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**Competing discourses of conservation and sustainability in state-
sponsored tourism development:
A critical analysis of the Lake Toba case in Indonesia**

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Abstract

The Indonesian government has an ambitious project to develop the tourism sector and to increase the state's foreign exchange: the National Tourism Strategic Area (KSPN). The project has been prioritised in ten regions, one of which is Lake Toba in the province of North Sumatera. In promoting this project, the government has claimed that the Lake Toba tourism development programme will conserve nature and contribute positively to the economic development of the local community of North Sumatera province. The project has, however, faced resistance from the locals, and in particular the community of Sigapiton village in the Tobasa regency, because the land claimed by the Lake Toba Tourism Authority or Badan Otorita Pariwisata Danau Toba (BOPDT) is customary land belonging to local clans. In examining this conflict, this study investigates how the discourses of conservation and sustainability have been deployed by the government and challenged by the local community in the struggle for control over natural resources in the Lake Toba region.

This study uses the critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach to uncover and analyse the discourses used by the government to control natural resources in the context of ecotourism in Lake Toba. Specifically, the study adopts Fairclough's (2012) notion of three domains that must be analysed, namely text (speech, writing, visual images, or a combination of all three); discursive practices that include the production and consumption of texts; and social practices.

The analysis demonstrates that the government not only uses the discourses of sustainability and conservation to govern the natural resources at Lake Toba but also optimises policy setting and development incentives to implement an institutional arrangement through the establishment of the forestry estate as a process of "*territorialisation*" of land claimed as state forest. The arrangement requires the existence of

binding agreements and regulations to determine who has the right to and control over natural resources, as well as formulate their conditions to access it.

Furthermore, the government uses two issues to promote the Lake Toba tourism project, namely environment (nature conservation) and social-economic welfare. The government argues that the project aims to conserve nature and improve the local economy. The government also claims that the project can stimulate local awareness of the need for nature conservation. Civil society has countered government arguments by advancing the concept of “*green grabbing*”. They believe that in fact Lake Toba represents a new model of community exclusion, where communities are excluded from their traditional lands and living space on the grounds of ecotourism.

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List of Abbreviations

ADB	: Asian Development Bank
ASEAN	: Association of South East Asian Nations
BOPDT	: Badan Otoritas Pariwisata Danau Toba/ Lake Toba Tourism Authority
BPN	: Badan Pertanahan Nasional/ National Land Agency
BPS	: Badan Pusat Statistik/ Centre of Statistics Agency
BRWA	: Badan Registrasi Wilayah Adat/ The Customary Territory Registration Agency
CDA	: Critical Discourse Analysis
CITES	: Convention on International Trade Endangered Species
DPR	: Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat/ People's Representative Council or parliament
FPIC	: Free, Prior, Informed Consent
IMF	: International Monetary Fund
IUCN	: International Union for the Conservation of Nature
Jokowi	: Joko Widodo/ President Indonesia 2014–2024
Kemenpar	: Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif/ Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy
KLHK	: Kementerian Lingkungan Hidup dan Kehutanan/ Ministry of Environment and Forestry
KPA	: Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria/ Consortium for Agrarian Reform

KSDAE	: Direktorat Jenderal Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam dan Ekosistem/ The Directorate General of Nature Resources and Ecosystem Conservation
KSP	: Kantor Staff Presiden/ President Staff Office
KSPN	: Kawasan Strategis Pariwisata Nasional/ National Strategic Tourism Areas
KSPPM	: Kelompok Studi dan Pengembangan Prakarsa Masyarakat/ People's Initiative Development and Study Group
LBP	: Luhut Binsar Panjaitan
LBNP	: Loreto Bay National Park
MA	: Mahkamah Agung/ Supreme Court
MK	: Mahkamah Konstitusi/ Constitutional Court
NGO	: Non-Government Organization
Perpres	: Peraturan Presiden/ Presidential Regulation
PDASHL	: Pengendalian Daerah Aliran Sungai dan Hutan Lindung/ Watershed and Protection Forest Management
PPP	: Public Private Partnership
PT	: <i>Perusahaan Terbatas</i> / Limited liability company
PTUN	: Pengadilan Tata Usaha Negara/ The Administrative Court
RI	: Republik Indonesia/ Republic of Indonesia
SAINS	: Sajogyo Institute
SBY	: Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono/ President Indonesia period 2004–2014

SUMUT : Sumatera Utara/ North Sumatera province

UNESCO : The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

WB : World Bank

Chapter 1

Introduction

This study examines how the discourses of conservation and sustainability are deployed by the government and challenged by the local community in the struggle for control over natural resources in the Lake Toba region, North Sumatera province, Indonesia. It focuses on an ecotourism public private partnership (PPP) project for Lake Toba, which is part of the 10 New Bali project and has been rejected by local residents (CNN Indonesia, 2019, September 12). This resistance was triggered by land and forest tenure conflicts between local communities and the government, specifically the Ministry of Environment and Forestry or Kementerian Lingkungan Hidup dan Kehutanan (KLHK). The conflict arose because the KLHK state that the area claimed by the community as customary land is registered as a protected forest and should be controlled by the state.

In contrast, the people of Sigapiton village argue that they had never been involved properly in the planning discussions around the Lake Toba tourism project (Farid, 2019, August 22). The conflicting perspectives on the nature of the proposed tourism development project reveal that there are competing views about land and ownership. The government views the land as part of a conservation area that must be protected and managed by the state, but local people believe that the customary land is a living space that should be managed communally. An analysis of the discourses deployed by the state and the responses of the local community will provide insights into the political struggle associated with the pursuit of a national tourism strategy, with specific reference to the strategic areas program or Kawasan Strategis Pariwisata Nasional (KSPN) ecotourism project for Lake Toba.

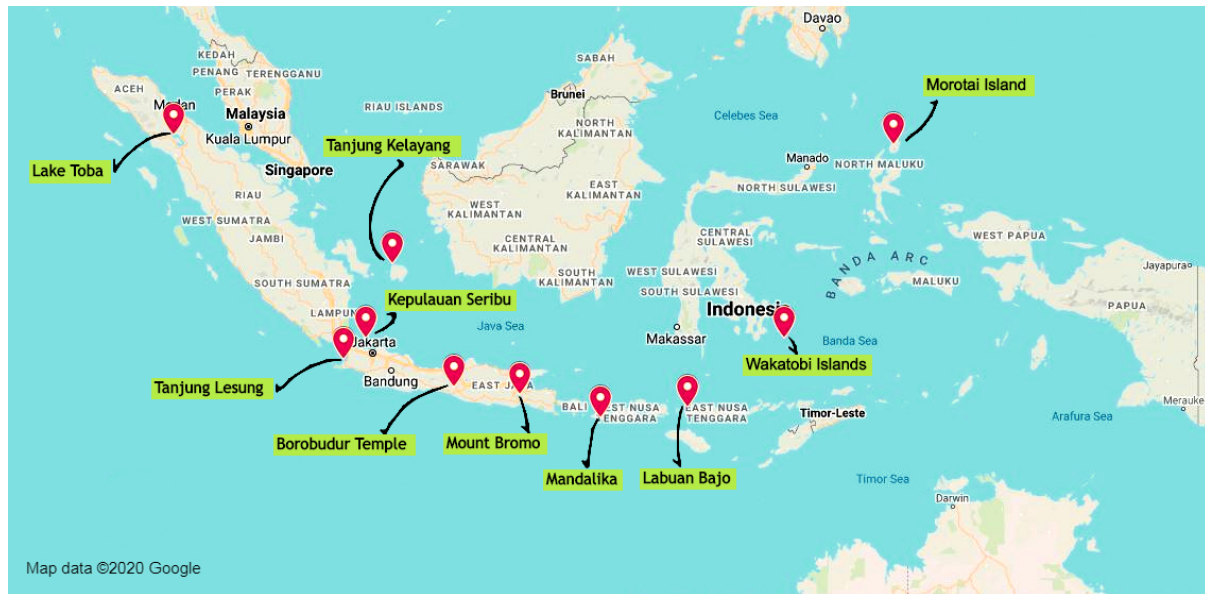
This chapter describes the background and context of this research. The chapter also introduces the aim of the study, comments on its significance, and provides an outline of the thesis.

Background

In 2011, the Indonesian government drafted a national tourism strategic plan for 2010–2025, and designated it “88 National Tourism Strategic Areas” or Kawasan Strategis Pariwisata Nasional (KSPN). Later, in 2016, the government chose 10 tourism areas whose establishment was to be prioritised. These are collectively known as the 10 New Bali projects (Cahyono et al., 2017). According to the Cabinet Secretariat letter no. B 652/Seskab/ Maritime/2015 (2015, November 6), the 10 priority tourist destinations consist of Lake Toba (North Sumatera), Tanjung Kelayang Beach (Belitung), Tanjung Lesung (Banten), Kepulauan Seribu (Jakarta), Borobudur Temple (Central Java), Mandalika (West Nusa Tenggara), Mount Bromo (East Java), Labuan Bajo (Southeast Sulawesi), Morotai (North Maluku), and Wakatobi (North Sulawesi). Hence, Cahyono et al. (2017) noted that the government offered five reasons to accelerate the implementation of the KSPN and designate 10 destinations as priorities, namely: (a) ending the dependence of state revenues on the extractive industries, (b) ensuring the optimal development of the tourism sector to realise its potential for generating national revenue, (c) increasing the competitiveness of the tourism sector at the global level, (d) optimising the tourism sector to open investment and employment opportunities, and (e) supporting the acceleration of infrastructure expansion for integration and interconnection.

Figure 1

Map of the 10 New Bali



Note. The figure is a modified map from Google.com

In the context of accelerating the development of tourism areas on Lake Toba, in the North Sumatera province, the government claimed that the Lake Toba tourism project would conserve nature and contribute positively to the economic development of the local community and the province (Farid, 2019, August 22). By using the public-private partnership (PPP) investment scheme, entertainment centres such as theme parks are planned to be built in the area to attract both domestic and foreign tourists, (Setiawan, 2019, July 29). Accordingly, during the IMF-World Bank Group annual meeting in Bali on 11 October 2018, Badan Otoritas Pelaksana Danau Toba (BOPDT), or Lake Toba Tourism Authority, and seven investors signed an investment partnership of US \$400 million to develop Lake Toba (Sinaga, 2018, October 12). Sinaga (2018, October 12) notes that the investment was to be used to develop ecotourism on 77.5 hectares of land.

The government issued Presidential Regulation number 49/2016 concerning the authority to manage the Lake Toba tourism area. In this policy, the president gave authority

to the BOPDT¹ to take all actions, including coordinating with cross-ministries, to accelerate the realization of Lake Toba tourism. In addition, based on the presidential regulation, the BOPDT was given a 500 hectare management area, with the land originating from both the forest and non-forest areas. According to this policy, the forest area can be changed in its designation and status to a non-forest area through the BOPDT in coordination with the KLHK and the local government (Article 24a, President Decree no. 49/2016). Thus, this policy also allows land acquisition from third parties (non-state land) to develop Lake Toba tourism to be compensated in accordance with the law (Article 24b, President Decree no. 49/2016).

However, the land acquisition for the Lake Toba tourism project was met with resistance from the local people from the village of Sigapiton, in the Tobasa district. According to a local non-government organisation (NGO) named *Kelompok Studi dan Pengembangan Masyarakat* (The People's Development Initiative and Study Group) or KSPPM (2019), the rejection was triggered by the handover of 386.6 hectares of land by the KLHK to the BOPDT in 2016. The KLHK argued that, based on Minister of Environment and Forestry Decree number 579/2014 concerning the Designation of Forest Areas in North Sumatera province, the land taken over for the tourism project was a state forest and registered as a protected forest area. However, of the 386.5 hectares of land, the Sigapiton villagers claimed that 120 hectares was customary land and belonged to them (KSPPM, 2019).

Based on *marturi-turian* (folklore), the land that was appropriated was the customary land of several clans, the descendants of *Raja* (King) Na Opat , who are now known as the

¹ The BOPDT is structurally under the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy. Furthermore, according to Article 14 of President Decree no. 49/2016, BOPDT has the tasks of coordination, synchronization, and facilitation of planning, development, construction, and control in the Lake Toba tourist area.

Marga Bius (Clans of Bius) in Sigapiton village (KSPPM, 2019). The Marga Bius consists of four primary clans (namely Butar-butar, Sirait, Nadapdap, and Manurung) and eight female clans known as Boru Bius (namely Gultom, Sidabalok, Manik, Samosir, Silalahi, Situmorang, Simaremare, and Sidabutar) (KSPPM, 2019).

Historically, according to a document of Badan Registrasi Wilayah Adat or the customary territory registration agency (BRWA, 2019), the disputed area in the village of Sigapiton was the customary land of Raja Bius's descendants. BRWA (2019) noted, in 1957,² that Bius Butar-Butar allowed the representation of the KLHK in North Sumatera province to plant pine trees in the Talpe Sileang-leang area for reforestation purposes. In 2017, the Sigapiton people became aware of Presidential Regulation number 49/2016 which included the Talpe Sileang-leang area into the Lake Toba ecotourism area under the authority of the BOPDT (KSPPM, 2019). Therefore, the Sigapiton people, especially the Butar-Butar clan, demanded that the land be returned because, according to the 1957 agreement, the land was only intended for the reforestation programme, not for tourism projects (KSPPM, 2019). Responding to this request, the KLHK explained that the Sigapiton customary area is only 81 hectares, consisting of settlements and rice field areas. The rest, 39 hectares land claimed by the local community as customary forest (*tombak*), was categorised by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry as state forest. Furthermore, according to KSPPM (2019) the KLHK provided evidence of customary land boundaries which was signed by the Head of Sigapiton Village. However, when the community questioned the information, the Head of the village claimed to have only signed a blank piece of paper and did not know that the document described a customary boundary (KSPPM, 2019).

² However, the Medan Administrative Court's verdict number 244/G/2019/PTUN-MDN notes that the agreement between local community and the provincial government was conducted on February 1, 1975.

According to the KSPPM field notes (2019), the people of Sigapiton responded positively to the Lake Toba tourism project plan because it would have an impact on the development of transportation access. However, they demanded that the 120-hectare customary area should be excluded from the tourist area and returned to the community. They expected the government to respect and protect customary areas which also form the livelihood of local communities (KSPPM, 2019).³

In this struggle, the Sigapiton village community has been supported by some NGOs such as Kelompok Studi dan Pengembangan Masyarakat/People's development initiative and study group (KSPPM), Sayogjo Institute (SAINS) and Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria/ Consortium for Agrarian Reform (KPA). Furthermore, Karokaro (2019, September 16) noted that a mediation meeting was held on September 15, 2019, at the Lumban Julu sub-district office. The mediation led to eight agreements:

1. The Sigapiton Indigenous People agreed to the government plan to build a road on customary land;
2. Demands for the return of customary land controlled by the BPODT were to be pursued through legal channels;
3. The BPODT committed to not damaging the environment and culture in Sigapito village;
4. The BPODT guaranteed that the project would preserve the springs in the Sigapiton Village;
5. The tourism project was not to displace the Sigapiton people who lived on the edge of Lake Toba;

³ The local communities manage the land for a community farming area, a communal forest, and a water source for drinking and irrigation.

6. The BPODT agreed to involve and empower the surrounding community in the development of the Lake Toba authority zone;
7. The BPODT would connect the electricity to 28 houses that were already standing in the Lake Toba Authority area; and
8. The BPODT would not disturb the historical sites of graves of the Sigapiton Indigenous People in the development of the first phase covering an area of 279 hectares (Karakoro, 2019, September 16).

Aims of the Study

The objectives of this research are to uncover the politics behind national policies and programs on ecotourism in Indonesia and the role of conservation and sustainability discourses within that process, particularly in relation to the ecotourism project for Lake Toba. This study examines how the discourses have been deployed by the government and challenged by the local community in the struggle for control over natural resources in the Lake Toba region.

Furthermore, the results of this study are expected to be widely disseminated. Thus, marginalised groups who have been “defeated” in the contestation over natural resource governance in Indonesia will be able to use the results of this study to understand the context within which they are engaging with the state and increase the likelihood that they can have their voices heard.

Research Significance

Academically, this study will enrich social research into conflicts over the use of natural resources in a conservation frame. In 2017, two local Indonesian NGOs—the Sayogjo Institute (SAINS) together with Kelompok Studi dan Pengembangan Masyarakat/ People's Development Initiative and Study Group (KSPPM)—carried out research into socio-

ecological issues and green grabbing ecotourism policies in the Lake Toba area. In their study, SAINS and KSPPM (2019) concluded that ecotourism policies for controlling land were effectively contributing to land commodification. However, that study did not elaborate on how conservation and ecotourism discourses were created and used by government authorities to take over residents' land. This study, therefore, focuses on the creation and use of discourse in these environmental conflicts, both by the government in seeking to take over land and by the community in challenging the government's actions.

In the Indonesian context, the results of this research are important because the national government plans to develop tourism areas in ten provinces, and these plans are integrated with notions of conservation. This means that there is a high risk of conflict in the implementation of the plans if the government ignores traditional landholding rights and related social and cultural aspects. The results of the study are expected to be part of a learning document that will encourage policymakers to consider social aspects and involve local communities in planning. In addition, the study is expected to be used by local communities or those advocating on their behalf, especially regarding how to understand discursive strategies and how to deal with them.

Outline of Thesis

The overall structure of this thesis takes the form of six chapters, including this introductory chapter, which provides an overview of the research. The second chapter through a literature review provides a discussion of natural resource management politics and policy in Indonesia. The chapter offers insights into the discourses and practices regarding conservation, sustainability, and investment that provide the theoretical context of the study.

The third chapter is concerned with the research design and the methodology used for the study. The chapter discusses qualitative research methodology and identifies critical discourse analysis (CDA) as the suitable methodological approach.

Chapter four describes and discusses the context of tension within Lake Toba governance, which consists of two sections. The first section focuses on the Indonesian government's tourism policies and strategy as the background to Lake Toba ecotourism project. The second part describes in greater detail the history of tenure rights at the Lake Toba, particularly in Sigapiton village.

Chapter five offers an analysis of interviews and media reports regarding how the discourses of conservation and sustainability are deployed by the government and challenged by the local community in the struggle for control over natural resources in the Lake Toba region, North Sumatera province, Indonesia. Finally, chapter six completes this thesis with conclusions and recommendations. It also identifies pathways for future research.

Chapter 2

Resource Governance and Conservation in Indonesia: A review of the Literature

Introduction

Knowledge about the history and politics of natural resource management in Indonesia, particularly in the context of forestry, is essential to understanding the national tourism strategic areas programme or *Kawasan Strategis Pariwisata Nasional* (KSPN) and the planned ecotourism project on Lake Toba. Therefore, this chapter offers an overview of the history of natural resource governance policies in Indonesia and their political implications. This chapter also explores the concepts and practices of conservation projects and the use of sustainability discourse by governments.

Natural Resources Governance in Indonesia

The concepts and practices of natural resource management in Indonesia are influenced by colonial agrarian policies, especially the Agrarische Wet 1870. This policy was issued by the Dutch colonial government in 1870 to regulate the division of administration and land tenure arrangements for natives and non-natives (Lukmanul, 2012). The issuance of the Agrarische Wet 1870 was a response to the concern of the Dutch trade alliance named VOC⁴ (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie or Dutch East India Company) that the absence

⁴ The VOC was a megacorporation in the early 17th century which established by a government-directed incorporation of several rival Dutch trading companies.

of a formal land policy constrained investment in the Dutch East Indies⁵ (Ratu, 2009). Ratu (2009) concluded that Agrarische Wet 1870 was intended as a legal basis for regulating and facilitating investment related to land, as well as eliminating the existence of customary laws. Through this policy, the colonial government introduced *erfpacht* (rights to cultivate or rights to exploit) for periods of 75 years and allowed them to be extended if needed (Laudjeng, 2013). According to Laudjeng (2013), the *erfpacht* was provided to meet the needs of investors as the right was attached to the object (land), which could be used as collateral in borrowing money from banks to increase capital.

