opposing plantation, mining and logging interests, can either “spur popular mobilization, emulation and collective affirmation, or conversely...cause divisiveness, exclusivity and withdrawal” (Tyson, 2010, 10). In this regard, the magnitude and meaningfulness of adat consciousness arguably arises in relation to excluding specific individuals or groups of individuals who subscribe to incongruous identities or cultural practices. Given that criteria regarding what identities and cultural practices are deemed acceptable, appropriate or “authentic” are contested and negotiated

during social mobilization (e.g. *sosialisasi* activities), (re)constituting broadly inclusive “new” local communities are never necessarily seen as desirable nor are they guaranteed. This dynamism that characterizes the inescapably politicized nature of how local communities are (re)established, demonstrates that deliberate decisions can be made regarding what subjectivities to produce and articulate and which may or may not result in “improved” relationships with state institutions and “better” land tenure arrangements. Accordingly, it becomes crucial to call into question both the notion that claims to land made on the basis of indigeneity are straightforward or inherently “good” or that efforts to do so are futile in the face of intransigent state institutions, the strength of concession-oriented rural development paradigm and the continued legacy of depoliticization of subjectivities in the name of national stability that took place over many decades when President Suharto was in power.

Instead, I would contend that the broad participation of different civil society actors, including indigenous peoples movements in the RAPS implementation process that I describe in the previous chapter, demonstrates an embrace of actually existing messy political culture. This stance not only reflects an unwillingness to foreclose on the prospects of achieving different or “better” land tenure arrangements in spite of dominant political-economic structures that continue to persist. It also acknowledges that even when communal land titles or access permits to local communities have been allocated, social relations and social organization need to be constantly (re)shaped as the achievement of “good” and “just” environmental and economic outcomes are not automatically assured. In this regard, the lack of clarity over how to operationalize the abstract national level RAPS framework at the provincial and local level as described in

Chapter 3 as well as the continuing conundrums regarding how best to configure the Indonesian state as described in Chapter 2 provide an opportunity for different actors to justify specific ways to allocate land and regulate land use practices as well as gain support and buy-in for them from rural populations and various state institutions. Especially in light of my discussion regarding how civil society actors constantly pressure the central government to compel provincial and district level state institutions to facilitate the implementation of the RAPS framework and other relevant land use and conservation policies, it becomes important not to romanticize bottom up and decentralized forms of governance or condemn top-down mandates from the central government. Such wide-ranging recognition that transforming existing land tenure arrangements requires the reconfiguration of Indonesian state (as opposed to its weakening) demonstrates how most if not all civil society actors grasp the unavoidability of the need for a certain regime of governmentality to achieve desired goals. On this account, the differences in opinion between different actors regarding how access permits or (communal) ownership rights should be allocated illustrates that meaningful contestations and exercise of power are arguably taking place within the bureaucratic-legal arena.

Above all, efforts by civil society actors to transform socio-spatial configurations and reconstitute state-society dynamic through the implementation of the RAPS framework without challenging the legitimacy of the Indonesian nation-state, mirrors discourses that existed during anti-colonial struggles and early years after the country's independence regarding the need for the Indonesian nation (and accompanying state institutions) to be actively and continuously imagined, constructed and produced in a

participatory manner. I would contend that this ethos that remained latent for decades during President Suharto's rule has been revived to some extent since his downfall with the expansion of political space available for civil society actors and local communities to make demands in ways that are explicitly forward-looking. Establishing "new" connections within and without communities therefore offers opportunities to generate support for "new" meanings of Indonesian citizenship and (re)define appropriate roles for state institutions. As discussed in Chapter 2, mass-based organizations such as peasant organizations and the PKI attempted to mobilize populations from below before the logic of centralized rule came to dominate when President Sukarno inaugurated the era of Guided Democracy. Such tendencies of actively constructing a strong Indonesian nation on the basis of autonomous cooperatives, rather than being grounded by top-down imposition of mandates from the central government, was clearly articulated by Mohammad Hatta, one of Indonesia's anti-colonial heroes and its first Vice President. He imagined a newly-independent and stable Indonesia nation-state as being constituted by local communities, able to work creatively and collectively from the bottom-up to realize a "truly inclusive economy built on the principle of family spirit and *gotong royong* or community cooperation, appealing across political divisions and resonating culturally" (Moon, 2015, 178).

Such invocation of communitarian vocabularies that simultaneously attempts to organize non-hierarchical social relations at the local level and imagine the Indonesian nation-state across scales, was importantly mediated by technological apparatuses and material infrastructures. For example, during the anti-colonial struggle, nationalist sentiment could not have spread without the use of radios by guerilla fighters who

transmitted messages across villages at the local level. Similarly, the Internet became a crucial tool used to connect activists and social movements across the country in the context of contesting Suharto's rule (Barker, 2015). What such forms of political contestation once again illustrates is how dominant top-down authoritarian impulses should be perceived as a contingent historical achievement that can come apart in face of resolute opposition. At the same time, any alternative imaginary of the Indonesian nation-state is not characterized by an absence of order, but rather an effort to work towards realizing a different kind of order, of configuring state institutions differently to construct "new" state-society dynamics and "new" meanings of citizenship.

In fact, in the context of RAPS framework as I have discussed, the success of its implementation arguably is dependent on civil society actors framing the need to change land tenure arrangements across the country and imploring national level state institutions to ensure that the processing of "accurate" claims takes place at the provincial and local levels in a timely manner. Therefore, contestations over what constitutes "accurate" information about biophysical and socio-economic "reality" are tied directly to the attempts to persuade relevant state institutions to recognize specific and potentially incommensurable future-oriented visions regarding to whom land should be allocated as well as how land should be used, managed and governed. Similar to campesinos who claim land in Paraguay acknowledging that the "'information' game is all about commanding the authority to represent the real" (Hetherington, 2011, 159), data collection processes underpinning RAPS implementation in North Sumatra as I describe in Chapter 3 should be characterized as contentious and politicized, given that the derivation of singular, consensual, neutral understandings of land as well as "description"

of activities happening on them and the people living and depend on them will unlikely occur.

In this regard, various civil society actors view participation in data collection processes underpinning RAPS implementation as well as the broader OneMap project discussed in Chapter 2 as absolutely vital. If they do not actively do so, current efforts by the central government to consolidate and standardize biophysical and socio-economic information (including the determination of the legality of existing concession licenses) as well as complete the gazettelement of forestry estate boundaries in a non-participatory, non-consultative manner will likely marginalize the views and interests of many rural populations. Similar to how radio and Internet technologies were deployed in earlier periods in the country's history to contest top-down imaginaries and enactments of national political and social order, participatory mapping techniques and its associated technological infrastructures (e.g. drones) are used to seek radically different visions of how the country's vast landmass should territorialized. Therefore, data collection that occurs during the RAPS implementation process that is motivated by seeking changes to existing formal land tenure arrangements simultaneously also contributes to broader debates over what proportion of land remains in the forestry estate or should be available for future concessions as well as how customary legal communities should be defined. As such, these contestations also allow for the ongoing (re)interpretation of Article 33 of the Indonesian Constitution regarding the meaning of state control over the country's vast landmass and how it would act and make decisions to ensure that "the people" would benefit from the vast availability of natural resources the country has. North Sumatra is a

key site of these debates given its long history of land politics as well as having diverse peoples and types of landscapes.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I have suggested in this thesis that the non-linear implementation of the RAPS framework as it moves from abstract policy at the national level to concrete materialization at the provincial and local levels should be expected. What I have witnessed in North Sumatra is the continuance of a fraught history over competing visions of land tenure and land use and in effect how rural populations are to be governed. Given longstanding diverse views on how land should be territorialized from the moment of Indonesia's independence up until today, contentious interactions taking place in the bureaucratic-legal arena are attempts by different state and non-state actors to assert and legitimize specific ways (that are mediated by mapping representations and other documents) in which land should be known, allocated, used, managed, owned, protected and/or conserved. Given real widening of political space after May 1998, such debates take place in a non-deterministic manner and can lead to contingent agreements to formally change existing land tenure arrangements in specific places. Nevertheless, not only are such outcomes not guaranteed, but even in situations when access permits and (communal) ownership rights have been allocated, the ability of formal national level regulations to govern local complexities (e.g. changes to membership of local community, intra-community politics, unexpected landscape changes, demarcated boundaries are not followed by all community members) are not guaranteed. Such perpetual incompleteness and lack of complete resolution regarding different worldviews,

epistemologies and interests that I began to point to in Chapter 2 (despite the contemporary dearth of explicit left-leaning and leftist ideological discourses), suggest that contestations over land tenure arrangements will be continually open-ended. This characterization of the implementation of RAPS framework eliminates the possibility of technical fixes available to arbitrate between competing claims and demonstrates that state institutions should not be seen as neutral actors in the process of allocating access permits and (communal) ownership rights.