However, the VOC and investors argued that the *erfpacht* in Agrarische Wet 1870 was not strong enough to legitimise the land acquisition by the colonial government and give investors the right to use the land for business (Laudjeng, 2013). Therefore, the colonial government proclaimed the *domein verklaring* (state land) statement through the Agrarische Besluit of 1870 (*staatblad* 1870 no. 118) (Laudjeng, 2013). *Domein verklaring* states that all land that cannot be proven to be individually owned is acknowledged as state-owned land (*domein vanden staat*). Accordingly, all land held by Indigenous peoples or local communities according to local customs was categorised as state-owned land because none of the customary laws or traditional norms in Indonesia can be equated with individual/personal rights in European law. Furthermore, through the *domein verklaring* doctrine, the colonial government had a legal claim to control land in all territories of the colonies and the right to lease land to private plantation investors for 75 years (Harsono, 1981). In addition, Indigenous people were also allowed to lease land to investors but were required to go through the colonial government as an intermediary (Ratu, 2009).

⁵ The Dutch East Indies was the name given by Dutch colonial government to the Indonesian archipelago, before Indonesia's independence.

After the proclamation of independence on 17 August 1945, the government of the Republic of Indonesia radically overhauled colonial policies. In 1959, President Soekarno annulled all ownership rights to the land by foreigners, subsequently launched the implementation of land reform in 1960, and issued a national land policy called Basic Agrarian Law (BAL) 1960 (Utrecht, 1969). Mulyani et al. (2011) believe this policy was the antithesis of exploitative colonial policy. In the same vein, Rachman (2011) argues that BAL 1960 has been abolishing the Agrarische Wet 1870.

However, in 1965, Indonesian experienced a counter-revolution in the political world. The right-wing military led by General Soeharto with the support of the CIA succeeded in a coup against President Soekarno (Kim, 2002). When he became president, Soeharto changed the direction of national policy towards liberalising the natural resources governance in Indonesia for investment (Mulyani, et al., 2011). As a result, the politics and the direction of policies on the management of Indonesia's natural resources shifted radically. The Soeharto regime often violated formal mechanisms and ignored questions about public consent for the sake of development (Daryono, 2010).

One of the legal changes carried out by the Soeharto regime did not implement the BAL 1960 and replaced the land reform program with the land for development projects (Rachman, 2011). Mulyani et al. (2011) note that the Soeharto regime created new national regulations to attract foreign investment. In the context of forestry, in 1967, the Soeharto government issued the Basic Law on Forestry or Law number 5/1967. The policy became the legal basis for determining forest areas⁶ and the authority of the Forestry Department⁷ (Fay &

⁶ However, Fay and Sirait (2005) also noted that the granting of forest concessions outside Java had taken place before this law was issued. Fay and Sirait (2005) explained that these concessions were within the jurisdiction of the Department of Agrarian Affairs and pertained to natural forest areas that did not have legal requirements or management requirements because they were not registered, unlike Indonesian lands today.

⁷ In the Soeharto era, cabinet nomenclature was referred to as the 'department'. In 1999, the term 'department' changed to 'ministry'.

Sirait, 2005). According to Fay and Sirait (2005), the existence of this Department marked the emergence of dualism in the land administration system in Indonesia, with about 39% of land under the Land Agency (BPN) jurisdiction, and 61% regulated by the Department of Forestry.

Barber (2001) argues that the Soeharto era (1965–1998) was marked by mismanagement that caused deforestation, as well as widespread conflict and violence. Barber (2001) argues that the orientation of forestry policies in the Soeharto era was more focused on granting long-term logging concessions to multinational corporations and tended to hinder local communities and Indigenous peoples' customary access to forest resources that formed the basis of their livelihood. The phrase “the right to control by the state” within the Indonesian constitution was interpreted by the Soeharto regime as “the right of ownership by the state” (Barber, 2001). For example, Barber (2001) states that, based on Law number 5/1967, the government classified millions of hectares of land as “official forest areas” owned by the state and subsequently sub-classified for various purposes such as production, protection and conservation. Moreover, through the Department of Forestry, the government had the authority to register forest areas, as well as to determine their designation, including changing the status of the forest land to non-forest so that it can be offered as concessions for plantations or mining (Barber, 2001).

The power of the government to define what constitutes "forest land" served as a political strategy to strengthen state hegemony over natural resources, all social relations, and the exercise of political authority within government (Barber, 2001). This political construction developed by the Soeharto government for the forestry sector marginalised millions of people living in, or near, the forest area and stigmatised them as backward communities (Barber, 2001). Consequently, the government's determination that forest areas that were community-managed would be handed over to companies through the granting of

permits, rights, concessions or conservation projects was a fundamental cause of conflicts (Rachman, 2013).

Critics of Conservation Projects

In general, in a global context, critics of the discourse and practice of conservation are getting stronger. For example, Shanee (2019) argues that global conservation practices have failed to reduce the environmental crisis or increasingly intensive extinctions. In fact, according to Brockington and Wilkie (2015), the discourse of conservation is becoming increasingly controversial with growing evidence that the conservation practices of creating protected areas is contributing to growing levels of poverty. Moreover, based on research into conservation practices in Indonesia and Kenya, Peluso (1993a) concluded that “state interests appropriate the ideology, legitimacy, and technology of conservation” to legitimise coercive controls over natural resources and people (p.199). By using repressive (military) apparatuses, these countries claim and control conservation objects (Peluso, 1993a).

In particular, there are three characteristics of conservation projects which are often criticised by scholars. The first is that conservation projects tend to separate society and nature. There is a trend where “large areas of habitat are being fenced globally to restore and relocate species that can no longer survive in their surrounding landscapes, such as because of introduced predators” (Tanentzap & Lloyd, 2017, p. 119). As humans are considered a threat to biodiversity, there is a discursive and material separation of society and its surroundings into categories, such as nature and culture in conservation and protected areas (West et al., 2006). Even if there is a tolerance for the entry of human activities in conservation areas, it is usually based on economic considerations. For example, in Ecuador, the Correa regime's policy on the Yasuni National Park creates two separate zones in the

Amazon: one that should be a high priority for protection and another that is potentially open to economic processes (Arsel, 2012).

In the same vein, West et al. (2006) and Kelly (2011, as cited in Holmes 2014) state that, historically, conservation projects and sustainability discourses have served as justification for the government to displace rural people, especially Indigenous people, from their land and resources. For example, coercive management techniques used for conservation management in Indonesia and Kenya have contributed to violence against and exclusion of local people from protected areas (Peluso, 1993). Similarly, in Mozambique's Limpopo National Park and Guatemala's Maya Biosphere Reserve, local people within protected areas have come to be perceived as a threat to biodiversity in a way that has provided justification for state actors to displace them (Lunstrum & Ybarra, 2018).

Such nature-culture dichotomies in conservation projects, marked by “fenced and intensively managed reserves” that seek to “[achieve] wider biodiversity goals”, are contentious (Tanentzap & Lloyd, 2017, p. 119). Moreover, according to Peterson (2015), the negation of social aspects in environmental management, such as in the concept of conservation, not only causes the failure of natural sustainability but also contributes to increasing inequality. Furthermore, Jupiter (2017) and Sterling et al. (2017, as cited in Caillon et al., 2017) believe that the dichotomy in terms of its definition, indicators and realisation strategies can result in irrelevant or disruptive actions on a local scale.

In addition, based on an example of conservation policies and practices in Zimbabwe, Mawere (2013) identified failures to overcome environmental conservation crises that were caused by a dichotomy between science and Indigenous epistemological systems. Mawere (2013) notes that government policies related to conservation in Zimbabwe tend to support and privilege Western science models and ignore local community practices inspired by local

traditional knowledge. The concept of conservation, which is designed to exclude local communities, is based on such privileging of Western science (Dasgupta, 2016, March 30). Therefore, especially in developing countries, conservation areas often succeed in preserving biodiversity amid growing poverty in local populations (Dasgupta, 2016, March 30).

The second characteristic is conservation as a process of territorialisation to control the resources. Conservation and protected area projects assume that the authorities (state or private) have the capacity to exercise control over natural resources. Peluso (1993a) mentions that international agreements on conservation allow nation-states to claim legitimacy to manage resources within their territorial boundaries. Due to such claims, the “state generally allocates rights to extract or protect resources in ways that benefit the state itself as well as for the proverbial greater good of society” (Peluso, 1993, p. 201).

Claims of authority to exercise control over natural resources through conservation and protected area projects often ignore or exclude other capacities. According to Peluso (1993a), both conservation and economic arguments are normally used by the state to justify the coercive exclusion of certain communities from national resources. Furthermore, the phenomenon of violence and exclusion in protected and conservation areas is known as green violence (Bersaglio, 2018), or coercing conservation (Peluso, 1993a).

The third characteristic is that conservation as a strategy has interconnections with the global market. Some scholars have argued that economic globalization is often considered to be the cause of environmental damage (Mwampamba et al., 2016). However, West et al. (2006) believe that protected area conservation projects are also part of globalisation itself. The ecological discourse of the 1980s prompted nation-states to establish international agreements for environmental protection (Peluso, 1993a). Furthermore, such agreements were supported by several international environmental NGOs together with transnational

corporations to promote the global conservation agenda by using the discourse of biodiversity protection (Rodríguez et al., 2007).

Baker (1999) identifies this global network as “the international worldwide conservation regime” (p. 34). According to Baker (1999), the actors of this regime consist of individuals and institutions that engage and influence government at the national and international levels related to the issue of wildlife protection. In addition, the actors actively develop categories to govern nature based on their definition. For instance, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) creates a global category system to govern worldwide conservation practices (West et al., 2006). Also, the World Bank applies the concept of sustainable development in the Mekong region in Laos, which separates the community from the environment (Goldman, 2001, as cited in West et al., 2006)

The participation of national governments or nation-states in the global scenario is also influenced by economic interests. For example, the Loreto Bay National Park (LBNP) in Mexico uses a global standard to enter the global conservation market (Peterson, 2015). Also, in the context of the quota management system that governs fisheries in New Zealand, McCormack (2016) argues that the interpretation and enactment of conservation and sustainability through that system ignores social aspects and produces injustice experienced by the Indigenous Maori people. She argues that the claims of sustainability by the quota regime represent a neoliberal economic paradigm characterised by increased presence of markets and privatization of resources (McCormack, 2016).

Conservation Projects in Indonesia

Historically, conservation projects in Indonesia were driven by Dutch colonisers during the colonial era. The first conservation law was enacted in 1932 when the Dutch East

Indies colonial government established the Natuur Monumenten Ordonnantie or Wildlife Reserve and Wildlife Sanctuary ordinance (Wiadnya, 2011). According to Setyowati et al. (2008), in the beginning, conservation policies were oriented more towards species conservation, as indicated by the existence of nature reserves or wildlife reserves with relatively small areas, such as the conservation of *Rafflesia arnoldii* flowers in Bengkulu or endemic teak tree conservation in Central Java. But the paradigm of this conservation policy changed to include a broader scope of conservation territory. For example, in 1934, the colonial government established 400,000 hectares of Leuser's wildlife sanctuary (Setyowati et al., 2008).

In 1978, the Indonesian government issued Presidential Decree Number 43 concerning the ratification of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) (Setyowati et al., 2008). Further, in accordance with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) approach to the categorization of conservation areas (discussed below), the Indonesian government issued Law no. 5 in 1990 concerning the conservation of living natural resources and their ecosystems (Subadia et al., 2010). The IUCN categorization was recognised by the United Nations and many national governments as the global standard by which to classify protected areas according to their management objectives. Setyowati et al. (2008) have subsequently questioned the extent to which the provisions in Indonesia's Law no. 5 align with the IUNC categorization of conservation areas. Figure 2 identifies the differences in regional categorization.

Figure 2

Comparison of Conservation Categories Between IUCN and Law No. 5/1990

IUCN categories	Law no. 5/1990 categories
Strict reserves	<i>Cagar alam</i> (strict nature reserves)
National park	<i>Suaka margasatwa</i> (wildlife sanctuary)
Nature monument	<i>Taman nasional</i> (national park)
Species management	<i>Taman wisata alam</i> (nature recreation park)
Protected land- or sea scapes	<i>Taman hutan raya</i> (grand forest park)
Managed resources	No equivalent category

Note. Source: Setyowati et al. (2008)

Having established the broad approach to conservation policy in Indonesia, the chapter will now turn to considering the emergence of ecotourism.

Ecotourism in Indonesia

Ecotourism has been defined by Fandeli (2003, as cited in Butarbutar & Soemarmo, 2013), as an activity of traveling to natural areas in order to conserve environmental resources, conserve biodiversity, and improve the livelihoods of residents. Therefore, Butarbutar and Soemarmo (2013) believe that ecotourism has two aspects that must be maintained, namely conserving nature and providing economic benefits to local communities. These ideas have been recognised in the Indonesian Tourism Act number 10 year 2009, which mentions that for tourism to be sustainable, it must encompass the natural, social, economic and cultural environment.

Avenzora et al. (2018) recognise the centrality of sustainability in the idea of ecotourism. They have argued that ecotourism has seven pillars consisting of ecology, socio-culture, economy, experience, satisfaction, memories, and education. According to Avenzora et al (2018), the first three pillars are related to the sustainable development paradigm, while the next three pillars are related to the basic needs of tourists. The pillar of education is an embodiment of the high need to educate tourists or visitors and tourism operators to have a collective awareness on value for sustainable.

In terms of economic impacts, Siswanto and Moeljadi (2015) argued that ecotourism contributes positively to the economic improvement. An example is ecotourism in Baluran National Park (BNP) in East Java. According to Siswanto and Moeljadi (2015), the presence of BNP ecotourism has had a positive impact on community empowerment. Local people no longer depend only on forest products because there are alternative job opportunities related to the tourism sector (Siswanto & Moeljadi, 2015). Therefore, in this case ecotourism is seen as positive for the future of nature and the people around BNP (Siswanto & Moeljadi, 2015).

There are also those who have showed how ecotourism projects cause social problems, especially conflicts with local communities (Sujatmiko, 2012). The same ecotourism initiatives in BNP are seen as having created conflicts with local transmigrant communities or *transmigrasi lokal* (Translok) that have been triggered by zoning determinations. In this case, zoning determinations within the BNP categorised Wonorejo Village as an illegal settlement within a conservation area. In his research, Sujatmiko (2012) wrote that the BNP authorities considered the community to have encroached on what had been designated as conservation land by building settlements. This raises the question about the rights of local communities to access and use land.

Indonesian Constitution and the Rights to Land

The Indonesian constitution is also called the UUD 1945. Article 33 paragraph (2) states, 'sectors of production which are important for the country and affect the life of the people shall be under the powers of the State'. Furthermore, in paragraph (3) it states that 'the land, the waters and the natural resources within shall be under the powers of the State and shall be used to the greatest benefit of the people'. The sentence 'under the powers of the state' in the article then gave rise to the legal concept "*Hak Menguasai Negara*" (HMN) or the right to control by the state (Sasmitha et al., 2014).

The Constitutional Court interprets HMN as not a right to own. Based on the verdict of the Constitutional Court number 21-22/PUU-V/2007, HMN in the land sector is a right given to the state to formulate policies (*beleid*), carry out management (*bestuurdaad*), regulation (*regelendaad*), management (*beheersdaad*), and supervision (*toezichthoudensdaad*).

Furthermore, the Constitutional Court also emphasized that HMN should be aimed at "the greatest benefit of the people". In the verdict number 3/PUU-VIII/2010, the Constitutional Court provides four indicators of how HMN is oriented towards the greatest benefits of the people, namely the benefit of natural resources for the people, equitable distribution of benefits of natural resources for the people, people's participation in determining benefits of natural resources, and respect for people's hereditary rights in exploiting natural resources.

In particular, in the context of customary forests, the Constitutional Court also guides how the state regulates it. Through the verdict number 35/PUUX/2012, the Constitutional Court has stated that 'customary forests are forests within the territory of customary communities'. This verdict mandates that forest control by the state shall still observe the

rights of the customary law, as long as it is still alive and in accordance with community development and the principles of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia as regulated in law.

The terminology "the greatest benefit of the people" and the recognition of Indigenous peoples reflect the fifth principle of Pancasila (the foundation of the Indonesian state) which mentions "social justice for all Indonesian people". Therefore, the discussion about social justice is essential to formulate the concept and practice of fulfilling, protecting, and respecting people's rights to land.

Dual Perspectivism: Politics of Recognition and Distribution

John Rawls (1971, as cited in Hasanuddin, 2018) states that justice has two principles. The first principle is everyone should have the same rights to the broadest basic freedoms. The second principle is socio-economic inequality must be regulated in such a way that even the most disadvantaged can benefit from society, and all positions in society are open to everyone (Hasanuddin, 2018).

Furthermore, this conception of justice has encouraged the debate about the two dimensions of social justice, namely the politics of recognition and the politics of distribution, both of which have their respective supporters, who tend to argue with each other (Zeinudin & Novita, 2016). According to Zeinudin and Novita (2016), adherents of the politics of recognition consider politics of distribution to simplify social justice issues to the aspects of wealth, income, and material resources only. Conversely, supporters of the politics of distribution consider the arguments from supporters of the politics of recognition as counter-productive because they are not based on actual socio-economic problems and

“refuse universal morality by being immersed in the ethics of relativity” (Zeinudin & Novita, 2016, p. 230).

Hence, Fraser (1996) explains that justice as recognition requires the establishment of the institutionalization of cultural values and identity that express equal respect for each participant in the socio-political order and guarantee equal opportunities for each person to enjoy a life of dignity. Redistributive justice requires ensuring access to material resources and goods to guarantee the independence of the voice of each person as a participant in the democratic political space.

Conservation and Marginalization Studies in Indonesia

In terms of implementing conservation projects in Indonesia, this study identifies several relevant and important studies. First, Tsing’s (1993) study illustrates the cultural and political construction of marginality among the Dayak Meratus people in Kalimantan, Indonesia. Tsing (1993) described the process of local communities being marginalised, as a consequence of which their perspectives were neglected in conservation initiatives. The focus of Tsing's research is the marginalization of the Meratus people in relation to government policies as well as their relationship with the Banjar people. She illustrates how shifting cultivation boundaries within forests defined and redefined the position of the Meratus people on the periphery of state power in the early 1980s. This anthropological research is interesting because Tsing (1993) discusses aspects of the role of the state, ethnic identity, and gender differentiation. However, the work does not adequately explore the relationship between government policies and the interests of the global conservation market.

Second, a legal review by Imamulhadi and Kurniati (2019) regarding the conservation of protected forests and the communal land of Indigenous People around Lake Toba

examined the Indonesian government's development policies in relation to tourism projects in Lake Toba. Several policies, such as the Decree of the Minister of Environment and Forestry number 155/MENLHK/SETJEN/PLA.2/3/2017 and SK.92/MENLHK/SETJEN/PLA.2 / 2/2018, which are the legal basis for changing land use, were criticised by Imamulhadi and Kurniati (2019) from a legal perspective. They argue that even though the constitution mentions that the state has a right to control land and forests, the constitution also emphasises that the state must remain oriented towards the prosperity of the people. In addition, Imamulhadi and Kurniati (2019) explain that Law number 5 of 1960 also recognises the existence of Indigenous peoples and their communal land tenure. The authors conclude that those government policies which changed the function of customary forests and lands violated the Indonesian constitution and were against the United Nations Declaration of Indigenous People (UNDRIP).