Therefore, the notion that RAPS implementation will be “successful” once existing information about land is fully collected and known and when state institutions establish coherence regarding land tenure and land use policies needs to be called into question. In this regard, by forgoing the conceptualization of information as “a ratio between what one has and a projected state of completeness” (Hetherington, 2012, 134), the production of “accurate” land tenure claims, of transparency, is something that is not only actually political, but always ongoing. In this context, rather than construing the achievement of transparency as merely referring to the process of visibilizing and representing already existing timeless, abstract relations between people and demarcated areas of land, it should be understood as

a political negotiation between disparate points of reference that have become unmoored, between documents, people, bodies, laws, circulating stories, plotted ground, the intransigent material objects and processes littering the landscape, the habits of the past and the looming uncertainties of the future (Hetherington, 2011, 222).

Therefore, it is by explicitly characterizing producing knowledge about land and deriving “accurate” land tenure claims as a mediated, contested and ongoing social process that demonstrates the difficulty of judging the implementation of the RAPS framework as

either a “failure” or a “success.” As with campesinos’ struggle in Paraguay that Kregg Hetherington discusses, civil society actors in North Sumatra especially amongst KPA, AMAN and WALHI do not “subscrib[e] to the representational assumptions of transparency’s project...[as their] view of bureaucracy resembles a war fought with paper, rather than the dispassionate management of information” (Hetherington, 2011, 20). Such a depiction of actually existing wranglings and disputes that underlie seemingly congenial interactions between civil society actors and the state would explain the strategic politicization of communitarian and technocratic policy vocabularies, as a means to continuously challenge the sustained intransigence of particular state institutions as well as dominant plantation, logging and mining interests and the predatory actors associated with them. In addition, doing so at the same time is an effort to co-produce with rural populations “new” imaginaries of knowing, relating to and using land.

In fact, it is those who insist on the possibility of a single, neutral way of *seeing* land that closes down democratic debates and contestations over different normative visions on how land should be territorialized, and which may prevent changes to existing unjust land tenure arrangements. This kind of worldview “is tightly tied to a dream of certainty, order and efficiency. And this means limiting the range of interpretation, dissent, political disagreement or creative entanglements” (Hetherington, 2012, 143). For this reason, in the context of post-May 1998 North Sumatra and Indonesia more broadly, I would contend that the focus to promote good governance and reforming state institutions to adopt technocratic “best practices” without any explicit reference to a specific normative vision of rural development contains a problematic anti-democratic impulse. Following through on these suggestions may result in regimes of

governmentality that could be considered more “coercive” and “top-down” and therefore, potentially less legitimate. To some extent, representatives of conservation NGOs and BPSKL who I spoke to can be considered “neo-institutionalists [who] become entangled in an ambiguous relationship with democracy by implicitly privileging the non-political — indeed the antipolitical” (Hadiz, 2004, 698). Nevertheless, such attempts to depoliticize issues of land tenure and land use, as I have shown in this thesis, are not totalizing and generate constant contestation, hence driving these debates in unexpected directions.

In this regard, by emphasizing how the multiscale advocacy approach taken up by civil society actors especially AMAN, KPA and WALHI leverages the continued fragmentation of the Indonesian state, the lack of resolution of determining the optimal combination of centralized/decentralized state authority as well as the lack of the ability of technocratic practices (e.g. spatial planning) to govern land and the people on them, attempts to imagine and enact different visions of rural development through the implementation of the RAPS framework should never be foreclosed. On this account, “the creative potential of the “messy”, the “fringes”, the ill structured” (Wiber, 2015, 451) that characterize the workings of the bureaucratic-legal arena allows us to widen the conception of the “political” to make sense of how (micro)practices taking place within it contain a logic of accumulation over time and which may result in “different” formal land tenure arrangements and “different” state-society dynamics. Yet, once again, the realization of “better” outcomes can never be guaranteed given dominant political-economic structures and exclusionary forms of political mobilization and identity formation that still remain part of the country’s political culture today.