Imamulhadi and Kurniati's (2019) study adds a legal perspective to my research. This perspective is important, and it has potential to enrich the analysis of my research on public policies used in the Lake Toba tourism project. However, the study of Imamulhadi and Kurniati (2019) does not cover why policies that are contrary to the constitution are still issued and implemented by the government. Political-economic aspects behind policies related to land conversion and the displacement of local people were not the focus of their research. Hence, my research seeks to fill this gap.

Third, the studies of Shohibuddin (2005) and Thamrin (2007) on local community conflicts with the authorities of Lore Lindu National Park, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, note that, since the establishment of a national park on October 5, 1993, Lore-Lindu has become an arena for contestation of interests and perceptions. The conflict between the local community and the Lore-Lindu National Park authority arises because of the limited involvement of the local community since the initial consultation process. In addition,

Shohibuddin (2005) notes that zoning⁸ created by national park authority tends to ignore the historical existence of local communities and their relationship with conservation areas.

According to Shohibuddin (2005), local communities have a social, economic and cultural dependency on forests that have been designated as conservation areas.

Shohibuddin (2005) identified a number of international actors with commitments to global interests involved in conservation politics in Lore Lindu National Park , such as The Nature Conservancy, Conservation International and CARE. In terms of funding, through a project titled The Central Sulawesi Integrated Area Development and Conservation Project (CSIADCP), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) provides loans to the local government to finance the Lore Lindu National Park project (Shohibuddin, 2005).

The studies of Shohibuddin (2005) and Thamrin (2007) are highly relevant to this study because they examine the conflict between local communities and the National Park authority. These studies also reflect the perception of competition constructed by each interest group. However, the context of conservation motivation in Lore Lindu is different from Lake Toba.

The literature mentioned above provides a good foundation for this research by presenting description and analyses of how natural resource governance and power contestation have occurred in Indonesia. My research contributes to this discussion by providing additional insights into how discursive power is used in conflicts over natural resource management, specifically in the tourism sector.

⁸ Based on Government Decree No. 68/1998, the zoning of the national park consists of the following: core zone, wilderness zone, utilization zone, intensive utilization zone, traditional utilization zone, rehabilitation zone, social-historical zone, and recreational zone (Shohibuddin, 2005).

Summary

As revealed in the previous review, conservation projects often have links with economic interests. Environmental conservation efforts for the long term are always pursued alongside calculations of the economic benefits. Therefore, the main indicator that is often used to measure success is the impact of conservation or ecotourism projects on increasing state and community incomes in the project area.

Many scholars in various countries have criticised the concept, and the policies to realise the concept, of conservation and ecotourism projects, including in Indonesia. Broadly speaking, these criticisms conclude that conservation and ecotourism projects have three characteristics. The first is that conservation projects tend to separate society and nature. The second criticism is that conservation as a process of territorialisation involves new forms of control over natural resources. The third criticism is that conservation is a strategy that tends to ignore the local context given its interconnections with the global market.

It can also be noted that there is a significant amount of research on conservation and ecotourism. However, questions about the contestation of power over natural resource management, and the use of discourse within that, and specifically in the ecotourism sector, is an area that is under-researched. Therefore, this study seeks to fill the gap by describing the contestation arena as well as illustrating the strategies used by social actors within the project.

Chapter 3

Research methodology

Introduction

This chapter lays out the methodological foundations of the thesis. It begins with a brief overview of qualitative research. It then offers a detailed discussion of critical discourse analysis (CDA) as the methodological approach used, before turning to an exposition of the relevance of CDA for the study of environmental politics and policy. The chapter then offers a discussion of the research methods used for data collection before ending with an explanation of the research ethics process that underpinned the research.

Qualitative Research

A qualitative methodology was used in undertaking this study. This methodology has been chosen because the qualitative approach in research enables a dynamic interaction between the research problems and the process of finding, summarising, and synthesising the literature (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010). In addition, a qualitative approach enables us to gain an understanding of people's behaviours and responses in complex environments without necessarily generalising to other contexts (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009, as cited in (Shanthi, Lee, & Lajium, 2015).

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) emphasised that qualitative research allows for the analyses of various phenomena in their natural setting and seeks to identify and interpret them within the context of their local meaning. They claim that this method can be used by various disciplines because of its multiparadigmatic focus.

Qualitative researchers use semiotics, narrative, content, discourse, archival, and phonemic analysis—even statistics, tables, graphs, and numbers. They also draw on and use the approaches, methods, and techniques of ethnomethodology, phenomenology, hermeneutics, feminism, rhizomatics, deconstructionism, ethnographies, interviews, psychoanalysis, cultural studies, survey research, and participant observation, among others. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 6)

My Position Within the Research – Both an Insider and Outsider

In this research, my position is simultaneously as an insider and outsider. My historical background as an activist for the agrarian reform movement in Indonesia gives me the position of an insider. In this position, I have both advantages and challenges. My advantages as an insider include having an understanding of the issues of forests, land, and Indigenous peoples. I also have the benefit of having easy access to information and data from civil society groups because I have well-established networks with them. This has provided advantages, not least in saving time for data collection and analysis. However, as an insider, I also bring my values to the analysis of this study. These values have informed my interest in and perspective on conservation issues in Indonesia. In explicitly acknowledging them here, my aim is to be transparent about the way they have informed the research procedures and analysis.

At the same time, I am also an outsider in this research. I am not part of the government or the Lake Toba tourism project. I am also not part of the community of residents of Sigapiton nor a member of any of the organizations that support the people of Sigapiton. This position as an outsider also provides advantages and challenges for me as a researcher. On the one hand, I benefited from having a distance that has allowed me to maintain my independence.

This has helped me to identify and assess the actors and their exercise of power in this situation. On the other hand, this position also presented challenges, especially in terms of obtaining information and data from the government. Being positioned as a government outsider has led to difficulties in gaining access to data and documents to support my research.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

This study adopts critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a theoretically grounded methodology to uncover and analyse the discourses used by the government in the context of contestation with a local community over an ecotourism project in Lake Toba. According to Ulinuha et al. (2013), CDA is an effective method in the framework of social science because it can bridge the social and language aspects in an effort to reveal hidden motivations in a discourse. In the same vein, Feindt and Oels (2006) note that CDA is a response to the three theoretical challenges of environmental-related policy issues, in a way that recognises that (i) although related to natural objects, environmental problems are actually the result of social construction; (ii) the foundation of environmental policy is the contestation of concepts, meaning, and knowledge; (iii) environmental discourse not only causes material and power impacts but is also an outcome of material practices and power relations (Feindt & Oels, 2006).

Wodak and Meyer (2008) describe critical discourse analysis “as being fundamentally interested in analysing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power, and control as manifested in language” (p. 10). CDA has potential to critically dismantle social injustices and inequalities that are constructed and legitimised by using language and discourse which contains domination and social power. The CDA

approach focuses on the dialectical relationship between structures and events to examine a social process (Fairclough, 2012). Hence, Van Dijk (1995) explains, CDA “examines patterns of access and control over the context, genres, text and talk, their priorities, as well as the discursive strategies of mind control” (p. 24).

Regarding the research approach, scholars use several terms to describe CDA, such as multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary. However, the last two terms are often debated as the CDA approaches, namely interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity. For example, although Weiss and Wodak (2003) recognise the term transdisciplinarity, they tend to use the term interdisciplinarity. According to Weiss and Wodak (2003), CDA requires interdisciplinary work to gain a correct understanding of how language operates to compile and transmit knowledge in order to exercise power. In a different vein, Fairclough (2012) claims that CDA not only requires interdisciplinarity, but it is more appropriate to use a transdisciplinary approach. Fairclough (2012) argues that a transdisciplinary approach implies the development of CDA's theoretical and methodological frameworks while providing a dialogue space between theory and information.

Hajer and Versteeg (2005) identify three strengths of discourse analysis, namely, illuminating the important role of language in politics, revealing the practice of language embeddedness, and answering the question “how” the discourse has been constructed on environmental politics. Similarly, Feindt and Oels (2006) argue that discourse analysis has seven strengths, namely:

- (i) a particular awareness of the role of language in constituting policies, politics and politics;
- (ii) a sceptical attitude toward claims of a single rationality and objective truth;
- (iii) an inclination to regard knowledge as contingent and principally contestable;
- (iv) an interest in bias effects of dominant types of language and

knowledge; (v) a shared understanding that language and knowledge need to be understood as an aspect of power and as exerting power effects; (vi) an interest in practices (i.e., professional and everyday practices) as constitutive of power relations and knowledge systems; and (vii) a strong emancipatory motive and an interest in democratising knowledge production and policy making. (Feindt & Oels, 2006, p. 163)

One of the essential elements in CDA that makes this method so powerful is the story-line concept. According to Hajer (1997), story-lines in CDA are defined as generative narratives that provide space for actors to utilise a number of discursive categories in order to attach meaning to certain physical or social phenomena. Furthermore, the operation of interests behind a discourse can be analysed through discourse-coalition illustrations. Hajer (1997) describes discourse-coalition as “the ensemble of (1) a set of story-lines; (2) the actors who utter these story-lines; and (3) the practices in which this discursive activity is based” (p. 65).

In order to operationalise CDA, this study adheres to Mullet's (2018) recommendation of five stages of analysis, namely “select the discourse, locate and prepare data sources (texts), explore the background of the texts, identify overarching themes, analyse external relations in the texts (interdiscursivity), analyse the internal relations in the texts, and interpret the data” (p. 123). This study also adopts Fairclough's (2012) approach of analysing three domains of discourse, namely text (speech, writing, visual images, or a combination of all three), discursive practices that include the production and consumption of texts, and social practices.

Furthermore, Munfarida (2014) identifies four values that must be understood:

First, the experimental value that shows the ideological footprint used by text producers in representing nature or the social. This experimental value parses the ideological meaning that is reflected in the text to be able to produce knowledge and beliefs in order to win ideological contestation and be publicly acceptable. The second value is the relational value which is a trail of social relations displayed in the text. One of the instruments that are often used in this value is a formality. The application of this formality then requires the creation of formality in social relations which then constructs how the social relationship should be working. The third value is the expressive value that can be traced through the expressive modality used by the text creator. The expressive value contained in the vocabulary used is related to ideological meaning and social identity. Therefore, each subject often chooses a vocabulary that can express ideological alignments. The use of different modalities marks the assessment and evaluation of different truths given by the speaker or writer. The fourth value refers to connective values that connect parts in the text. (Munfarida, 2014, p. 9–10)

CDA in Environmental Politics and Policy

Critical discourse analysis has been developed by various disciplines, and it, therefore, has developed into a diverse array of analytical approaches. However, Foucault's theory of discourse is an important foundation in developing this analytical approach. Foucault's concept of power in the context of discourse maintains that "power relations are reflected in language, but are not consequence of language" (Hewitt, 2009, p. 2). Hewitt (2009) explains that the use of Foucault's theory of power and discourse in public policy analysis has four characteristics. First are the considerations of government ideology and state bureaucracy. This analysis examines the activities of governments and those who

organise to rescind government actions. Second is the examination of the questions about policy decisions and control over the policy process to measure government legitimacy. Third is the examination of the complex elements within the policy process, from its formation through to its implementation and evaluation. Fourth brings an understanding of organisational theory and organisational sociology to analyse the complexity of institutions that represent state actions.

In the context of environmental politics and policy, Hajer (1997) defines discourse as an “ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorizations that are produced, reproduced, and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities” (p.44). According to Rydin (1999), environmental discourse encompasses a variety of arguments and perspectives, which give rise not only to ambiguity but also to debate. However, environmental politics allows the unification of various actors who actually have different orientations and modes of talking (Hajer,1997). The basis of this argument is a reflection of the structure of interests and power in society (Rydin, 1999). Furthermore, in terms of belief, Novikau (2016) notes that it is an imaginary component, in contrast to knowledge. Rather than describing a reality, a belief through the imaginary component tends to represent the interpretation of reality, ideal perceptions, hopes, and nostalgia. Hence, environmental policy and political discourse adopt these beliefs while representing the power structure (Rydin, 1999).

However, even though the elements within it are constructed and imaginary, discourse has the unseen power to discipline a society. Foucault (1970) argues that “in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed by a certain number of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality” (p. 52). This argument is then developed and deepened by Foucault (1970) with the concept of

“governmental rationality” or “governmentality”. Foucault uses the term “government” to describe an activity that can include four relationships, namely self and self; personal and interpersonal, involving aspects of control and guidance; social and community institutions; and the exercise of political sovereignty (Gordon, 1991). The rationality of government can be interpreted as a way or system of thinking about the nature of government practices in which these activities can be thought out and practised (Gordon, 1991).

Hence, inspired by the concept of "governmentality" from Foucault, Agrawal (2005) develops the term "environmentality" to analyse "environmental governmentality". According to Agrawal (2005), environmentality illustrates a framework for understanding the creation of new subjects in the environment through the use of “technologies of self and power” (p. 116). Foucault (1991) believes that the interaction of power, government technologies, discourse, and knowledge production can construct individual perceptions and actions to further organise themselves according to the perceptions and goals that have been constructed. Moreover, Agrawal (2005) argues that subjects are individuals who have been “environmentalised” by governmental projects, programmes, and processes. Thus, the orientation of individual or group actions towards the environment are mostly determined by how governmentality is carried out (Agrawal, 2005).

Given the complexity of the elements that exist within the politics of environmental discourse mentioned above, effective tools or frameworks are needed to describe the interaction between agency and structure including the interaction strategies used in order to create rules of domination. CDA is one way to uncover discourses related to the environment and natural resources. Feindt and Oels (2006) describe five reasons why CDA is useful. First, problems of environmental and natural resources can no longer be considered as outside issues that are “given”. Currently, environmental and natural resource governance issues are considered as outcomes of linguistic regularities that reflect a strategy of power and

knowledge. Second, CDA proposes a reflexive understanding of politics and enables the transformation of the practice of policy analysis. They believe that the limitations of environmental policy alternative may be understood through CDA because this approach provides space to study the impact of power generated by and built into environmental and natural resource discourse. Third, CDA provides insight into the process of the formation of subjects and objects in the discourse. This insight is important because the need to uncover environmental discourse requires the ability to describe the identity, expectations, and responsibilities used to discipline individuals and society. Fourth, CDA allows one to understand contestations over time and space. This approach introduces the concept of scaling which helps to explain political migration from national governments to multi-actor multi-level forms of governance. Fifth, the opportunity to democratise the naming process and produce an “environment” is possible through a discourse analysis approach. This democratisation is needed to deal with discourse through political institutions that create basic regularities, such as space, time, and scale, which tend to be complicated and biased (Feindt & Oels, 2006).

Hajer and Versteeg (2005) also describe the contributions of CDA to the study of environmental politics. First, CDA fundamentally respects nature as a contested notion. Hajer and Versteeg (2005) cited McKibben (1990) from his book *The End of Nature*, which describes virgin nature in partnership with society. Facing global pollution, the author is concerned with a “not-us” natural future that will not be able to survive (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005, p. 178). Second, discourses that form not only what can be thought of but also what cannot be thought of therefore can become precursors to policy outcomes. Hajer and Versteeg (2005) discuss Killingsworth & Palmer (1992) who succeeded in identifying the specific language of the campaign and ecological awareness in their work *Ecospeak: Rhetoric and environmental politics in America*. Third, CDA has a role as cultural politics that can analyse

bias in the discourse and practice of policy. For example, Dryzek (2013) argues that discourse can be used to understand the world and make it possible to compile bits of information in a coherent account (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005). Fourth, CDA operationalises the concept of governmentality from Foucault in the study of environmental politics. Foucault developed this concept to identify the emergence and distribution of power in three domains, namely the institutional concentration around the government bureaus, the creation of substitute instrumental knowledge, and the spread of the impact of power on society (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005).

Summary

This research has adopted a qualitative research design to enable a dynamic interaction between the research problem and the scholarly literature and to gain an understanding of people's behaviours and responses in complex environments without generalising to other contexts. In addition, the research data in this thesis includes both primary and secondary data. Moreover, CDA is utilised to deal with the three theoretical challenges of environmental-related policy issues, namely:

1. Although related to natural objects, environmental problems are actually the result of social construction.
2. The foundation of environmental policy is the contestation of concepts, meaning, and knowledge.
3. Environmental discourse causes not only material and power impacts but also the impact of material practices and power relations.

(Feindt & Oels, 2006).

Hence, Van Dijk (1995) explained that CDA “examines patterns of access and control over the context, genres, text and talk, their priorities, as well as the discursive strategies of mind control” (p. 24).

In the next section, I discuss the details of fieldwork and review the specific research methods that were deployed in undertaking this study.

Research Methods

This section begins with a discussion of the fieldwork that was carried out in Indonesia and then describes the methods used for primary and secondary data collection.

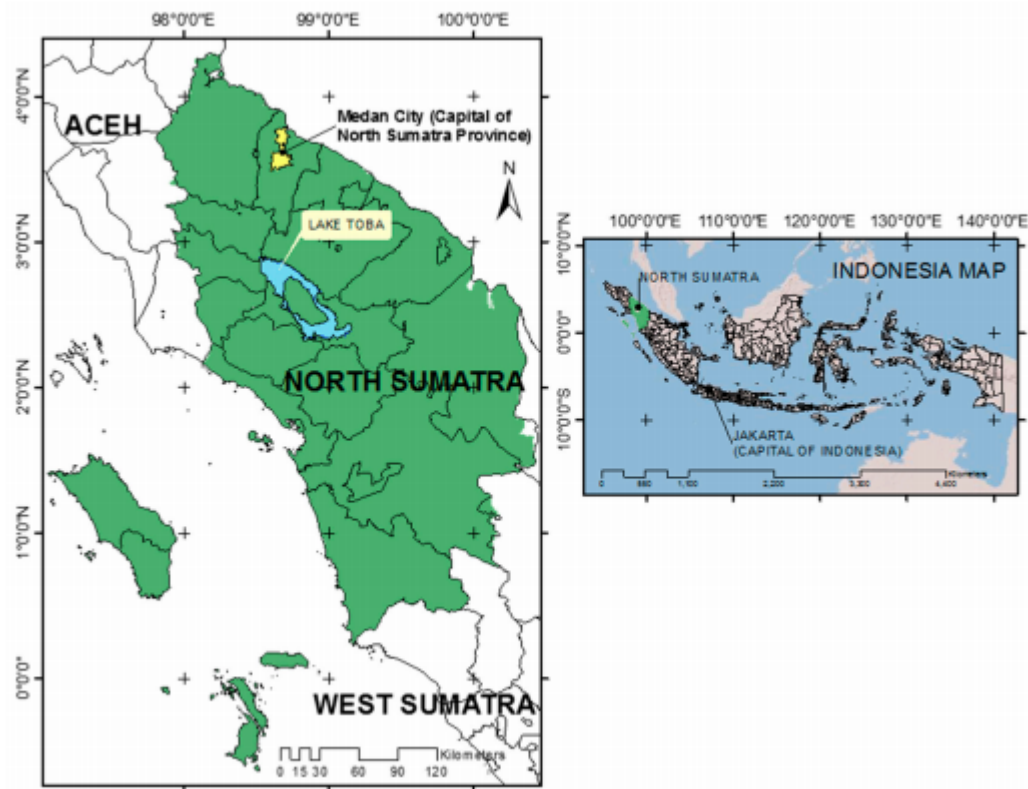
Context

Lake Toba is located on the north side of the *Barisan* hill, North Sumatera province and is recorded as the largest freshwater lake in Southeast Asia and one of the deepest lakes in the world, with a depth of more than 508 m (Kumparan, 2018, June 25). This lake extends from north to south, with a length of 100 km and a width of about 30 km, and the island of Samosir is in the middle.

In 2015, Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS), the central statistics agency, reported that the North Sumatera province was the fourth largest province in Indonesia with a population of around 14.7 million inhabitants consisting of 25 districts and 8 cities. Sigapiton Village is administratively located in one of the districts in North Sumatera, the Toba Samosir district. The total area of Sigapiton village is 920 hectares with a population of around 142 families, or 390 residents (BPS, 2015).

Figure 3

North Sumatera Province



Note. Retrieved from: <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/11/11/3024>

One of the largest tribes in North Sumatera is the Batak tribe. This tribe consists of several sub-ethnic groups such as Karo, Toba, Pakpak, Mandailing, Simalungun, Pardembanan, Mandailing, and Angkola (Viner, 1979). In the context of the Sigapiton village community, the descendants of Raja Na Opat, both Raja Bius, and Boru Bius, are sub-ethnic Batak Toba (KSPPM, 2019).

In terms of land governance, local communities have two systems of tenure (BRWA, 2019). First, the Tano Pangumpolan system in which land has been divided and owned individually or by families. Second, the Tano Ripe-Ripe system in which land is owned

communally, either by one clan or several clans. *Harangan/ tombak* (customary forest) is communally owned, in which all the primary clans have the right to take advantage of the natural wealth in the *harangan*, whereas the rice fields are divided based on clan.

Moreover, according to the KSPPM field notes (2019), in general, the Sigapiton community implements a spatial system by dividing the area into seven parts, namely: *parjombaan ni bulu* (village gate), *pakkaisan ni manuk* (front yard), *pangugean ni babi* (backyard), *parhutaan* (settlements), *parsobanan* (where firewood is fetched), *tombak* (forests), *tombak raja/ harangan* (protected forests/reserves, places to hold rituals, and as a source of water). Notably, regarding livelihood, the local community divides the area into four areas, namely *juma*, (paddy fields), *tano darat* (area covered planted with short-lived plants), *danau* (water sources and fishing grounds), and *porlak* (areas covered planted with coffee, candlenut, cloves, durian).

Additionally, in terms of the inheritance of land, as a patrilineal society (Bovil, 1985), the community implements the *panjean* system (first male child) and the *dondon tua* system (sons of the first child). Even though the position and size of the land obtained are based on the results of deliberations on the scope of the big family, the first son receives a larger share, however the inheritance for females includes access to a single piece of land and that will be shared with other females if they are married. Thus, the unmarried female does not get a share of inherited land. In addition, other tribes or clans are allowed to access land in the customary area as long as they obtain permission from Raja Na Opat. However, they are not allowed to get ownership rights (KSPPM, 2019).

Fieldwork

In this research, I did not visit Sigapiton village nor meet the local community directly. I conducted interviews in Bahasa Indonesia with several government institutions and civil society organisations (CSOs), located in Jakarta and its surroundings. The discussions and interviews were conducted over the course of one month.

Meanwhile, searching and collecting documents took more than four months. This process takes a long time due to bureaucratic constraints in government institutions. Also, the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to the inadequate work of the government bureaucracy because many government offices were not operating normally.

In-depth Semi-Structured Interview

The study undertook primary data collection through in-depth semi-structured interviews and participant observation. The semi-structured interview method was chosen because it allows informants the freedom to express their perceptions and experiences in their own terms. Through this method, the researcher takes an active role in listening, after asking a number of questions to participants. These questions are flexible, allowing discussion to explore certain points in the guiding questions that have been prepared (Longhurst, 2009). The theme of the interview questions varied according to the grouping of participants.

The interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia, and the transcripts of the interviews were carefully translated into English by the researcher, a native speaker of Bahasa Indonesia who also speaks English fluently.

Participants and Question Outlines

There were seven participants in this study. They are listed as follows:

Participant 1 - GOI-1

The participant is an official within the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (Kementerian Lingkungan Hidup dan Kehutanan/ KLHK). The interview focused on their views of nature and society and their strategy to convey that view to the public. The interview also addressed several points, namely the history of land and forest status in the Lake Toba, the role of the ministry in the Lake Toba tourism project, the ministry's responses to the resistance of local people to the tourism project, and the ministry's point of view regarding the tourism project.

Participant 2 - GOI-2

The participant was an official within the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy or Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif. The interview focused on their views of nature and society and their strategy to convey that view to the public. In addition, the interview also addressed issues relating to the background of the tourism project and its stakeholders, the role of the ministry, types of information that were provided to the local communities, the financing of the Lake Toba tourism project and revenue-sharing, the model of communication with the local communities, and the ministry's response to the Sigapiton residents' resistance.

Participant 3 - GOI-3

The participant was official within the BOPDT (Badan Otorita Pariwisata Danau Toba) or the Lake Toba Tourism Authority. The interview focused on the conception of environmental sustainability within the ecotourism scheme and their strategy to realise the concept. The interview also discussed the structure and responsibilities of the BOPDT, the

financing scheme and revenue-sharing, communication and relationships with the local communities, the role of local communities within the project, and the BOPDT's response to the resistance of the Sigapiton people.

Participant 4 - CSO-1

The participant was the representative of a civil society organization that advocated for the Sigapiton community's rights to land, namely Kelompok Studi dan Pengembangan Prakarsa Masyarakat/ People's Initiative Development and Study Group (KSPPM).

Participant 5 - CSO-2

The participant was the representative of the civil society organization that advocated for the Sigapiton community's rights to land, namely Sayogjo Institute (SAINS).

Participant 6 - CSO-3 and Participant 7 - CSO-4

These participants were the representatives of the civil society organization that advocated for the Sigapiton community's rights to land, namely Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria/ Consortium for Agrarian Reform.

The focus of the interviews for CSO-1, CSO-2, CSO-3 and CSO-4 were the same, namely how they dealt with and responded to the strategies of GOI-1, GOI-2, and GOI-3. However, the interviews also discussed other issues, such as their organisation's views on nature and sustainability, reasons for supporting the local community in Sigapiton village to fight for their land rights, field updates, the role of each organization in the advocacy process, and their organisation's strategy to counter the discourses from the government.

Secondary Data Analysis

In addition, secondary data in this research was drawn from three main sources, namely policy document analysis, literature review, and media analysis.

Document analysis

In terms of policy documents, a number of relevant official policies were identified, including:

- Government Regulation (PP) number 50 of 2011 concerning the National Tourism Development Master Plan for 2010–2025
- Presidential Regulation (Perpres) number 49 of 2016 titled Lake Toba Tourism Area Management Authority
- The Minister of Environment and Forestry Decree number SK.579/Menhut-II/2014 concerning North Sumatera province forest area
- The Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) decree number SK.92/MENLHK/SETJEN/PLA.2/2/2018 concerning the release of a convertible production forest
- The Ministry of Environment and Forestry decree number 155/MENLHK/SETJEN/PLA.2/3/2017 concerning land conversion between the main functions of forest areas
- The State Administrative Court's verdict number 244/G/2019/PTUN-MDN regarding the land disputed between the local community and the National Land Agency (BPN) together with the Lake Toba Tourism Authority Agency (BOPDT)
- The Minister of Agrarian Affairs and Spatial Planning decree number 70/HPL/KEM-ATR/BPN/2018 concerning land management rights for the BOPDT
- World Bank report no. PAD2756 regarding project appraisal document

- The Indonesian Constitutional Court verdict number 21-22/PUU-V/2007 which explained the rights to control by the state or *Hak Menguasai Negara* (HMN)
- The Indonesian Constitutional Court verdict number 35/PUUX/2012 regarding customary forests

Literature Review

A critical literature review of relevant scholarship on the topics of environment, natural resources management, and the discourse of conservation and sustainable development was undertaken (see chapter 2). There was a specific focus on research which had significant relevance to the Indonesian context.

Media Analysis

In terms of media and news articles, this study relied on local and national media (electronic and print) in Indonesia which reported and discussed the Lake Toba ecotourism project between 2015–2020. The timeframe of 2015–2020 was established as a base period to encompass the plan for national ecotourism project initiated by the Indonesian government.

There were 30 news articles analysed in the study. The national media referred to include the Kompas Daily, CNN Indonesia, Tempo, Kumparan, Republika, Liputan 6, Kontan, Detik.com, Mongabay, Warta Ekonomi, Berita Satu. Meanwhile, the local media consisted of Medan Tribun, Tagar.id, and PelitaBatak.com.

Ethical Consideration

The study was approved by the Human Research Ethics committee of the University of Waikato. In order to minimise any risk of participants, all respondents were granted the right to remain anonymous. An alpha-numeric code is used for referring to respondents, and the results have been written up in a way that will not reveal any identification information. The collected data is kept confidential and is accessible only to the researcher and supervisors. Data from this research will be stored for a period of five years at the University of Waikato.

Chapter 4

Actors and Events in the Lake Toba Controversy

Introduction

This chapter describes the actors and events in the unfolding controversy around three issues, namely, the facilities and infrastructure development for the tourism project, the livelihoods and socio-cultural contexts of local communities, and the resistance of local communities against the tourism project. It then describes the Indonesian government's tourism policies and strategy that form the background to the Lake Toba ecotourism project. This section tracks Indonesian tourism policies from 2009 to the current period, during the presidency of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2009–2014) and of President Joko Widodo (2014–2019 and 2019–2024). The final section then describes in greater detail the history of tenure rights at Lake Toba, particularly in Sigapiton village.

The chapter also draws on the analysis of interviews with participants, especially with the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, as well as of the State Administrative Court's verdict number 244/G/2019/PTUN-MDN regarding the land at the heart of the dispute between the local community and the National Land Agency (BPN) together with the Lake Toba Tourism Authority Agency (BOPDT). The analysis also examines other relevant policy documents as well as secondary sources, including academic scholarship and media reports. Overall, the chapter offers an in-depth look at the Lake Toba controversy.

Actors

In general, the actors involved in the Lake Toba tourism project consist of three groups, namely the government, the community, and investors. Each of these actors is described below.

Government

President

The Lake Toba tourism project is part of a national tourism project which was declared a strategic project by the president, and nationally titled the KSPN (national tourism strategic area) project. Since the beginning of the first period of Joko Widodo's regime, tourism development projects have become a priority. According to the Presidential Staff Office (KSP) document (2016), tourism was ranked third as a priority government program in 2015.

Given tourism's status as a national strategic project, the president is seriously mobilising various resources to accelerate its realisation. Various ministries are involved in supporting the tourism project. The roles and responsibilities of ministries, local governments, and state companies are divided into six development clusters, namely:

1. Coordination of destination development consists of the Coordinating Ministry for Maritime Affairs and Natural Resources and the Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs.
2. Destination development institutions consist of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, Ministry of Finance, and Local Government.
3. Providers of fuel oil and electricity consist of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, the Ministry of State-Owned Enterprises, and the State Electricity Company.

4. The construction of public facilities and area maintenance consists of the Ministry of Public Works and Public Housing, the Ministry of Communication and Information, the Ministry of Health, and the Local Government.
5. The construction of transportation facilities and infrastructure consists of the Ministry of Public Works and Public Housing, the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, and the Regional Government.
6. The preparation of tourist attractions consists of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, and the Local Government (Bappenas, 2016).

Also, as Fatkhurrohim (2019, December 2) notes, President Joko Widodo addressed the Indonesian Hotels and Restaurants Association (PHRI) and agreed to allocate a huge budget in order to accelerate the development of tourism destinations. On many occasions, the president has stated that the motivation to boost tourism projects is to increase economic growth. For example, during a cabinet meeting on 24 June 2015, the president said that "When economic growth is down, the one that can provide foreign exchange in a short time is the tourism sector" (KSP, 2016, p. 11). Moreover, the president argued that the tourism sector has the opportunity to become the largest contributor to foreign exchange, exceeding other economic sectors (Fatkhurrohim, 2019, December 2). Reported by the Ministry of Tourism, in 2018, foreign exchange earnings from the tourism sector was US \$17.6 billion, higher than from Crude Palm Oil (CPO) of US \$16 billion (Fatkhurrohim, 2018, December 21). In addition, Joko Widodo believes that strategic tourism projects will also be able to boost the community's economy (Kurniawan, 2019, October 5).

Similar to other priority programs, tourism development projects are also always narrated by the President and ministers as an implementation of the government's vision, namely,

Nawacita or the nine main programs. According to Syamsi (2015), Nawacita is a criticism of the development paradigm of the New Order (Soeharto era) which prioritised what was seen as a destructive and inequitable economic growth. The spirit of Nawacita is to emphasise the presence of the state and government in society, to expand equitable development, reduce the neglect of public services, build economic independence and maintain cultural values through mental revolutions and continue the restoration of the nation (Syamsi, 2015).

However, the implementation of the Nawacita by the Joko Widodo regime is believed to be prioritising infrastructure development (Puspita, 2019, February 9). Moreover, Joko Widodo is seen to be focusing more on commercial infrastructure development rather than basic infrastructure for the people (Puspita, 2019, February 9). The President is busy building toll roads, light rapid transit (LRT), mass rapid transit (MRT), but he has ignored infrastructure for people such as cheap houses, school buildings, and community health centres (Puspita, 2019, February 9). Furthermore, some economists have noted that Joko Widodo's infrastructure program does not have a good financing plan, causing overpricing, oversupply, and over-borrowing (Hidayat, 2019, March 29).

Responding to this criticism, Joko Widodo has argued that after the massive infrastructure development, the government will continue with the priority of economic empowerment (Nugroho, 2018, October 20). He has also stated that without the development of interconnected infrastructure, regions will not be able to grow their economies (Kurniawan, 2019, October 5).

Coordinating Ministry for Maritime and Investment Affairs

As stipulated in Presidential Regulation Number 49 of 2016, the Minister of Coordinating Ministry for Maritime and Investment Affairs is the chairman of the Steering Board of the BOPDT. The Steering Board plays a critical role in the Lake Toba tourism

project because it has the authority to set policies, synchronise the work of all ministries, provide advice or guidance, and oversee the implementation. The Minister, Mr. Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan (LBP), established two units to assist the work of the Steering Board, namely, the Expert Group and the Secretariat, and determined the structure and membership of these two units through Ministerial Regulations number 2 and number 3 of 2017.

LBP is a former military general, and a loyalist and supporter of Joko Widodo since the presidential campaign in 2014, who served as a minister for two periods, namely, 2014–2019, and 2019–2024. In 2014–2019, he held positions of Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs and Presidential Chief of Staff to President Widodo. Previously, in 1999–2000, LBP was Minister of Trade and Industry for Indonesia during President Abdurrahman Wahid’s administration and Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to Singapore.

LBP is also a successful businessman. The company owned by LBP, PT Toba Sejahtera, is a group of companies that does business in the fields of energy, electricity, mining, and oil and gas, as well as plantations and industrial plantations, and property (Utami, 2020, April 6). By sector, Utami (2020, April 6) notes that there are 16 subsidiaries, including the following:

1. Toba coal and mining.

There is a company called PT. Toba Bara Sejahtera Tbk. which also has a minority stake in PT. Rakabu Sejahtera (a furniture company owned by the Joko Widodo family), PT. Adimitra Baramata Nusantara has a 2,990-hectare mining concession, PT. Indomining has a mining land concession of 683 hectares, PT. Trisensa Mineral Utama has a 3,414-hectare mining concession and PT. Kutai Energi has a land concession area of 6,932 hectares.

2. Toba oil and gas

The company has a subsidiary company named PT. Energi Mineral Langgeng, which controls an area of 4,567 km², and PT. Fairfield Indonesia is a joint venture with a US company named Fairfield Nodal. In addition, through PT. Kabil Citranusa, PT. Toba Sejahtera, which has a minority stake in 147 hectares of industrial land that is designed to meet the needs of the gas and oil industry.

3. Toba plantation and forestry.

PT. Toba Bara Sejahtera controls the majority of the shares of PT. Perkebunan Kaltim Utama I, which has a land concession area of 8,633 hectares. PT. Toba Sejahtera is working with Wilmar Plantation to develop an oil palm plantation in Saliki, East Kalimantan with a land concession area of 5,759 hectares. There is also a subsidiary called PT. Adimitra Lestari which has a Timber Product Management Business License for 52,100 hectares of productive forest.

4. Toba industry.

PT. Smartias Indo Gemilang plays a role in the sale and distribution of electricity for housing provided by the state electricity company.

5. In the property and infrastructure sector there is PT. Toba Developer Sejahtera

6. Toba power

Panjaitan has a subsidiary called PT. Pusaka Jaya Palu Power which is the first private company in Indonesia to build a steam power plant.

In the context of the Batak Indigenous community, LBP is an influential figure in the Panjaitan clan as well as among the Batak community in general. For example, when Trimedya Panjaitan, who is also an important Indonesian political figure, was inaugurated as chairman of the Panjaitan clan in the greater Jakarta, he openly acknowledged that he had received the blessing of LBP (Santosa, 2020, January 26).

Therefore, LBP has the role of not only carrying out the tasks as stated in the formal policy but also mediating with Indigenous peoples around the Lake Toba tourism project, including the Sigapiton village community. For example, in September 2019, LBP brought BOPDT together with the Raja Bius Indigenous People to resolve land conflicts in Sigapiton (Bakkara, 2019, September 7). In addition, according to news website pelitabatak.com (2020, January 18), LBP also invited several community representatives from three villages, Pardamean Sibisa, Sigapiton and Motung, including representatives from the Butarbutar clan. During the meeting in Jakarta, LBP was angry at residents' representatives because the residents' opposition to the land issue that had hampered the development of tourism (pelitabatak.com, 2020, January 18). On several occasions, LBP also often advised residents not to be easily provoked (Bakkara, 2019, October 14).

Participant CSO-2 acknowledges the dominant influence of LBP in the Lake Toba tourism project. Local people believe that the tourism project is a project owned by LBP, so they do not dare to oppose it (Participant CSO-2). For example, everyone seemed to be compliant when LBP asked for 20 hectares of land for the development of a golf course (Participant CSO-2).

Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK)

The Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) has an important role in the management of natural resources in Indonesia because of its authority to regulate and issue all permits, both forest area utilization permits, as well as land use permits originating from forest areas, including the release of forest areas. Meanwhile, land outside the forest area is regulated and managed by the Ministry of Agrarian Affairs and Spatial Planning (ATR/BPN). The current minister of Environment and Forestry Ministry is Siti Nurbaya Bakar. She served as minister in the KLHK from 2014–2019 and has been reappointed for 2019–2024.

Bakar is a politician from the National–Democratic Party, and also a supporter of President Joko Widodo since 2014.

Historically, the ministry of forestry is a state institution that plays a role as a land provider. In the 1980s, according to McCarthy (2006), the ministry systematically compiled a set of geographical boundaries for forestry estate purposes. Through the establishment of forest area boundaries by creating regional spatial plans in provincial government offices, this institution retains its authority to determine the allocation of uses (McCarthy, 2006). At this stage, McCarthy (2006) refers to the practice of “institutional arrangements” as a set of rules arranged and used to regulate repetitive activities to influence others and reinforce their legitimacy. Hence, according to McCarthy (2006), the institutional arrangements in the context of forestry in Indonesia contains not only property rights but also a set of socially recognised rules governing work relationships, the acquisition of permission and concession, and access to markets. Furthermore, based on the map, McCarthy (2006) notes that the ministry would receive land conversion requests for many purposes such as plantation agriculture, and timber use permits, and enterprise use rights.