Works Cited

- Afiff, S., & Lowe, C. (2007). Claiming indigenous community: Political discourse and natural resource rights in Indonesia. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 32(1), 73-97.
- Andaya, L. Y. (2002). The trans-Sumatra trade and the ethnicization of the 'Batak'. *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land-en Volkenkunde*, 158(3), 367-409.
- Anderson, Z. R., Kusters, K., McCarthy, J., & Obidzinski, K. (2016). Green growth rhetoric versus reality: Insights from Indonesia. *Global Environmental Change*, 38, 30-40.
- Alatout, S. (2006). Towards a bio-territorial conception of power: Territory, population, and environmental narratives in Palestine and Israel. *Political Geography*, 25(6), 601-621.
- Appadurai, A. (2015). Success and failure in the deliberative economy. In A. Azmanova & M. Mihai (Eds.), *Reclaiming democracy: Judgment, responsibility and the right to politics*. Routledge.
- Ardiansyah, F., Marthen, A.A., & Amalia, N. (2015). *Forest and land-use governance in a decentralized Indonesia: A legal and policy review*. (Vol. 132). Center for International Forestry Research.
- Aritonang, D. R. (2014, May 20). *Jokowi-JK andalkan Nawa Cita, sembilan agenda prioritas untuk Indonesia*. Retrieved from <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2014/05/20/1427368/Jokowi-JK.Andalkan.Nawa.Cita.Sembilan.Agenda.Prioritas.untuk.Indonesia>.
- Arumingtyas, L., & Karokaro, A. S. (2017, November 5). *Orangutan Tapanuli, spesies baru yang hidup di ekosistem Batang Toru*. Retrieved from <http://www.mongabay.co.id/2017/11/05/orangutan-tapanuli-spesies-baru-yang-hidup-di-ekosistem-batang-toru/>.
- Aspinall, E. (2013a). A nation in fragments: Patronage and neoliberalism in contemporary Indonesia. *Critical Asian Studies*, 45(1), 27-54.
- Aspinall, E. (2013b). The triumph of capital? Class politics and Indonesian democratisation. *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 43(2), 226-242.
- Astuti, R., & McGregor, A. (2015). Responding to the green economy: How REDD+ and the One Map Initiative are transforming forest governance in Indonesia. *Third World Quarterly*, 36(12), 2273-2293.
- Bachriadi, D. (2009). *Land, rural social movements and democratisation in Indonesia*. Transnational Institute.
- Bachriadi, D. (2010). *Between discourse and action: Agrarian reform and the politics of rural social movements in Indonesia post 1965*. (PhD dissertation, Flinders University).
- Bae, J. S., Kim, Y. S., Fisher, L., Moeliono, M., & DeShazo, J. (2014). Promises and perils of decentralized forest governance: The case of Indonesia's Forest Management Units in Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+). *Society & Natural Resources*, 27(12), 1346-1354.
- Banjade, M. R., Herawati, T., Liswanti, N., & Mwangi, E. (2017). *Reformasi tenurial hutan di Indonesia. Kapan? Apa? Mengapa?*. [pdf file]. Retrieved from http://www.cifor.org/publications/pdf_files/infobrief/6557-infobrief.pdf.

- Barker, J. (2009). *State of authority: The state in society in Indonesia* (No. 50). SEAP Publications.
- Barker, J. (2013). Epilogue: Ethnographies of state-centrism. *Oceania*, 83(3), 259-264.
- Barker, J. (2015). Guerilla engineers: The internet and the politics of freedom in Indonesia. In S. Jasanoff, & S. H. Kim (Eds.), *Dreamscapes of modernity: Sociotechnical imaginaries and the fabrication of power*. University of Chicago Press.
- Bedner, A. (2016). Indonesian land law: integration at last? And for whom?. In J. F. McCarthy, & K. Robinson (Eds.), *Land and development in Indonesia: Searching for the people's sovereignty*. ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute.
- Bello, W. (2018). Counterrevolution, the countryside and the middle classes: Lessons from five countries. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 45(1), 21-58.
- Bevins, V. (2017, September 4). 'We'd rather die than lose': Villagers in Indonesia fight for a land rights revolution. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/sep/04/villagers-in-indonesia-fight-for-a-land-rights-revolution>.
- Blomley, N. (2016). The territory of property. *Progress in Human Geography*, 40(5), 593-609.
- Borras, S. M., & Franco, J. C. (2010). Contemporary discourses and contestations around pro-poor land policies and land governance. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 10(1), 1-32.
- Brockhaus, M., Obidzinski, K., Dermawan, A., Laumonier, Y., & Luttrell, C. (2012). An overview of forest and land allocation policies in Indonesia: Is the current framework sufficient to meet the needs of REDD+?. *Forest Policy and Economics*, 18, 30-37.
- Cadman, L. (2010). How (not) to be governed: Foucault, critique, and the political. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 28(3), 539-556.
- Coca, N. (2018, March 22). *Despite government pledges, ravaging of Indonesia's forests continues*. Retrieved from <https://e360.yale.edu/features/despite-government-pledges-ravaging-of-indonesias-forests-continues>.
- Collins, E. F. (2002). Indonesia: a violent culture?. *Asian Survey*, 42(4), 582-604.
- Davidson, A. I. (2011). In praise of counter-conduct. *History of the Human Sciences*, 24(4), 25-41.
- Dawson, A. C., Zanotti, L., & Vaccaro, I. (Eds.). (2014). *Negotiating territoriality: Spatial dialogues between state and tradition* (Vol. 17). Routledge.
- de Jong, E. B., Knippenberg, L., & Bakker, L. (2017). New frontiers: An enriched perspective on extraction frontiers in Indonesia. *Critical Asian Studies*, 49(3), 330-348.
- Delaney, D. (2015). Legal geography I: Constitutivities, complexities, and contingencies. *Progress in Human Geography*, 39(1), 96-102.
- Dewantoro. (2018, September 27). *Perhutanan sosial di Sumut baru 36.966 Ha dari target 550.887 ha*. Retrieved from http://www.medanbisnisdaily.com/news/online/read/2018/09/27/52384/perhutanan_sosial_di_sumut_baru36_966_ha_dari_target_550_887_ha/.
- Elden, S. (2007). Governmentality, calculation, territory. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 25(3), 562-580.

- Fay, C., & Denduangrudee, H. S. (2016). Emerging options for the recognition and protection of indigenous community rights in Indonesia. In J. F. McCarthy, & K. Robinson (Eds.), *Land and development in Indonesia: Searching for the people's sovereignty*. ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute.
- Ferguson, J. (2011). Toward a left art of government: From Foucauldian critique to Foucauldian politics. *History of the Human Sciences*, 24(4), 61-68.
- Ferguson, J., & Gupta, A. (2002). Spatializing states: Toward an ethnography of neoliberal governmentality. *American Ethnologist*, 29(4), 981-1002.
- Galudra, G., & Sirait, M. (2009). A discourse on Dutch colonial forest policy and science in Indonesia at the beginning of the 20th century. *International Forestry Review*, 11(4), 524-533.
- Gellert, P. K. (2015). The quest for legal certainty and the reorganization of power: Struggles over forest law, permits, and rights in Indonesia. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 74(3), 639-666.
- Goldman, M. J., Nadasdy, P., & Turner, M. D. (2011). *Knowing nature: Conversations at the intersection of political ecology and science studies*. University of Chicago Press.
- Goldstein, J., & Yates, J. (2017). Introduction: Rendering land investable. *Geoforum*, 82, 209-211.
- Hadiz, V. R. (2003). Power and politics in North Sumatra: The uncompleted reformasi. In G. Fealy, & E. Aspinall (Eds.), *Local Power and Politics in Indonesia: Decentralisation and Democratisation*. ISEAS.
- Hadiz, V. R. (2004). Decentralization and democracy in Indonesia: A critique of neo-institutionalist perspectives. *Development and change*, 35(4), 697-718.
- Hadiz, V. R., & Robison, R. (2005). Neo-liberal reforms and illiberal consolidations: The Indonesian paradox. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 41(2), 220-241.
- Hadiz, V. R., & Robison, R. (2013). The political economy of oligarchy and the reorganization of power in Indonesia. *Indonesia*, 96(1), 35-57.
- Hadiz, V. R., & Robison, R. (2017). Competing populisms in post-authoritarian Indonesia. *International Political Science Review*, 38(4), 488-502.
- Hall, D., Hirsch, P., & Li, T. (2011). *Powers of exclusion: Land dilemmas in Southeast Asia*. NUS Press.
- Hanafiah, J. (2018, February 20). *Perambahan, ancaman serius yang terjadi di Taman Nasional Gunung Leuser*. Retrieved from <http://www.mongabay.co.id/2018/02/20/perambahan-ancaman-serius-yang-terjadi-di-taman-nasional-gunung-leuser/>.
- Herriman, N., & Winarnita, M. (2016). Seeking the state: Appropriating bureaucratic symbolism and wealth in the margins of Southeast Asia. *Oceania*, 86(2), 132-150.
- Heryanto, A. (1988). The development of "development". *Indonesia*, (46), 1-24.
- Hetherington, K. (2011). *Guerrilla auditors: The politics of transparency in neoliberal Paraguay*. Duke University Press.
- Hetherington, K. (2012). Promising information: Democracy, development, and the remapping of Latin America. *Economy and Society*, 41(2), 127-150.
- Hetherington, K. (2014). Waiting for the surveyor: Development promises and the temporality of infrastructure. *The Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*, 19(2), 195-211.