Before the era of President Joko Widodo, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry were two separate institutions. However, since 2014, the two agencies have been incorporated into one ministry named KLHK. The task of the ministry is to carry out the functions of formulating and determining policies, implementing policies, coordinating and synchronising the implementation of policies, conducting technical guidance and supervision, conducting research, conducting counseling, implementing substantive support, fostering and providing administrative support, managing state property/assets, and supervision of the implementation of tasks within the KLHK (menlhk.go.id, 2020). Out of the nine directorates-generals within the KLHK structure, there are two directorates-generals directly related to Lake Toba governance, namely, the Directorate-General of Natural Resource and Ecosystem

Conservation (KSDAE), and the Directorate-General of the Watershed and Protected Forest Control (PDASHL) (menlhk.go.id, 2020).

The primary role of KLHK in the Lake Toba tourism project was as a land provider.⁹ In 2012, KLHK received a request number 522/8787/2012 from the Governor of North Sumatera related to changes in provincial spatial planning (Zai, 2019, November 19). In response to the request, KLHK formed an Integrated Team (Tim Terpadu) to conduct a study focusing on two themes. First, the Integrated Team studied the changes in the function of protected forest areas to develop the Lake Toba tourism area. Second, the Integrated Team studied the change in the designation of production forest areas that can be converted for the development of the Lake Toba tourism area. The Team issued a report on the results of its study in 2012 (Zai, 2019, November 19).¹⁰

Furthermore, based on this report, KLHK issued SK.579/Menhut-II/2014 regarding forest areas in the province of North Sumatera. Through this decree, the Ministry categorised community land into forest areas without involving the community (participant CSO-1). Nevertheless, through the Decree of the Minister of Environment and Forestry number SK.92/MENLHK/SETJEN/PLA.2/2/2018, KLHK released 386.50 hectares of forest area to be converted into a Lake Toba tourism development area. Subsequently, through decree number 70/HPL/KEM-ATR/BPN/2018 on 20 December 2018, the Ministry of Agrarian Affairs and Spatial Planning (BPN) issued a certificate of management rights to the land released by KLHK for BOPDT (Imamulhadi and Kurniati, 2019).

⁹ KLHK also has the role of conducting environmental impact assessments and monitoring the consistency of the results of the assessments. However, KLHK acknowledges that coordination with BOPDT had not been running optimally (Participant GOI-1).

¹⁰ Although KLHK admits that the Integrated Team's report is a public document, it argues that the report is a process document that could not be shared with the researcher.

However, Padjajaran University law lecturers Imamulhadi and Kurniati (2019) consider that the policy on land conversion is contrary to the Indonesian constitution (Article 18b) and many other laws such as the Law on Environmental Protection and Management, the Law on Human Rights, and the Law on Village Governance. Imamulhadi and Kurniati (2019) also argue that the policy on land conversion violates the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Imamulhadi and Kurniati (2019) note that the land converted to management rights overlapped with 121 hectares of communal forest of the Raja Bius Motung Indigenous community, 28 hectares of Sirait Pardamean Sibisa clan land, and 120 hectares of the Bius Naopat Sigapiton Indigenous People and the Butar-Butar Sigapiton clan.

Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy

The Ministry of Tourism and the Creative Economy is one of the ministries that is highly prioritised by President Joko Widodo. The government seeks to boost the role of the tourism sector to contribute more to the national foreign exchange, replacing palm oil and the oil and gas sector (Imamulhadi & Kurniati, 2019). According to the Kantor Staff Presiden (KSP) or Presidential Staff Office document (2016), out of 335 priority programs in 2016, the tourism sector was priority program number four.

The current Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy is Wishnutama Kusubandio. He was appointed by President Widodo for the 2019–2024 period. Kusubandio's professional background was in the television and creative industries. In 2008–2012, Kusubandio served as Managing Director of a national television channel, named Trans TV. Furthermore, in 2013 he founded a new television channel called NET TV (News and Entertainment Television), where he served as president director from 2013–2019.

According to the World Bank Report no: PAD2756 (2018), one of the responsibilities of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy in the National Tourism Strategic Areas (KSPN) project is to promote local participation in the tourism economy with a budget allocation of US \$66.9 million. In this appraisal document for the KSPN (project ID P157599), it is stated that the key outcomes of this ministry consist of “(i) guaranteeing a continuous supply of relevant workforce skills for jobs in the tourism economy; (ii) supporting local firms to capture opportunities in the increasingly digitalised tourism economy; (iii) improving the quality of service standards among local tourism firms; and (iv) improving local community awareness (sadar wisata) and engagement in tourism development” (World Bank, 2018, p. 19).

The Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy is the Chief Executive within the structure of the Badan Otoritas Pengelola Kawasan Pariwisata Danau Toba (Lake Toba Tourism Areas Management Authority Agency). Moreover, based on the Regulation of the Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs and Investment number 4/2019, all BOPDT strategic cooperation must be submitted to the daily Chief Executive or Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy and then forwarded to the Chairperson of the Steering Board who is the Minister of Maritime Affairs and Investment. The ministry also carries out the task of inviting and opening investment opportunities. The Head of the Tourism Destination Investment Sector of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, Mugiyanto, said an example of commitment to advance Lake Toba tourism was by facilitating prospective investor meetings with local governments (Aprilyani, 2019, May 4).

Lake Toba Tourism Authority (BOPDT)

This institution was formed through Presidential Regulation (Perpres) number 49 of 2016 titled Lake Toba Tourism Area Management Authority. The composition of BOPDT personnel is 25 per cent from non-government officials and 75 per cent of civil servants (Butar, 2016, December 8). This organization consists of a Steering Board and an Implementing Body, known as BOPDT. Although the Implementing Body was formed by the government and is responsible to the President, this institution is not categorised in government institutions or state-owned enterprises. Based on its management method, this organization is called a public service body or BLU (Participant GOI-3). Five years after its formation, BOPDT is expected to be transformed into an organisation that manages a special economic tourism zone (Participant GOI-2). The transformation will be carried out by the government as in other super-priority tourism areas, such as in Mandalika. Through Presidential Decree (Kepres) number 46 of 2014, the Zone Council was formed as the organization that administers the Mandalika Special Economic Zone at the provincial government level (Hidayat, 2018).

The BOPDT is led by a president director named Arie Prasetyo who was formerly a member of the transition team of Joko Widodo and Jusuf Kalla (President and Vice President, respectively, in the period 2014–2019). Prasetyo is an architect by profession. As a president director, on his personal LinkedIn page, Prasetyo claims responsibility for the areas of implementation such as project planning, including land acquisition, permits, and licensing, and engagement with potential strategic partners (Prasetyo, 2020). He also mentions that he is responsible for coordinating with the government (ministries and government agencies), as well as managing international and local consultants (Prasetyo, 2020).

Moreover, according to the Presidential Regulation concerning the BOPDT, the Implementing Body has eight functions, namely (i) formulation of master plan, (ii)

formulation of detailed plan, (iii) implementation, coordination, synchronization, and facilitation of planning, development, and control, (iv) formulation of planning, development, governance, and control of the area, (v) formulation of development operational strategy, (vi) implementation of permit and non-permit services, (vii) designation of strategic problem-solving efforts, and (viii) other tasks determined by the steering board.

Furthermore, participant GOI-3 acknowledges that BOPDT is also involved in business. For example, in terms of managing the Toba Kaldera Resort, it collaborates with investors as tenants. Furthermore, it uses the money from the tenants to manage this area (Participant GOI-3). In addition, participant GOI-3 explained that BOPDT is similar to a corporation. However, since BOPDT is a public service agency, GOI-3 argued that his organization had no responsibility to take profits, but only to provide services. For instance, BOPDT offers services to encourage private sector investment. BOPDT also provides services for community economic development (Participant GOI-3).

In terms of investment, Prasetyo convinced investors to use the ecotourism approach. The statement was made by Prasetyo when signing an investment agreement with seven investors for the development of the Lake Toba tourism destination which was held in a series of events leading up to the IMF–World Bank Group Annual Meeting (Fadhilah, 2018, October 12). According to Fadhilah (2018, October 12), the investment agreement signed on 11 October 2018 agreed on an investment budget of US \$400 million in 77.5 hectares of land area. The government and investors committed to running the development process according to an ecotourism approach that preserves the harmony of nature, humans, and spiritual aspects (Fadhilah, 2018, October 12).

However, during my fieldwork, I found that since 2019, the Lake Toba tourism promotion no longer explicitly mentioned ecotourism. In an interview with participant GOI-

3, I asked for clarification on whether the concept or approach used to develop Lake Toba was ecotourism or tourism alone. Participant GOI-3 explained that he was not aware of the difference in the concepts. He said that they have promoted tourism from the beginning. He clarified that as Lake Toba has cultural and natural advantages, the principles of ecotourism are important for him.

Civil Society Organizations

Kelompok Studi dan Pengembangan Prakarsa Masyarakat (People's Initiative Development and Study Group) or KSPPM

This civil society organization was established on 23 February 1985, in Tapanuli, North Sumatera. The focus of KSPPM's work is research, community organising, and advocacy. Through their website (ksppm.org), KSPPM show their concern on issues of economic, social, and cultural rights, especially regarding Indigenous peoples and the environment (KSPPM, 2019).

Once KSPPM found out about the KSPN project plan, they analysed the potential impacts. According to participant CSO-1, they identified potential conflict areas through a map in the Minister of Environment and Forestry Decree number SK.579/Menhut-II/2014. KSPPM identified that several villages, including Sigapiton village, were likely to become involved in conflict due to their land or forest being included in the creation of tourism areas by the government (Participant CSO-1).

Therefore, before the government issued concessions to other parties, in 2015, KSPPM conducted an education campaign for the Sigapiton community about the status of their customary forest areas which were categorised as state forests to be used for tourism project development (Participant CSO-1). According to participant CSO-1, the government

was not transparent about zoning and tourism project planning. Participant CSO-1 mentioned that the government only communicates with the village government, without involving *adat*, or customary authority. The government tended to involve the formal authority of the village government who are not the descendants of the Raja Bius clan (Participant CSO-1).

KSPPM then organised and strengthened the capacity of the local community regarding customary land rights. According to participant CSO-1, KSPPM discussed with the Sigapiton community whether they wished to exclude their customary forests from the state forest area. Together with the Sigapiton community, KSPPM conducted a participatory mapping to identify the customary areas. Furthermore, the map along with the history of the origins of the Sigapiton Indigenous People became the document that was attached in the application for the release of forest areas submitted to KLHK (Participant CSO-1).

Sajogyo Institute (SAINS)

The Sajogyo Institute (SAINS) was established on March 10, 2005 as a centre for study and documentation of agrarian, poverty, and rural areas in Indonesia. The organization, based in Bogor, works to produce knowledge for social movements and seeks improvement of agrarian policies and rural development in Indonesia (Participant CSO-2).

In 2018, SAINS started advocating in land conflict cases in the village of Sigapiton. According to participant CSO-2, the involvement was triggered from the SAINS study on the KSPN (the National Strategic Tourism Area) project in three locations, namely Wakatobi (East Nusa Tenggara), Bromo-Semeru (East Java), and the Thousand Islands (Greater Jakarta). The study concluded that the implementation of the KSPN project was essentially a form of land grabbing using an environmental conservation cover, also known as green grabbing (Participant CSO-2). As the Lake Toba tourism project is part of the KSPN project,

KSPPM invited SAINS to discuss more deeply about land grabbing practices in the context of tourism projects. Furthermore, the follow up of the discussion was research training for KSPPM staff and joint research on ecotourism in three villages, namely Sigapiton, Sianjur Mula Mula, and Huta Ginjang (Participant CSO-2).

Participant CSO-2 explained that the motivation for SAINS' involvement in community advocacy in land conflicts was to carry out the organizational mandate. Since the organization's mandate is to advocate for rural communities, Indigenous peoples, and other marginalised groups, SAINS decided to become involved in advocating the Sigapiton village community (Participant CSO-2). The main role of SAINS in Sigapiton's community advocacy is to strengthen research-based argumentation. SAINS' research is expected to contribute to systematising advocacy knowledge to become an argument. Participant CSO-2 argued that SAINS can also play a role in providing methodological legitimacy because all SAINS research always uses academic methods. Furthermore, these results can be used as material for advocacy in front of various stakeholders (Participant CSO-2).

Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria (consortium for agrarian reform) or KPA

KPA was established on 24 September 1994, in Jakarta. The KPA website (kpa.or.id, 2020) on 9 July 2020 notes the consortium's members numbered 153 organizations throughout Indonesia with a composition of 85 community-based organizations or CBOs (unions of peasants, fisherfolks, and Indigenous peoples) and 68 non-government organizations or NGOs. According to the organisation's statutes, KPA has three functions (kpa.or.id, 2020), namely (i) as a reinforcer, empowerer, supporter, and agent of the struggle for agrarian reform based on people's initiatives, (ii) as an organisation that encourages the establishment of policies and agrarian systems that favour the people, as well as against

various policies that are against agrarian reform, and (iii) as an organisation that encourages, formulates and disseminates ideas and knowledge about genuine agrarian reform.

KPA has seven main programs, namely strengthening and developing organisations, advocating for policies, campaigns and studies, strengthening the position of the political role of KPA, raising funds for organizations, developing and structuring the National Secretariat and Regional KPA, and building and developing a collective economy (kpa.or.id, 2020).

According to participant CSO-3, the reason KPA became involved in advocating in the Sigapiton land conflict case was that the Sigapiton Indigenous People were supported by KSPPM, and KSPPM is a member of KPA. Participant CSO-3 added that KPA members in other provinces were also facing land conflict issues triggered by tourism projects. KPA members in the province of East Nusa Tenggara, for example, are also fighting land grabbing being legitimised in the form of tourism development in the Komodo National Park (Participant CSO-3).

The role of KPA in the Sigapiton community advocacy is a campaign at the national level. Participant CSO-4 explained that the campaign aims to raise public attention over land conflict cases in Sigapiton village. Furthermore, participant CSO-4 claimed his organization had held hearings with several ministries in Jakarta, such as the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK), the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, and the Office of the Presidential Staff (KSP). However, the response of these institutions is not yet clear enough. Participant CSO-4 noted that KSP stated that they would call several stakeholders to explain the core problem in the field.

Local Community

The local community, and especially women in Sigapiton village, were also important actors in the Lake Toba controversy. Media accounts of the controversy identified how the local community, and women in particular, played an important role in the struggle to defend their land rights. An example of their activism can be seen in their protest on 12 September 2019, as the momentum for land clearing was increasing, where they had a prominent role in defending their forests and land. Women led the protest, and in that incident, 30 women stood hand in hand to blockade police and excavators. They removed their clothing in protest as they clashed with the security apparatus (Rachmawati, 2019, September 14).

According to participant CSO-2, this type of protest was used by Batak women as a politically symbolic way to humiliate people who are considered to have crossed the boundary of violating customary law. In the same vein, participant CSO-1 argued that Batak women believe that land was an essential part of identity, as well as a condition for sustainability. This also reflected a concern about their children's rights to land in the future. Women were therefore leading agitators when confronted with the loss of land. Further detail about the role of women in the struggle over land rights is discussed in Chapter 5.

The Events in the Lake Toba Ecotourism Project

According to Hamad (2007), understanding the objective reality is essential to analyse how discourse is constructed. Such objective realities are embodied in things such as circumstances, objects, thoughts, and events (Hamad, 2007). However, this research uses the terms "events" rather than the term "objective reality" to describe realities. This research assumes that reality is a representation of inter-subjective creation. Inspired by Dryzek (2013) who believes that a reality can have various interpretations, the researcher also believes that,

although the meaning of events will always be subjective, the description of events may be illustrated objectively.

In terms of formal reality, on the one hand, there are some policies issued by the government that categorise the Sigapiton forest as a state forest. As described in chapter 4, formal policies have been issued by national and local governments, as a result of which the area categorised as state forest was then handed over to the Lake Toba tourism authority for further development. On the other hand, there is also a formal reality of the local Indigenous Peoples that categorises the Sigapiton forest as customary forest. These competing formal realities are described in this chapter as events and facts.

As discussed in Chapter 4, in June 2016, President Joko Widodo issued Presidential Regulation Number 49 in 2016 concerning the establishment of the Lake Toba tourism authority (BOPDT). According to GOI-3 in the interview, since its establishment, BOPDT has coordinated infrastructure development such as constructing the Silangit airport. Furthermore, on 31 July 2019, President Joko Widodo inaugurated a tourism site called the Kaldera Toba Nomadic Escape. Agriyana (2019) notes that this 386.7-hectare tourist area offers the sensation of camping with luxurious facilities such as tents, glasshouses, bubble tent, plazas, and an amphitheatre.

In the context of local communities, it is a fact that the Sigapiton villagers are very dependent on nature. They mostly depend on the forest, fields, and lake for their livelihood. This community also farms a variety of crops such as rice, sweet potatoes, corn, coffee, and incense. At the same time, they have fish cages in the lake to farm fish as well (Participant CSO-2). A civil society network that works with Indigenous people named BRWA (the Customary Territory Registration Board) states that almost all of Sigapiton local community needs are met from the forests, fields, and lakes (BRWA, 2019). According to BRWA

(2019), the food sources of the Sigapiton community came from local plants such as rice, cassava, corn, beans, fish, mango, durian, *jengkol*, banana, pineapple, chocolate, and kale. The BRWA (2019) noted, the local community also has various medicinal plants such as *sanggae* and ginger for headaches, soursop for gout, and turmeric and *paet-paet* for stomach ache. As a source of spices and seasonings, people have cloves, ginger, turmeric, cereals, galangal, candlenut, cardamom, onions, *andaliman*, and pepper. The harvests that are sold as income are onion, coffee, sweet potatoe, fish, candlenut, and corn.

In terms of spatial planning, according to BRWA (2019), Indigenous peoples in Sigapiton divide land uses into five types of areas. First, the *harangan* area where natural forests are planted with natural wood trees. Second, the *juma* area which is a rice field area. Third, the *tano darat* area, which is a field planted with fast growing plants. Fourth, the *huta* or housing areas. Fifth, the *porlak* area where the area is planted with cash crops such as coffee, durian, *jengkol*, and candlenut.

Participant CSO-2 assessed that due to Sigapiton's remote position the Sigapiton Indigenous People's livelihoods are more dependent on forest and lake than the communities at other villages surrounding Lake Toba. Therefore, the Sigapiton Indigenous People have strongly resisted the claim of control of the forest area by the government (Participant CSO-2). In addition to livelihood reasons, Bakkara (2019, October 14) reports that local people are also worried that the graves of their ancestors will be disturbed and damaged by the Lake Toba tourism project. However, during the interview the participant CSO-1 stated that people do not reject the development of Lake Toba tourism. The participant CSO-1 added that the community supports development programs by the government, including tourism projects, but people object if their customary land is claimed and taken over by the state.

Various actions to protect the customary forests have been carried out by Sigapiton villagers, supported by several civil society organizations such as KSPPM (the people's initiative development and study group), SAINS (Sayogjo institute), and KPA (the agrarian reform consortium). For example, on 12 September 2019, a clash occurred when the BOPDT wanted to clear land using a backhoe (Bakkara, 2019, October 14). When the community became aware that the forest would be cleared, the residents, especially the women, moved to block the backhoe. This led to clashes and resulted in several residents being injured (Bakkara 2019, October 14).