- Hoag, C. (2011). Assembling partial perspectives: Thoughts on the anthropology of bureaucracy. *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review*, p34(1), 81-94.
- Hull, M. S. (2012a). Documents and bureaucracy. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 41, 251-267.
- Hull, M. S. (2012b). *Government of paper: The materiality of bureaucracy in urban Pakistan*. University of California Press.
- Huxley, M. (2008). Space and government: Governmentality and geography. *Geography Compass*, 2(5), 1635-1658.
- In Berlin this month. (2017, July 15). *UNESCO World Heritage Committee keeps Leuser ecosystem on world heritage in danger list*. Retrieved from <http://globalconservation.org/news/unesco-world-heritage-committee-keeps-leuser-ecosystem-world-her/>.
- In July last year. (2017, June 21). *Abdon Nababan: 'North Sumatran land mafia offered me \$21m to win election — and then hand over control of government'*. Retrieved from <https://news.mongabay.com/2018/06/abdon-nababan-north-sumatran-land-mafia-offered-me-21m-to-win-election-and-then-hand-over-control-of-government/>.
- Ito, T. (2011). Historicizing the power of civil society: A perspective from decentralization in Indonesia. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38(2), 413-433.
- Jong, H. N. (2018, January 12). *Indonesian parliament pushes for passage of palm oil legislation this year*. Retrieved from <https://news.mongabay.com/2018/01/indonesian-parliament-pushes-for-passage-of-palm-oil-legislation-this-year/>.
- Kaputra, I., Siregar, T., & Kharina, W. (2014). *Burung-burung kehilangan sarang: Kisah tiga kampung dalam konflik agraria*. Pustaka Sempu & Bitra Indonesia.
- Karokaro, A. S. (2017a, September 22). *Hijaukan kembali hutan mangrove rusak di pesisir Sumatera Utara*. Retrieved from <http://www.mongabay.co.id/2017/09/22/hijaukan-kembali-hutan-mangrove-rusak-di-pesisir-sumatera-utara/>.
- Karokaro, A. S. (2017b, October 7). *Mengintip hutan Batang Toru, sumber hidup warga tiga kabupaten*. Retrieved from <http://www.mongabay.co.id/2017/10/05/mengintip-hutan-batang-toru-sumber-hidup-warga-tiga-kabupaten/>.
- Kennedy, D. (2011). Some caution about property rights as a recipe for economic development. *Accounting, Economics, and Law*, 1(1), 53.
- Kimmet, C. (2017, January 4). *Local NGOs: Ecosystem services, not orangutans, key to saving Leuser*. Retrieved from <https://news.mongabay.com/2017/01/local-ngos-ecosystem-services-not-orangutans-key-to-saving-leuser/>.
- Kimura, E. (2010). Proliferating provinces: Territorial politics in post-Suharto Indonesia. *South East Asia Research*, 18(3), 415-449.
- Kuddus, R. (2017). The ghosts of 1965: Politics and memory in Indonesia. *New Left Review*, (104), 45-92.
- Kunz, Y., Hein, J., Mardiana, R., & Faust, H. (2016). Mimicry of the legal: Translating de jure land formalization processes into de facto local action in Jambi province, Sumatra. *ASEAS-Österreichische Zeitschrift für Südostasienwissenschaften*, 9(1), 127-145.

- Larastiti, C. (2018). *Authoritarian and paternalism in Indonesian peasant cooperative: A former plantation workers' cooperative from the 1950s to the neoliberal era*. Paper presented at ERPI 2018 International Conference: Authoritarian populism and the rural world, The Hague, Netherlands (pp. 1-11).
- Legg, S. (2005). Foucault's population geographies: Classifications, biopolitics and governmental spaces. *Population, Space and Place*, 11(3), 137-156.
- Li, T. M. (2005). Beyond "the state" and failed schemes. *American Anthropologist*, 107(3), 383-394.
- Li, T. M. (2007). Practices of assemblage and community forest management. *Economy and Society*, 36(2), 263-293.
- Li, T. M. (2014a). *Land's end: Capitalist relations on an indigenous frontier*. Duke University Press.
- Li, T. M. (2014b). What is land? Assembling a resource for global investment. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 39(4), 589-602.
- Li, T. M. (2017). The price of un/freedom: Indonesia's colonial and contemporary plantation labor regimes. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 59(2), 245-276.
- Lindblad, J. T. (2009). The economy of decolonization in North Sumatra. In Lindblad, J. T., & Post, P. (Eds.), *Indonesian economic decolonization in regional and international perspective* (Vol. 267). Brill.
- Lindblad, J. T., & Post, P. (Eds.). (2009). *Indonesian economic decolonization in regional and international perspective* (Vol. 267). Brill.
- Lucas, A., & Warren, C. (2013). *Land for the people: The state and agrarian conflict in Indonesia*. Ohio University Press/Swallow Press.
- Lund, C. (2016). Rule and rupture: State formation through the production of property and citizenship. *Development and Change*, 47(6), 1199-1228.
- Margono, B. A., Turubanova, S., Zhuravleva, I., Potapov, P., Tyukavina, A., Baccini, A., Goetz, S., & Hansen, M. C. (2012). Mapping and monitoring deforestation and forest degradation in Sumatra (Indonesia) using Landsat time series data sets from 1990 to 2010. *Environmental Research Letters*, 7(3), 034010.
- Mathews, A. S. (2011). *Instituting nature: Authority, expertise, and power in Mexican forests*. MIT Press.
- McCarthy, J. F. (2010). Processes of inclusion and adverse incorporation: Oil palm and agrarian change in Sumatra, Indonesia. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 37(4), 821-850.
- McCarthy, J. F., & Robinson, K. (Eds.). (2016). *Land and development in Indonesia: Searching for the people's sovereignty*. ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute.
- Moon, S. (2015). Building from the outside in: Sociotechnical imaginaries and civil society in New Order Indonesia. In S. Jasanoff, & S. H. Kim (Eds.), *Dreamscapes of modernity: Sociotechnical imaginaries and the fabrication of power*. University of Chicago Press.
- Moore, D. S. (2005). *Suffering for territory: Race, place, and power in Zimbabwe*. Duke University Press.
- Mulyani, M., & Jepson, P. (2016). Does the 'One Map Initiative represent a new path for forest mapping in Indonesia? Assessing the contribution of the REDD+ initiative in effecting forest governance Reform. *Forests*, 8(1), 14.