Responding to the clash, the secretary of the Toba Samosir district government explained to a journalist that those opposing the land clearing were not Sigapiton villagers (Rachmawati, 2019, September 14). However, according to Silalahi, the director of KSPPM, all the protesters were residents of Sigapiton village. Silalahi stated that KSPPM would legally prosecute cases of beatings committed by the police (Rachmawati, 2019, September 14).

Separately, some residents took legal action by suing the Ministry of Agrarian Affairs and Spatial Planning (BPN) for issuing land management rights certificates to BOPDT (Participant CSO-1). This topic will be elaborated further in the next section.

Indonesian Tourism Policy and Strategy

On December 2, 2011, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono issued Government Regulation (PP) Number 50, concerning the National Tourism Development Master Plan for 2010–2025.¹¹ According to the participant GOI-2, this policy steers the national tourism

¹¹ This policy is related to Indonesia's position as a member of the ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations). Earlier, in 2009, the Special Working Group on ASEAN Tourism Integration made a decision during its 9th Meeting in Phnom Penh to prepare the new ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan (ATSP) for 2011–2015 in

direction into two components, namely the development of DPN (national tourism destination) and KSPN (national tourism strategic areas). The DPN consists of 50 destinations, and the KSPN consists of 88 strategic areas (Participant GOI-2). Furthermore, the follow-up of this policy was a detailed formulation of a plan for six KSPN, consisting of Lake Toba (North Sumatera province), Komodo Island (East Nusa Tenggara province), Sanur Nusa Dua Kuta (Bali province), Bromo Tengger Semeru (East Java province), Toraja (South Sulawesi province), and Seribu Islands (The Greater Jakarta province).

Several government institutions were involved during the KSPN preparation, namely the Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Public Affairs, National Disaster Management Authority, Geological Agency, Tourism Promotion Agency, National Destination Governance Forum, and local government work unit (Participant GOI-2). Moreover, participant GOI-2 explained that the primary goal of KSPN is to develop national tourism, to have an essential influence on aspects of economic growth, social and cultural values, and to strengthen natural resources, environmental capacity, and defense and security. In October 2015, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy released a tourism program, named Program Pengembangan Destinasi dan Industri Pariwisata (destination and tourism industry development program). The program's purpose is to increase three strategic targets, namely the quality and quantity of tourism destinations, investment in the tourism sector, and the contribution of tourism to employment.

In 2016, President Joko Widodo issued a presidential decree number 3 concerning ten priority destination areas for the KSPN, consisting of Tanjung Kelayang (Bangka Belitung province), Borobudur Temple (Central Java province), Morotai Island (North Maluku

order to achieve the goals of the ASEAN Community in 2015 (Moenir, 2017). According to Moenir (2017), the ATSP became the foundation of the ASEAN Tourism Marketing Strategy (ATMS) 2012-2015, which was adopted by ASEAN tourism ministers in January 2012.

province), Komodo Island-Labuan Bajo (East Nusa Tenggara province), Wakatobi national park (Southeast Sulawesi province), Seribu Islands (Jakarta province), Lake Toba (North Sumatera province), Bromo-Tengger-Semeru (East Java province), Mandalika Lombok (West Nusa Tenggara province), and Tanjung Lesung (Banten province) (Cahyono et al. 2017). Hence, as mentioned in Chapter 1, these ten priority areas also known as “10 Bali Baru” (10 New Balis).¹²

Furthermore, during a cabinet meeting on 15 July 2019, President Joko Widodo asked for five locations to be developed as a priority (Participant GOI-2). This direction was then formally acknowledged into the strategic program of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy 2019–2024. The program document mentions that the national tourism project is going to focus on the five destinations, also known as the “five super priority”, comprising Lake Toba, Borobudur, Mandalika, Labuan Bajo, and Likupang. Moreover, the ministry also adopted five primary targets within the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) for 2020–2024, namely (1) increasing the foreign exchange and added value of tourism, (2) increasing the readiness of destinations, industry, and society, (3) improving the human resource capacity, (4) enhancing the environmental carrying capacity, and (5) improving the competitive tourism image of the archipelago (Kusubandio, 2019).

In order to accelerate the realisation of the super-priority tourism projects, the government established special agencies with cross-sector authority. In Lake Toba, through a presidential decree number 46 of 2016, the government established an agency named BOPDT or Lake Toba Tourism Authority. According to the Managing Director of the BOPDT Board

¹² However, on 17 January 2020, through a presidential decree number 18 concerning National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) for 2020–2024, President Joko Widodo revised those ten priority areas by dropping Seribu Islands and Tanjung Lesung from the list and adding Likupang Manado (North Sulawesi province) and Raja Ampat (Papua province). In addition, the government allocates IDR 161 billion for these ten priority areas.

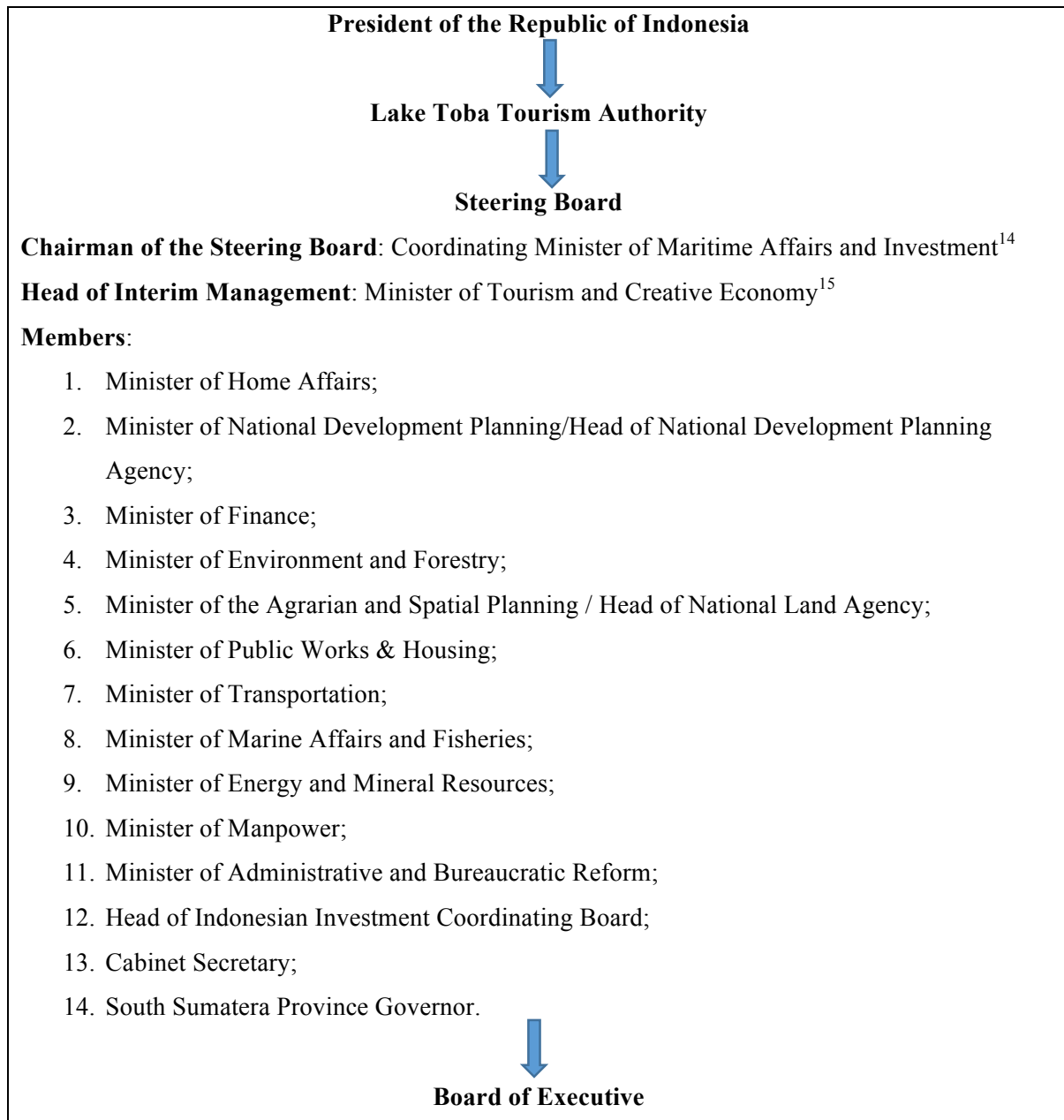
Executive, Arie Prasetyo, the BOPDT has three tasks, namely, formulate the Lake Toba tourism development plan, accelerate the coordination of the master plan, and manage the integrated tourism area on an area of 500 hectares (Batubara, 2016, December 16). However, participant GOI-2 noted that the BOPDT has authority over a larger area, namely, 602 hectares in Sibisa hamlet and 573 hectares in Flower Garden area. In addition, the BOPDT has a coordinative role in 300,000-hectare areas within eight regencies (Participant GOI-2).¹³

Figure 4 illustrates the structure of the BOPDT.

¹³ The eight regencies consist of Simalungun, Toba Samosir (Tobasa), Samosir, Humbang Hasundutan (Humbahas), Pakpak Bharat, Dairi, Karo and Tapanuli Utara.

Figure 4

Structure of the BOPDT



¹⁴ The BOPDT Steering Board is chaired by the Minister of Maritime Affairs and Investment, named Mr. Luhut Binsar Panjaitan.

¹⁵ In 2014–2019, the Minister of Tourism was Mr. Arief Yahya, who was replaced by Mr. Wishnutama as the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy for 2019–2024.

Regarding project acceleration, participant GOI-3 explained that the BOPDT focuses on three A's, namely attraction, amenities, and accessibility. In terms of attractions, BODPT promotes two things. First is the promotion of the history and natural beauty of the place. One of the efforts made by BOPDT is to register Kaldera Lake Toba as a global Geopark with UNESCO.¹⁶ Second is the promotion of local traditions and culture. In the hope of strengthening the local economy, BOPDT seeks to involve local communities around Lake Toba. Furthermore, concerning amenities, the government expects that the private sector will take on more optimum roles such as building restaurants, hotels, and souvenir shops.

With regard to accessibility, the cross-ministerial government work focuses on infrastructure which requires a huge budget for building roads and airport, as well as opening flight routes. According to the participant GOI-2, for these acceleration works, the Ministry of Public Works and Housing allocated IDR 2.52 trillion and the Ministry of Transportation budgeted IDR 1.06 trillion.¹⁷ In addition, the World Bank (WB) approved funding support for the development of Indonesia's tourism development infrastructure on 30 May 2018 (World Bank, 2018). The WB's report number PAD2756 mentions that they have committed to budgeting the US \$300,000 through project ID P157599 entitled "The Development Objectives of the Integrated Infrastructure Development for the National Tourism Strategic Areas Tourism Development Project for Indonesia" (World Bank, 2018).

Furthermore, since investment is an essential requirement for this tourism project, on 11 October 2018, BOPDT signed an investment partnership worth US \$400 million with some investors during the IMF-World Bank Annual Meeting in Bali. On this occasion,

¹⁶ The UNESCO Geopark is an integrated area that is identified as having geological heritage of international importance. At the field level, the process to register Lake Toba as a UNESCO Global Geopark has been followed by the installation of signposts at several points around Lake Toba. The installation provoked the anger of residents due to the signposts categorising community forests as geopark areas and forbidding residents to access those areas (Participant CSO-2).

¹⁷ Based on exchange rate in May 19, 2020, IDR 10,000 equals NZ\$ 1.12.

BOPDT convinced investors that the Lake Toba tourism project would use an ecotourism approach (Sinaga, 2018, October 12). Also, in terms of the state budget, participant GOI-2 noted that the government allocated IDR 404 trillion.

History of Tenure Rights in Sigapiton Village, Lake Toba

The Lake Toba tourism project is located in eight districts in the province of North Sumatera. This research focuses on one district, namely Toba Samosir (Tobasa), more specifically, on Sigapiton village. According to KSPPM (2019), BOPDT has managed 386.5 hectares in the Sigapiton village area, of which 120 hectares is a customary forest. The land acquisition triggered conflicts over tenure rights¹⁸ between residents and the government, especially Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) and Ministry of Agrarian and Spatial Planning or National Land Agency (BPN). The Indigenous local community claim that the 120 hectares of the land is customary forests, however the government argues that all BOPDT lands are state forests.

The history of the disputed land from the government version can be traced from a document produced by the Integrated Team's review of the Lake Toba spatial plan in 2016/2017. Through the review, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, together with a number of other institutions, had conducted an assessment of the various economic, ecological, social, and historical aspects of the area (Participant GOI-1). The result of the assessment then became the basis for changing the status of the area from the forest area to the non-forest area.

¹⁸ This research defines tenure rights as the systems that determine the access to and control over land and the resources it provides.

However, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (personal communication, April 2, 2020) refused to share the document with the researcher. Through a reply letter to the researcher numbered S/37/KUH/PPFKH/PLA.2/4/2020, the Ministry argued that the document of the Integrated Team report is defined as “a process document” and not categorised into the public information criteria. Therefore, this research used information and documents from other sources such as media reports and journal articles. In addition, several policy documents related to the history of the land, such as the Forest Areas of North Sumatera province and Medan Administrative Court verdict, were downloaded from the website of the state institution.¹⁹

According to the Medan Administrative Court’s verdict document (2020),²⁰ in the 1800s, a man named Ompu Ondol Butarbutar Sigapiton opened a village (*mamungka huta*) in the Sileang-leang hamlet of Sigapiton village, Ajibata sub-district, Toba Samosir district. Subsequently, in the 1890s, Ompu Ondol Butarbutar passed away and was buried near the Sileang-leang hamlet in Sigapiton Village. According to Batak customary law regarding *mamungka huta* (opening a village), Sipungka Huta (who opens a village) has the authority to determine the prevailing customs, rules of *partanoon* (rules of land) in the village *huta* area. The descendants of Sipungka Huta became the heirs of authority possessed by Sipungka Huta, known as Raja Huta. Currently, some of the descendants (*pomparan*) of Ompu Ondol Butarbutar still live in Sigapiton village (Medan Administrative Court, 2020).

¹⁹ However, there is a document that is not sourced from the official website of the state institution, namely the Decree of the Minister of Environment and Forestry number SK.579/Menhut-II/2014 concerning the Forest Areas of North Sumatera. This policy document is very important because it is the legal basis for the decision to change the status of the forest to a non-forest area and vice versa. However, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry was not willing to share the document with the researcher. This policy document was therefore downloaded by the researcher from the website <https://fliphtml5.com/ayua/khts/basic>.

²⁰ On 4 September 2019, three residents filed a lawsuit through the State Administrative Court in Medan district for the certificate of land management rights issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Spatial Planning (BPN) for BOPDT. This research uses a lot of information from the court's verdict (20 February, 2020), both from the perspective of residents as the plaintiffs and from the perspective of BPN and BOPDT as the defendants.

Furthermore, the Medan Administrative Court (2020) notes that on 1 February 1975, the Sigapiton people made a letter of agreement with the Government of Indonesia through the Government of the Province of North Sumatera to overcome a drought. The contents of the agreement were as follows:

- a) The community supports the Government's plan for reforestation;
- b) The government was obliged to make an enclave on the land;
- c) The land is managed by the Government and granted by the community voluntarily or without compensation;
- d) Land status remains as the customary property rights of the community.

In 1976, President Soeharto issued a policy called Presidential Instruction (Inpres) no. 8 of 1976 concerning greening and reforestation assistance programs.²¹ Subsequently, in the 1980s, the term *Tata Guna Hutan Kesepakatan* (TGHK) or Forest Land Use by Consensus emerged which encouraged the expansion of forest areas. As a result, many villages, including customary lands, had their status changed to become state forest areas (Nasichuddin, 2016).

In 1992, the Ministry of Forestry issued a Business Permit for Timber Forest Product Utilization (IUPHHK-HT). Nasichuddin (2016) notes that, in this year, a timber company named PT. Inti Indorayon Utama (PT IIU), which later changed its name to PT. Toba Pulp Lestari (PT. TPL), obtained a permit from the Minister of Forestry No: SK.493/Kpts-II/1992 for a 43-year period, starting June 1, 1992 until May 31, 2035. Through this concession, PT. TPL obtained access to 269,060 ha of land spread across 11 districts (Nasichuddin, 2016).

²¹ Reforestation defined as forest rehabilitation in state forest areas and other areas according to land use plans designated as forests. Greening is planting trees on vacant land outside the forest area.

At that moment, according to Nasichuddin (2016), local people did not realise that their customary lands had changed status to become state forest areas and been given as concessions to the company. Therefore, when the community realised this, they re-claimed the land and started to manage it again. Therefore, since 1992, the community has been controlling and managing the land. They plant several crops such as coffee, corn, chilies, candlenut, bananas, avocados, ginger, and potatoes. The community also farm several livestock (Medan Administrative Court verdict, 2020).

On 18 September 2012, the Governor of North Sumatera province sent a letter to the Ministry of Forestry number 522/8787/2012 containing a proposal to change the designation and function of the forest area and designating some non-forest areas to become forests. Following up on the letter, the Ministry of Forestry formed an Integrated Team to conduct a review of Lake Toba's spatial planning. As a result, on 24 June 2014, through the Decree of Minister of Forestry number SK.579/Menhut-II/2014, North Sumatera's forest area has formally changed from 3,742,120 hectare to 3,055,795 hectares. In this policy, the customary forest which was re-controlled by the community is categorised as state protected forest (KSPPM, 2019).

However, on 16 March 2017, the Minister of Environment and Forestry issued a decree number SK.155/MENLHK/SETJEN/PLA.2/3/2017, which changed the function of forests from a protected forest covering 386.50 hectares into production forests. Subsequently, on 15 February 2018, the Minister of Environment and Forestry issued a decree number SK.92/MENLHK/SETJEN/PLA.2/2/2018, which became the legal basis for the release of the production forest area for the development of the Lake Toba tourism area (Medan Administrative Court, 2020). Furthermore, on 20 December 2018, the area was released and formally entered into the jurisdiction of the BOPDT. Through the Decree of the Minister of Agrarian Affairs and Spatial Planning number 70/HPL/KEM-ATR/BPN/2018,

BOPDT obtained a certificate of land management rights covering an area of 2,789,928 square meters, including the customary forest at the Sigapiton village (Medan Administrative Court verdict, 2020).

Based on the land management rights certificate, BOPDT installed signs to mark the area under their control. The signposts state that the land is state owned and all people are prohibited from entering or utilising land without permission. The signposts also include the threat of criminal penalties for violating the ban. The installation of the signposts has further escalated conflicts with the local community. Residents had protested when they realised that the customary land was declared by the government as state land. However, the escalation had not yet peaked because at that time residents were still allowed to enter the disputed land. The conflict situation escalated when the disputed land was handed over to the BOPDT, and residents were prohibited from entering the area (Participant CSO-2).

Communally, the local community, who work as farmers and fisherfolk, accompanied by KSPPM (Community Initiative Development Study Group) fight through various demonstrations and dialogues. Some mobilization led to clashes with security forces. For example, on 12 September 2019, this group blocked the excavator that was clearing land. During the blocking action, around 30 women took off their clothes in protest. As a result, CNN Indonesia (2019, September 12) reported that the clashes happened and some residents were hit by apparatuses. A KSPPM staff member, Rocky Pasaribu, was beaten by a police officer, causing injuries to his left eye (CNN Indonesia, 2019, September 12).