- Neilson, J. (2016). Agrarian transformations and land reform in Indonesia. In J. F. McCarthy, & K. Robinson (Eds.), *Land and development in Indonesia: Searching for the people's sovereignty*. ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute.
- Nuraini, A., Aziz, D. A. N., Cahyono, E., & Moniaga, S. (2016). *Summary of findings and recommendations for improvement of the law and policy concerning respect, protection, compliance and remedy relating to the human rights of indigenous peoples over their territories within the forest zone*. [pdf file]. Retrieved from <https://www.forestpeoples.org/sites/default/files/publication/2016/04/komnas-ham-nationalinquiry-summary-apr2016.pdf>
- Peluso, N. L. (1995). Whose woods are these? Counter-mapping forest territories in Kalimantan, Indonesia. *Antipode*, 27(4), 383-406.
- Peluso, N. L. (2008). Claiming the grounds for reform: Agrarian and environmental movements in Indonesia. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 8(2-3), 377-407.
- Peluso, N. L., & Lund, C. (2011). New frontiers of land control: Introduction. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38(4), 667-681.
- Peluso, N. L., & Vandergeest, P. (2001). Genealogies of the political forest and customary rights in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 60(3), 761-812.
- Peluso, N. L., & Vandergeest, P. (2011). Political ecologies of war and forests: Counterinsurgencies and the making of national natures. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 101(3), 587-608.
- Pelzer, K. J. (1957). The agrarian conflict in East Sumatra. *Pacific Affairs*, 151-159.
- Penny, D. H. (1967). Development opportunities in Indonesian agriculture. *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, 3(8), 35-64.
- Pritchard, S. B., Wolf, S. A., & Wolford, W. (2016). Knowledge and the politics of land. *Environment and Planning A*, 48(4), 616-625.
- Rachman, N. F. (2011). *The resurgence of land reform policy and agrarian movements in Indonesia*. (PhD dissertation, University of California-Berkeley).
- Rachman, N. F. (2015). *Panggilan tanah air: Tinjauan kritis atas porak-porandanya Indonesia*. INSISTPress.
- Robinson, G. (2017). "Down to the very roots": The Indonesian army's role in the mass killings of 1965-66. *Journal of Genocide Research*, 19(4), 465-486.
- Rochmi, M. N. (2017, November 6). *Data-data HGU perusahaan sawit akan dibuka buat publik*. Retrieved from <https://beritagar.id/artikel/berita/data-data-hgu-perusahaan-sawit-akan-dibuka-buat-publik>.
- Rosser, A., Roesad, K., & Edwin, D. (2005). Indonesia: The politics of inclusion. *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 35(1), 53-77.
- Sahide, M. A. K., & Giessen, L. (2015). The fragmented land use administration in Indonesia? Analysing bureaucratic responsibilities influencing tropical rainforest transformation systems. *Land Use Policy*, 43, 96-110.
- Sahide, M. A. K., Supratman, S., Maryudi, A., Kim, Y. S., & Giessen, L. (2016). Decentralisation policy as recentralisation strategy: Forest Management Units and community forestry in Indonesia. *International Forestry Review*, 18(1), 78-95.
- Sairin, S. (1996). The appeal of plantation labour: Economic imperatives and cultural considerations among Javanese workers in North Sumatra. *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, 11(1), 1-23.

- Sarturi, S. (2017, July 16). *Bappenas siapkan rencana pembangunan hijau 2020-2024, seperti apa?* Retrieved from <http://www.mongabay.co.id/2017/07/16/bappenas-siapkan-rencana-pembangunan-hijau-2020-2024-seperti-apa/amp/>.
- Sarturi, S., & Arumingtyas, L. (2017, July 24). *Akhirnya perpanjangan Inpres moratorium izin hutan keluar*. Retrieved from <http://www.mongabay.co.id/2017/07/24/akhirnya-perpanjangan-inpres-moratorium-izin-hutan-keluar/>.
- Savitri L. A., & Adriyanti, D. (2018). *The demise of emancipatory peasant politics? Indonesian fascism and the rise of Islamic populism*. Paper presented at ERPI 2018 International Conference: Authoritarian populism and the rural world, The Hague, Netherlands (pp. 1-13).
- Schulte Nordholt, H., & van Klinken, G. (2007). *Renegotiating boundaries: Agency, access, and identity in post-Suharto Indonesia*. KITLV Press.
- Scoones, I., Edelman, M., Borras Jr, S. M., Hall, R., Wolford, W., & White, B. (2018). Emancipatory rural politics: Confronting authoritarian populism. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 45(1), 1-20.
- Shahab, N. (2016). Indonesia: One map policy. *Open Government Partnership*.
- Shapin, S., & Schaffer, S. (1985). *Leviathan and the air-pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the experimental life*. Princeton University Press.
- Siagian, S., & Harahap, T. (2016). Pandumaan dan Sipituhuta vs TPL di Sumatera Utara: Tangis kemenyan, amarah perempuan. KOMNAS HAM Indonesia.
- Sikor, T., & Lund, C. (Eds.). (2010). *The politics of possession: Property, authority, and access to natural resources*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Simanjuntak, B. A. (Ed). (2013). *Dampak otonomi daerah di Indonesia*. Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia.
- Simpson, B. (2008). *Economists with guns: Authoritarian development and US-Indonesian relations, 1960-1968*. Stanford University Press.
- Simpson, B. (2009). Indonesia's "Accelerated Modernization" and the global discourse of development, 1960–1975. *Diplomatic History*, 33(3), 467-486.
- Sletto, B. (2015). Inclusions, erasures and emergences in an indigenous landscape: Participatory cartographies and the makings of affective place in the Sierra de Perijá, Venezuela. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 33(5), 925-944.
- Stoler, A. L. (1985). *Capitalism and confrontation in Sumatra's plantation belt, 1870-1979*. University of Michigan Press.
- Stoler, A. L. (1988). Working the revolution: Plantation laborers and the people's militia in North Sumatra. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 47(2), 227-247.
- Sulistyo, E. (2017, September 23). *Nawacita reforma agraria*. Retrieved from <http://ksp.go.id/nawacita-reforma-agraria/>.
- Tans, R. G. (2011). *Mafias, machines and mobilization: The sources of local power in three districts in North Sumatra, Indonesia*. (Master's Thesis, National University of Singapore).
- Tjondronegoro, S. M. P. (1981). *A short introduction to Indonesia's land reform: Past experiences and its present state*. Agro-Economic Survey; Institute of Social Studies.

- Tyson, A. D. (2010). *Decentralization and adat revivalism in Indonesia: The politics of becoming indigenous*. Routledge.
- van Langenberg, M. (1982). Class and ethnic conflict in Indonesia's decolonization process: A study of East Sumatra. *Indonesia*, (33), 1-30.
- Vel, J., Zakaria, Y., & Bedner, A. (2017). Law-making as a strategy for change: Indonesia's new village law. *Asian Journal of Law and Society*, 4(2), 447-471.
- Viner, A. C., & Kaplan, E. L. (1981). The changing Pakpak Batak. *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 54(1 (239)), 93-105.
- Wainwright, J., & Bryan, J. (2009). Cartography, territory, property: Postcolonial reflections on indigenous counter-mapping in Nicaragua and Belize. *cultural geographies*, 16(2), 153-178.
- Warburton, E. (2016). Jokowi and the new developmentalism. *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, 52(3), 297-320.
- Warman, R. (2016). Decentralization and forestry in the Indonesian archipelago: Beyond the big bang. *South East Asia Research*, 24(1), 23-40.
- Warren, C. (2005). Mapping common futures: Customary communities, NGOs and the state in Indonesia's reform era. *Development and Change*, 36(1), 49-73.
- Welker, M. (2012). The Green Revolution's ghost: Unruly subjects of participatory development in rural Indonesia. *American Ethnologist*, 39(2), 389-406.
- White, B. (2016). Remembering the Indonesian Peasants' Front and Plantation Workers' Union (1945–1966). *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 43(1), 1-16.
- Wiber, M. G. (2015). Property as boundary object: Normative versus analytical meanings. *The Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law*, 47(3), 438-455.
- Wittayapak, C., & Baird, I. G. (2018). Communal land titling dilemmas in northern Thailand: From community forestry to beneficial yet risky and uncertain options. *Land Use Policy*, 71, 320-328.