Also, three residents registered a lawsuit through the State Administrative Court in Medan district on 4 September 2019. They sued the certificate of land management rights issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Spatial Planning (BPN) for BOPDT. Furthermore, through verdict number No. 244/G/2019/PTUN-MDN on 20 February 2020, despite rejecting

the legal standing of the plaintiffs, the panel of judges ruled that the 120 hectares of the forest now controlled by BOPDT are customary forests (Sinaga, 2018, October 12).

Summary

This chapter presented the actors, events and facts associated with the Lake Toba project. The actors involved in the Lake Toba tourism project include the state authorities, in this case, the representatives of the executive or government at the national level such as the President, the Coordinating Ministry for Maritime and Investment Affairs, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, and the Lake Toba Tourism Authority Agency. However, these actors are individuals and entities who also have certain interests and motivations. The findings show that these actors tend to use formal instruments, namely policies, through which they have discursively constructed their agendas. These instruments have portrayed the Lake Toba projects as an initiative to conserve nature as well as improve the economic welfare of local communities and foreign exchange. Furthermore, various events have arisen in conjunction with these policies such as the national tourism strategic program. The momentum was then followed up with the action on forest regulation and categorization in the project area that has been determined.

The actions of these actors faced reactions from other actors who challenged the discourse on the tourism project constructed by the government. These actors represent civil society organisations, consisting of KSPPM, SAINS, and KPA. These three organizations consider that the Lake Toba tourism project ignores and violates the rights of Indigenous people, who have lived and guarded their forest and lake for generations. The three of them also argued that the tourism project would only benefit investors.

As explained by Feindt and Oels (2006), public policy creates the social actors' arena for discourse contestation. One of the spaces that became the arena for contestation was the Medan State Administrative Court, which judges the land management rights of BOPDT. In its verdict, the panel of judges ruled that the 120 hectares of the forest now controlled by BOPDT are customary forests.

The next chapter turns to a discussion of perceptions and strategies for constructing and countering the dominant discourse of the state.

Chapter 5

Discursive and Counter-Discursive Strategies Around the Lake

Toba Tourism Project

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings as well as an analysis to answer the research question, namely, how the discourses of conservation and sustainability were deployed by the government in the Lake Toba tourism project and challenged by the local community. Firstly, I describe the tools and strategies used to construct a particular reality about the tourism project. I then offer an analysis of how the discourse on conservation and sustainability in the Lake Toba tourism project was challenged by the community.

Strategy and Tools in Discursively Constructing the Tourism Project

Selective Deployment of Institutional Arrangements

The initial strategy used by the government for the governance of natural resources in this situation was through the creation of new institutional arrangements. McCarthy (2006) explains that institutional arrangements require the existence of binding agreements and regulations to determine who has the right to and control over natural resources, as well as formulate their conditions to access it. Furthermore, McCarthy (2006) believes that these arrangements can construct relationships among individuals related to natural resources because the arrangements build the structure of rights and duties. The common form of the

institutional arrangements is the maps or spatial plans that are prepared and located in government offices, or described in a landscape (McCarthy, 2006).

According to Li (1999), the practice of the institutional arrangement in order to govern natural resources includes the development of the “forestry estate”. Hence, McCarthy (2006) argues that the development of the forestry estate is not only a process of "territorialisation" of land claimed as state forest but also a method to prepare land for when the state forestry institution receives land requests for certain purposes. In the context of the Lake Toba tourism project, the institutional arrangement process began when the government determined the category of state forests. There were several policies used for this institutional arrangement, such as Minister of Environment and Forestry Decree number SK.579/Menhut-II/2014 which includes customary forests as state forests. The policy was continued with a territorialisation process that resulted in a spatial plan document in the North Sumatera provincial government.

The categorization of state forests justified by the ministerial decree becomes a method to arrange land allocations for certain purposes. Therefore, when the president designated Lake Toba as a super-priority tourism location, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) issued decree number SK.92/MENLHK/SETJEN/PLA.2/2/2018 which stated that part of the state forest in Lake Toba was released and then allocated to the tourism development project. Subsequently, through the Decree of the Minister of Agrarian Affairs and Spatial Planning number 70/HPL/KEM-ATR/BPN/2018, the land was handed over for management under the BOPDT jurisdiction (Medan Administrative Court, 2020).

When the state succeeds in implementing an institutional arrangement, the government can determine the definitions of what is deemed legal and illegal in the context of natural resource management. In Sigapiton and its surroundings, by using the legitimacy of

the category of state forest, the government built boundaries of control over all the resources within it. These boundaries have been outlined in map documents and signs in the field. Furthermore, through these signs, the government symbolises its authority and determines the rules regarding the rights and the prohibitions.

According to participant CSO-1, in the early stages of installation, the sign was written on behalf of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry. On the sign was written, 'This is a forest area. Entry is prohibited' (Participant CSO-1). Furthermore, participant CSO-1 added, when the land had been handed over to BOPDT, the sign was also changed to display the name of BOPDT.

Figure 5

An Example of a Sign Prohibiting Access to Customary Forest



Note. Source: <http://aktualonline.com/view/Sumut/11356/Lahan-Kaldera-Toba-Mirip-Lokasi-Gembala-Kerbau.html>. Copyright permission requested.

In practice, the institutional arrangement uses policy and binding agreements as a tool which has coercive power. For example, the BOPDT sign refers to two articles of the Criminal Code (articles 385 and 551) that were used to keep people from entering their area of authority. Article 385 gives a threat of four years imprisonment, and article 551 of the Criminal Code threatens a fine of IDR 225,000 (Indonesian Criminal Code, 1946).

Use of Incentives and Disincentives for Development

In order to deal with community resistance to the Lake Toba tourism project, in addition to persuasive efforts such as conducting discussions and traditional ceremonies, the government also provides incentives in the form of infrastructure development and capacity building programmes. The government has offered many infrastructure development plans. For example, the Ministry of Public Works and Housing (PUPR) has projects to build roads, bridges, and revitalise public facilities, and the Ministry of Transportation has plans to build ports and airports (Participant GOI-3). The government expects that, through this infrastructure development, further cooperation will be established with investors (Participant

GOI-3). The government also argues that this tourism project contributes to access to clean water and electricity for villages around the BOPDT area.

In addition, the government also built the Kaldera resort for modern *glamping* (glamour camping) with luxurious facilities such as tents, glasshouses, bubble tent, plazas, and an amphitheater (Angriyana, July 31).

Figure 6

The Kaldera Resort Area



Note. Photo from Dewi Kartika (2020)

In terms of capacity building, the government provides scholarships to high school graduates to study at tourism schools in Bali (Participant GOI-3). Various types of training were also provided for residents, such as hospitality training for GoJek taxi partners (Participant GOI-3).

Alongside these initiatives, the government also sought to disincentivise or discourage citizen resistance. The disincentive has taken the form of a threat to deny the Regent's assistance funds. Participant GOI-2 explained that the denial would hamper financial assistance from the Regent. Another example of these disincentives was the threat to

terminate infrastructure development projects such as roads. The road construction project was continued when the village head sent a letter to BOPDT signed by all villagers (Participant GOI-3).

Promotional Campaigns in Support of the Lake Tourism Project

The two institutions that most often promote Lake Toba tourism are the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy and the BOPDT. Participant GOI-2 claimed that the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy are intensively promoting five super-priority tourism destinations, including Lake Toba both online and offline.

The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy optimised its website, which is www.kemenpar.go.id, by creating content and uploading information about the tourism project. According to the participant GOI-2, the Ministry also actively uses social media such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Especially for Instagram, they routinely upload posts that contain government tourism promotion. In offline media, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy often produces infographics, advertisements on television, newspapers, and other print media.

Meanwhile, BOPDT tends to involve local people directly. According to Participant GOI-3, BOPDT recruits local people as representation of BOPDT to conduct discussions and dialogue with community. Participant GOI-3 believes that this approach proved effective because psychologically the implementation of tourism projects became part of them.

I now turn to the analysis of two issues used in the Lake Toba tourism project promotion campaign, namely environment (nature conservation) and socio-economic welfare.

Environment

There is a perception that before the tourism project was carried out, efforts to protect the environment were only conducted by the government. Participant GOI-2 argued the following:

'Dengan kita jadikan dia sector pariwisata berkembang, masyarakat itu justru ada kesadaran untuk melakukan proses konservasi, yang tadi hanya dilakukan oleh pemerintah'

[Due to our development in the tourism sector, the community will become aware of the conservation process, which was previously only carried out by the government].

However, the Lake Toba tourism promotion campaign has only used ecological terms a few times. The terms and themes of nature sustainability such as conservation and ecotourism only exist in the planning and initial preparation stages of a project. For example, a document from The Ministry of National Development Planning on 11 March 2016, stated that the core product of the Lake Toba destination is “ecotourism” in order to claim that the government is prioritising both economic development and conservation (Bappenas, 2016).

The conservation terms and the ecotourism concept were also mentioned in the Ministry of Environment and Forestry document entitled “The Masterplan for the Development of Nature Tourism in the Conservation Areas 2018–2078”. The document is a guideline for the effectiveness and efficiency of the management and development of natural tourism in conservation areas, including Lake Toba (Avenzora et al., 2018).

Ecological terms were also stated in a few certain events. For example, the commitment to ecotourism was conveyed by the Director of BOPDT, Arie Prasetyo, to investors on October 11, 2018, in Bali along with the Annual Meetings of the Boards of

Governors of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group (WBG). Prasetyo explains that BPODT ensures development with an ecotourism approach, namely development that preserves the environment, development that involves socio-economic empowerment of communities around Lake Toba, and development that maintains local wisdom and traditions of local cultural heritage (Fadhilah, 2018, October 12).

Furthermore, the promotion of conservation and nature sustainability was also used to register the Lake Toba as a UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG). Participant GOI-2 argued that the recognition of the Lake Toba as a geopark is an implementation of sustainable conservation tourism. In the same vein, Coordinating Minister for Marine Affairs Luhut B. Pandjaitan stated that “Geopark can be an alternative solution for the use of natural and cultural wealth for economic revival and social empowerment that continues to promote conservation and environmental protection” (Imran & Soedarsono, 2019, p. 178).

Based on these facts, it can be concluded that the terms “conservation” and “sustainability” are only used at certain times to target groups with specific goals. For example, the statement of the Director of BOPDT to use the ecotourism approach in the Lake Toba tourism project, in the context of its momentum, was in a forum in the series of Annual Meetings of the IMF and the World Bank Group that discussed the issue of sustainable development. The target recipients of these messages were the investors who attended the forum on October 11, 2018 (Fadhilah, 2018, October 12).

However, during the research interview, the BOPDT Director stated that he was not aware of the difference between tourism and ecotourism in the Lake Toba project. He believed that from the beginning the concept was tourism. However, because Lake Toba has cultural and natural advantages, the principles of ecotourism will also be taken into consideration (Participant GOI-3).

Social and Economic Welfare

Since its inception, social and economic welfare is the narrative most often conveyed in promoting the Lake Toba tourism project. Furthermore, the two terms that are always used for framing the narrative are “increasing income or revenue” and “employment absorption”. For example, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy argues that tourism projects, including in Lake Toba will increase regional income and labour absorption (Participant GOI-2). The revenues of the districts around Lake Toba for 2016–2017 experienced a total growth of 79% (Participant GOI-2). Furthermore, the Director of BOPDT hopes that job creation will absorb the local workers so that tourism projects can benefit the community around tourism sites (Participant GOI-3).

In the context of the development of the Lake Toba tourism project, the government claims to involve various interests during its planning and implementation, including the local community. According to participant GOI-3, BOPDT often holds meetings with residents to disseminate information and discuss tourism projects. The participant GOI-3 expected the project will benefit the surrounding community. In the same vein, Participant GOI-2 claims that the community participated in the implementation of the FGD (focus group discussion) related to Lake Toba destinations. In addition to being involved in discussions, the FGD also became a forum for information for local people (Participant GOI-2). The initial assessment process by the integrated team under the KLHK also paid attention to the social aspects of the community (Participant GOI-1).

However, several civil society organizations consider that the government does not consider Indigenous peoples. Participant CSO-1 stated that the government communicated mostly with the head of village and ignored the Raja Bius clan decedents. Participant CSO-1 also considered that the government was not open to the planned tourist projects that would run. For example, without explaining the tourism development project, the government

installed signs in the forest with the inscription that the land would be used for development, and people were prohibited from entering. Participant CSO-3 added that when the government built a homestay in the Kaldera area, there were no discussions with residents first. Similarly, participant CSO-2 argued that the project was top-down, and community involvement was minimal.

Regarding who benefits from the Lake Toba tourism project, Participant CSO-1 explained:

Yang diuntungkan dari proyek ini adalah investor, makelar tanah, dan pemilik modal. Para makelar ini datang dari kota, parapat dan jakarta, untuk membeli tanah di sekitar kawasan BOPDT. Sementara yang dirugikan adalah masyarakat adat karena hak atas tanahnya terancam, akses terhadap nilai adat semakin terbatas, dan sumber air minumnya terancam. Mereka berada di lembah, jadi sumber air minumnya berasal dari hutan di atas, bukan dari Danau Toba.

[The beneficiaries of this project are investors, land brokers, and capital owners. These brokers come from cities, Parapat and Jakarta, to buy land around the BOPDT area, while the losers are Indigenous peoples because their land rights are threatened. Access to customary values is increasingly limited, and drinking water sources are threatened. They are in the valley, so the source of drinking water comes from the forest above, not from Lake Toba.]

However, Participant CSO-1 does not deny that there are Sigapiton residents who will benefit from the Lake Toba tourism project. Some young families who previously lived outside the village and did not have emotional ties to the land or lake hoped to work on a tourism development project (Participant CSO-1). The participant CSO-1 explained:

Tapi keluarga-keluarga muda ini hanya sekitar 30%, selebihnya sudah lanjut usia yang bekerja sebagai petani. Kenapa sebagian besar masyarakat tidak setuju proyek pariwisata? Karena orang-orang tersebut merasa pariwisata jauh dari penghidupan mereka sebagai petani.

[But these young families are only around 30%. The rest are elderly who work as farmers. Why do most people disagree with this tourism project? Because these people feel that tourism is far from their livelihood as farmers.]

Moreover, participant CSO-1 explained that the village of Sigapiton is an isolated area. Therefore, the local community welcomed the development plan (especially road infrastructure) by the government, but they wanted state recognition of customary land so that there would be respect for their rights (participant CSO-1).

Based on the facts above, it can be concluded that the concept of social-economic welfare projected by the tourism project on Lake Toba is a state construction that is based on the assumption of opening up employment, improving infrastructure development, and increasing foreign exchange.

Hence, the concept of welfare constructed by the state is a transformation from the agriculture and forestry sectors to the service sector. The projection of the transformation direction can be indicated from two trends, namely the type of capacity building (training) provided to the community and the state institutions that work as agents in the field. In terms of capacity building, some of the training provided to the community is hospitality-related capacity such as lodging, food and beverage, travel, and recreation.

Differently, support for strengthening and developing the agricultural and forestry sectors is considered insufficient. One indicator is the absence of the involvement of the Ministry of Agriculture during the process of preparing or implementing the campaigns.

To sum up, in the construction process, the state builds access while simultaneously making exclusions. As defined by Ribot and Peluso (2003), access is the ability to benefit from something that contains the meaning of a bundle of power, which is in contrast to property that implies a bundle of rights. In the context of the Lake Toba tourism project, on the one hand, the government opens up opportunities for several interest groups to get benefits even though they do not have legitimate rights. On the other hand, groups of people who cannot live in the constructed space (in the tourism services sector), will be excluded despite having the legitimacy of customary rights.

Counter-Discourses Used by the Community

In this section, the discussion of a counter-discourse strategy focuses on the strategies and actions of three civil society organizations, namely KSPPM, SAINS, and KPA. Some actions have also been taken directly by the local community without being accompanied by the organizations.

Counter-Discourse of Nature

Since KPA defines agrarian as earth, water, and air, therefore they perceive the nature and environment as part of an agrarian system. Through this perspective, the KPA describes the environment as an ecosystem that contains land and its wealth, both below and above its surface (Participant CSO-3). Moreover, as an ecosystem, the relationships within it are unified (Participant CSO-3).

In the same vein, KSPPM believes that humans and the environment have an interdependent relationship. Therefore, development must not be exploitative, and all human actions must take into account the environment for future sustainability (participant CSO-1). Furthermore, participant CSO-1 considers that conservation practices carried out by the government are merely symbols. For example, when the government uses the discourse of environmental protection, the practice that is carried out is a tourism project that does not address the environmental problem itself.

Government conservation practices are also criticised by SAINS. According to participant CSO-2, the dominant conservation practice in Indonesia is preservation which prioritises the preservation and care of endangered species. Participant CSO-2 suspects that the influence of the conservation approaches such as the “Yellowstone National Park” from the US is still a strong reference for the Indonesian government, where the conservation paradigm negates the presence of humans in areas declared as national parks. Participant CSO-2 argued the following:

Karena tidak ada dimensi social yang kuat, implikasinya banyak konflik. Konflik tertinggi dalam kawasan hutan di Indonesia itu banyak di kawasan konservasi

[Due to less attention to social aspects, the implications are many conflicts. The highest conflicts in forest areas in Indonesia are in the conservation areas]

Hence, Participant CSO-2 also criticises the concept of sustainability as articulated by the government. According to participant CSO-2, the government only refers to the fulfilment of three elements, namely social, economic, and ecological. When the three elements are fulfilled, the government believes the concept of sustainability has been implemented despite

conflicts between the elements. In fact, according to participant CSO-2, other ideas are available as alternative concepts of economic growth.

Based on the assumptions and perceptions of nature and development, it can be concluded that the three organizations reflect the discourse of green politics. Dryzek (2013) explains that the green politics group believes that ecological crises are only usually overcome by political action and structural change. This discourse will construct nature as a complex ecosystem and has links with social, economic, and political structures (Dryzek, 2013). In terms of relationships with nature, this discourse assumes that there are complex interconnections between humans and nature (Dryzek, 2013).

The Campaign Against the Lake Toba Tourism Project

In the context of the campaign against the Lake Toba project, the term that is used to contest the government campaign is “green grabbing”. In terms of challenging Lake Toba's ecotourism discourse, the three organizations state that the KSPN tourism project, including Lake Toba, is an embodiment of land grabbing under the cover of environmental conservation and welfare. Participant CSO-1 argues that the takeover of customary land began when suddenly the customary land of Raja Bius clan was put into the category of state forest. Furthermore, an indication of the government's seriousness to take over the land was seen when the government installed signs that refer to the land as forest area, and the community was prohibited from entering (participant CSO-1).

Participant CSO-3 adds:

Ini perampasan tanah model baru dengan soal pariwisata. Memangnya kita butuh Bali Baru?

[This is a new model of land grabbing with tourism. Do we need The New Bali?]

Participant CSO-2 explains:

'Yang ada di danau toba itu salah satu contoh modus baru masyarakat tereksklusi, dikeluarkan atau dicerabut dari tanah dan ruang hidupnya dengan isu ekowisata. Atau yang kita sebut ini green grabbing. Green grabbing itu di luar sudah menjadi satu diskursus penting, tapi di Indonesia masih belum menjadi hal yang public luas tahu karena belum ada riset-riset yg menunjukkan bukti empirisnya.

[The fact (state action) in Lake Toba is an example of a new model of community exclusion, with people excluded from land and living space based on the issue of ecotourism. Or what we call green grabbing. Green grabbing outside has become an important discourse, but, in Indonesia, it is not yet a matter of public knowledge because no research shows empirical evidence]

Therefore, in the initial stage, SAINS together with KSPPM undertook research on Lake Toba tourism projects in three villages namely Sigapiton, Hutaginjang, and Sianjur Mula-Mula (Participant CSO-2). The research found that the ecological defence and the neglect of the local knowledge system also threatens social and ecological crises. For example, despite being rejected by residents, the construction of cottages on community water sources was still being carried out (Participant CSO-2).

According to participant CSO-2, these studies are used as a basis for argumentation when conducting further advocacy and campaigns. Participant CSO-2 claims that the results

of his research have legitimacy because they use academic methodology. Participant CSO-2 says:

Jadi nanti melalui riset kita itu sebenarnya tugasnya menstrukturkan, mensistematisir pengetahuan-pengetahuan advokasi mereka agar menjadi argumen tanding. Di beragam level.

[So later, through our research, it is actually the task of structuring and systematising their advocacy knowledge so that it becomes a counter-argument, at various levels]

According to participant CSO-2, in terms of campaign material, SAINS delivered three substantive points for their message. First is the narrative about the rules of the people for development. In the illustration, SAINS emphasised that development must pay attention to the models and methods that will be accepted by the community. The narration was built to counter the discourse that the people are against development. Second is a description of who benefits and who loses when the development is carried out. Third is an early warning about the harmfulness of unfair development policies (CSO-2).

Furthermore, the results of the research were disseminated by SAINS in various workshop forums, workshops, and seminars. Participant CSO-2 said that he had presented the results of the research in a number of state institutions, including the Ministry of National Development Planning, the Presidential Staff Office, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, the Ministry of Agrarian and Spatial Planning, and the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy. In addition, SAINS also uses newspapers, both print and electronic, as a dissemination medium (Participant CSO-2).

Meanwhile, the KPA uses popular media, namely, infographics and videos to disseminate counter ecotourism discourses. According to participant CSO-4, through these

media, the organization promotes citizens' testimonials to illustrate how the impact of tourism development projects on the communities around Lake Toba.

Hence, KSPPM, as a consortium member of KPA, tends to optimise social media, especially Facebook to publish field conditions updates. According to Participant CSO-1, beside the organization's website, Facebook is more effective in disseminating information from the field than the local mainstream media, whose coverage is often biased and tends to discredit the local community. Therefore, KSPPM also often uses mainstream media at the national level to minimise the potential for reporting bias and to reach a wider public.

According to participant CSO-1, KSPPM campaigns are an effort to counter the BOPDT and government discourse and messages about welfare. The text presented below is an explanation to the public about the state's responsibility to recognise and protect the rights of Indigenous peoples to their land and natural resources. The explanation is also to refute the stigma that the community is against development. Participant CSO-1 argues the following:

Apapun pembangunan itu harus mengdepankan FPIC (Free, Prior and Informed Consent), jadi berikan ruang dan informasi sebanyak-banyaknya kepada masyarakat, sehingga masyarakat memutuskan; menerima atau menolak pembangunan itu sendiri. Jadi jangan sampai masyarakat adat dan petani yang tergusur dengan alasan pembangunan dan kesejahteraan itu.

[Whatever the development, it must prioritise FPIC²² (Free, Prior and Informed Consent) to give as much space and information as possible to the community, so the community decides, accepts or rejects the development itself. So do not let the

²² FPIC is a framework instrument to fulfil, to protect, and to respect human rights, which has been recognised by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). This instrument provides space for local communities or Indigenous communities to give or withhold consent of a project that has the potential to affect them or their living space. Moreover, this instrument also allows the communities to discuss how a project is planned, implemented, monitored, and evaluated.

Indigenous peoples and farmers be displaced by the reasons for development and prosperity]

The campaigns target two groups, namely the public and policy makers. At the public level, participant CSO-1 hopes that the information provided can present facts from the field to change public perception, as well as garner support and expand social movements. At the policy-making level, real field facts can be known so as to refute information from other sources which claim that there is no issue in Sigapiton, and land clearing has been completed properly.

Women's Fight for Land Rights

As a patrilineal society, Batak women do not have land rights. However, participant CSO-2 explains that the segregation of domestic roles and public roles based on gender is not too obvious among middle and poor economic households. Both men and women work in the fields and fish cages (Participant CSO-2). In terms of domestic work at the household level, according to participant CSO-2, men and women take turns doing it, depending on who has the chance. Participant CSO-2 said,

Tergantung struktur ekonomi keluarganya, kalo keluarga itu bangsawan, biasanya perempuan ada pembagian (peran) domestic dan public. Tapi yang kita teliti kan kebanyakan masyarakat desa, dengan penghasilan miskinlah. Nah, di level rumah tangga (ekonomi) menengah dan miskin ini, tidak pembagian publik dan domestik'

[Depending on the economic structure of the family, if the family is noble, usually women have a specific division (role)—division of labour—in the domestic and public spheres. But we research mostly villagers with poor incomes. So, at this level of middle and poor households, there is no public or domestic division of labour.]

At the community level, women's groups have an important role in the struggle to defend their land rights. On many occasions, they have taken on the key role of defending their forests and land, as was seen in the rejection of land clearing on 12 September 2019. In that incident, a group of women stood hand in hand to blockade police and excavators that were to be used to clear the land in order to build a road from the Nomadic Kaldera Toba Escape towards Batusilali. The women also undressed and clashed with the security apparatus (Rachmawati, 2019, September 14). As a result, the action stopped the land clearing process for a while, but the excavator returned to work (Rachmawati, 2019, September 14).

Figure 7

Women Block the Excavator During Land Clearing



Note. Photo retrieved from

<https://www.facebook.com/100003622843732/videos/pcb.1694097930720952/1694094600721285/>
<https://www.facebook.com/100003622843732/videos/pcb.1694097930720952/1694094600721285/>

According to participant CSO-2, this is the last resistance as well as a political symbol of the Batak people to humiliate people who are seen to have violated customary law.

Participant CSO-2 explains:

Dalam kasus Sigapiton, menurutku ini lebih pada politik simbolik adat. Yang itu memalukan kalau Mamak-Mamak sudah maju, kalau proyek masih diteruskan, kamu menyalahi adat istiadat, kira-kira begitu.

[In the case of Sigapiton, in my view, this is more about customary symbolic politics. That one was embarrassing if the mothers just move forward. If you continue the project, you have violated your customs, something like that]

Participant CSO-1 added Batak women believe that land is part of the community's identity, as well as a condition for survival and sustainability. Therefore, women are the most agitated group if they lose land. Participant CSO-1 explains:

Mereka [perempuan] lebih memikirkan apa yang akan dimiliki oleh anak-anaknya dibandingkan dengan laki-laki. Makanya, di Sigapiton ketika laki-laki sudah mulai goyang, meminta ganti rugi atas pengambilan tanahnya, perempuan akan selalu mengingatkan bahwa bukan uang yang kita perjuangkan, tapi tanah untuk generasi yang akan datang. Namun dalam sistem kepemilikan tanah, Batak menganut patriarki. Jadi perempuan sebagai ibu selalu memperjuangkan tanah untuk anaknya. Terutama jika punya anak laki-laki, mereka akan lebih gigih berjuang.

[They [women] think more about what their children will have, compared to men. Hence, in Sigapiton when men have begun to falter, asking for compensation for the taking of their land, women will always remind us that it is not the money we are fighting for but the land for future generations. But in the system of land ownership,

the Batak adheres to patriarchy. So, women as mothers always fight for the land for their children. Especially if you have a son, they will be more persistent.]

Based on that facts above, it can be seen that women have a strategic point of view about nature and environmental sustainability. They are considering the future of their children in relation with nature, especially forest and land. This group also demonstrates a spirit of endurance in defending their rights because of their deep-rooted belief that there is no separation between nature and culture. They believe that land and forests are the reflection of their identity.

Summary

The initial strategy used by the government for the governance of natural resources was the creation of a set of institutional arrangements that required binding agreements and regulations to determine who had the right to and control over natural resources, as well as their conditions of access to those resources. The common form of the institutional arrangements has been the use of maps or spatial plans that were prepared and located in government offices, or described in a landscape. The implementation of these institutional arrangements as the strategy to govern natural resources in Indonesia has mostly been carried out through the development of “forestry estate”. The strategy of "territorialisation" and land banking in the forestry estate is a way of having land available for when the state forestry institution receives land requests for certain purposes. In the context of the Lake Toba tourism project, the institutional arrangement process began when the government determined the category of state forests.

In terms of dealing with community resistance, the government uses a strategy of providing incentives and disincentives. Governments and tourism authorities offer

development incentives to communities that accept or support projects such as road infrastructure and education incentives. On the other hand, the government also offers disincentives in response to citizen resistance such as the threat to withhold Regent assistance funds.

At the campaign level, the government and tourism authorities used online and offline media to promote the Lake Toba ecotourism project. The online media included organizational websites and social media (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube). The government also actively campaigned using television media, newspapers, and the production of many infographics. Meanwhile, offline media, discussion and dialogue activities were often carried out to disseminate the Lake Toba tourism project agenda.

Two themes that are often used in the campaigns are environment and socio-economic welfare issues. Regarding environmental issues, the campaign content sought to construct the perception that before the tourism project was carried out, efforts to protect the environment were only conducted by the government. Therefore, the project was assumed to encourage local people to become involved in the environment conservation works. However, in terms of public campaigns, the government rarely used ecological terms. The terms conservation and sustainability were only used a few times to certain target groups with specific goals. For example, the statement of the Director of BOPDT to use the ecotourism approach in the Lake Toba tourism project in the context of its momentum was a forum in the series of Annual Meetings of the IMF and the World Bank Group that discussed the issue of sustainable development. In relation to the topic of social-economic welfare, the government and tourism authorities referred to this more often following the beginning of project preparation. The two terms that were consistently used for framing the narrative were “increasing income or revenue” and “employment absorption”.

On the opposing side, the campaign and the construction of perceptions by the government were challenged by three civil society organizations, namely KSPPM, SAINS, and KPA. They considered that the Lake Toba tourism project only benefited investors, land brokers, and capital owners. Meanwhile, the majority of local people who worked as farmers were seen as being excluded from their land and forests. Therefore, they called the Lake Toba ecotourism project an instance of green grabbing.

The conclusion of green grabbing in the Lake Toba tourism project resulted from research conducted by KSPPM and SAINS in three villages, namely Sigapiton, Hutaginjang, and Sianjur Mula-Mula. Furthermore, the results of the research were disseminated by SAINS in various workshop forums, workshops, and seminars.

Meanwhile, the KPA used popular media, namely infographics and videos, to disseminate counter ecotourism discourses. Through these media, the organization promoted citizens' testimonials to illustrate how the impact of tourism development projects on the communities around Lake Toba.

KSPPM tended to optimise social media, especially Facebook, to publish field conditions updates. This organisation also often used mainstream media at the national level to minimise the potential for reporting bias and to reach a wider public. KSPPM campaigns were an effort to counter the BOPDT and government messages that promoted a welfare discourse. The information presented is an explanation to the public about the state's responsibility to recognise and protect the rights of Indigenous peoples to their land and natural resources.

This study also found the important role of women in fighting the Lake Toba ecotourism project. At the community level, women had an important role in the struggle to defend their land rights. On many occasions, they had taken on the key role of defending their

forests and land. Batak women believe that land is a part of their identity, as well as a condition for sustainability. Their performative actions of protests are reflective of cultural expressions of symbolic politics.

Chapter 6

Conclusion and Recommendations

In 2016, the Indonesian government launched the 10 priority areas for tourism project, including Lake Toba, North Sumatera province. This project is also known as *10 Bali Baru* or 10 New Bali. However, the land acquisition for the Lake Toba tourism project was met with resistance from the local people of the Sigapiton village. The local community claims that the land is customary land. Meanwhile the government (the Ministry of Environment and Forestry) argues that the area was registered as protected forest and should be managed by the state. This chapter will review the key findings and reflect on their implications for what type of practice and the government development vision.

This study adopted a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach to uncover and analyse discourses used by the government to control natural resources in the context of ecotourism in Lake Toba, and how these discourses were challenged by the community. It has shown that the government not only uses the conservation and sustainability discourse to govern the natural resources at Lake Toba but also optimises policy settings and development incentives to implement institutional arrangement through the establishment of “forestry estate”. Such an arrangement can construct relationships among individuals related to natural resources because the arrangements build the structure of rights and duties (McCarthy, 2006).

Hence, the key findings of the research are outlined below:

- The initial strategy used by the government involved the creation of institutional arrangements that required the existence of binding agreements and regulations to determine who has the right to and control over natural resources, as well as formulating their conditions of access to those resources. In the context of the Lake

Toba tourism project, the institutional arrangement process has begun since the government identified and determined the category of state forests. There were several policies used for the institutional arrangement such as the Minister of Environment and Forestry Decree number SK.579/Menhut-II/2014, which includes customary forests as state forests. The policy was continued with a territorialisation process that resulted in a spatial plan document created by the North Sumatera provincial government.

Moreover, the government determines the definitions of what is legal and illegal in the context of natural resource management. In Sigapiton and its surroundings, by using the legitimacy of the category of state forest, the government built boundaries of control over all the resources within it. These boundaries have been outlined in map documents and signs in the field. In addition, through these signs, the government symbolises its authority and determines the rules regarding the rights and the prohibitions.

- The government provided incentives and disincentives and associated these with support for development to deal with the community resistance to the Lake Toba tourism project. The government offered many infrastructure development plans. For example, the Ministry of Public Works and Housing (PUPR) has projects to build roads, bridges, and revitalising public facilities, and the Ministry of Transportation plans to build ports and airports. In addition, the government also provides scholarships to high school graduates to study at tourism schools in Bali. On the other hand, the government also uses disincentives in response to citizen resistance. The disincentive was in the form of the threat of withholding Regent's assistance funds, which would affect the Sigapiton residents.

- In terms of campaigns, the government has promoted two issues, namely environment (nature conservation) and socio-economic welfare. The government has constructed a perception that efforts to protect the environment were only to be conducted by the government. Therefore, the government expects that, due to the developments in the tourism sector, the community will become aware of the conservation process. However, the terms conservation and sustainability were only used at certain times to target groups with specific goals. For example, the statement of the Director of BOPDT to use the ecotourism approach in the Lake Toba tourism project in the Annual Meetings of the IMF and the World Bank Group that discussed the issue of sustainable development. The target recipients of these messages were the investors who attended the forum on October 11, 2018.

A second campaign or promotion has been the government's use of social and economic narratives to implement Lake Toba tourism project. The concept of welfare constructed by the state is a transformation from the agriculture and forestry sectors to the service sector. In this construction process, the state builds access while simultaneously making exclusions. On the one hand, the government opens up opportunities for several interest groups to get benefits even though they do not have legitimate rights. On the other hand, groups of people who cannot live in the constructed space (in the tourism services sector) will be excluded despite having the legitimacy of rights (customary).

As part of their campaign, the government actively uses social media such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Especially for Instagram, they routinely upload posts that contain government tourism promotion. In offline media, the

Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy often produces infographics, advertisements on television, newspapers, and other print media.

- Civil society countered the government discourses by campaigning on the concept of green grabbing. They argued that Lake Toba was an example of a new model of community exclusion; people were excluded from land and living space on the issue of ecotourism. They believed that the takeover of customary land began when the customary land of the Raja Bius clan was registered into the category of state forest. Furthermore, an indication of the government's seriousness to take over the land is when the government installed signs that refers to the land as forest area, and the community is prohibited from entering. Responding to the installation of signs, the community submitted a written protest to the local government. They also submitted a request to the Forestry Agency (Dinas Kehutanan dan Perkebunan) at the local level to return the community's customary lands.

After undertaking action research, some organizations disseminated the findings through various workshop forums, workshops, and seminars. They presented the results in a number of state institutions, including the Ministry of National Development Planning, the Presidential Staff Office, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, the Ministry of Agrarian and Spatial Planning, and the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy. This group optimised social media, especially Facebook, to expose field conditions, updates and campaign regarding green grabbing. They also used newspaper media (online and print) and popular media such as infographics and videos to disseminate counter-ecotourism discourse.

- Based on the assumptions and perceptions of nature and development, it can be concluded that the three organizations (KSPPM, SAINS, and KPA) reflect the discourse of green politics. Dryzek (2013) explains that the green politics group

believes that ecological crises are only usually overcome by political action and structural change. This discourse will construct nature as a complex ecosystem and has links with social, economic, and political structures (Dryzek, 2013). In terms of relationships with nature, this discourse assumes that there are complex interconnections between humans and nature (Dryzek, 2013).

- In addition, at the community level, women's groups have an important role in the struggle to defend their land rights. On many occasions, they have taken on the key role of defending their forests and land. Batak women believe that land is part of their identity, as well as a condition for sustainability. Also, due to the women having no land rights, Batak women, as mothers, will fight for their children (particularly sons) to retain their control over their land.

Recommendations

1. A Need for Recognition and Redistribution

The socio-economic welfare discourse of development must consider two dimensions of social justice, namely, the need for recognition and redistribution. According to Fraser (1996), justice as recognition requires the establishment and the institutionalization of cultural values and identity that express equal respect for each participant in the socio-political order and guarantee equal opportunities for each person to enjoy a life of dignity. Redistributive justice requires ensuring access to material resources and goods to guarantee the independence of the voice of each person as a participant in the democratic political space.

In the context of the Lake Toba tourism project, it is important that a genuine concern for people's welfare must be based on the recognition of the cultural values of local communities

(especially the Indigenous Peoples of Sigapiton village) and provide opportunities for them to participate equitably and meaningfully in the social-political order. For example, the government must recognise and facilitate the traditional, hereditary access to and control over forests by the local communities, whose livelihoods depend on their forests. At the same time, the government must also ensure that the Lake Toba project development process must take into account the needs of the local communities and become a vehicle for the distribution of welfare resources for everyone in the democratic political framework.

2. A Need to Revisit the Concept of Sustainability

Government perceptions involved in tourism projects tend to simplify sustainability as the existence of environmental, social, and economic components. Moreover, the government tended to prioritise economy components rather than the other components. In fact, the economic improvement concept within the sustainability framework was heavily considering the economic interest of government and investors. Through the tourism project documents and the interviews, the government has agreed that sustainability must contain both intra- and inter-generational justice. However, this perception fails to capture the potential for conflict between these components.

Therefore, sustainability as a constructed discourse must involve all people affected and potentially affected to participate in decision making. Moreover, the formulation of sustainability must consider and give equal importance to all forms of knowledge, providing an enabling environment for the dynamic contestation of discourse.

3. Review the Decision to Choose the Tourism Sector as the Backbone of State

Revenue

The government has a progressive vision to reduce the dependence of state revenue on extractive industries (mining) and big scale plantations, which are considered to encourage deforestation. However, the orientation of economic growth towards the tourism sector as a development priority and ignoring the existing livelihoods of local communities is an unwise choice. This is because apart from marginalising local people or Indigenous communities, the choice of the tourism sector that depends on tourists, especially from outside the region, is also vulnerable to external dynamics that cannot always be controlled. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a serious impact on the tourism sector. Many tourism businesses have collapsed in the face of a pandemic that led to a crisis. Therefore, the government needs to reconsider the orientation and concept of development that is more resilient, agile, inclusive and just, such as empowering a community cooperative.

Conclusion

This thesis critically examined how the discourse of conservation and sustainability was used by the government to control natural resources in the context of the tourism project. The result of this study indicates that the government uses socio-economic welfare discourse more frequently than environmental discourse. In addition, the government also optimises policy setting and development incentives to implement institutional arrangements through the establishment of “forestry estate” to control the natural resources in Lake Toba. Yet, the government’s strategic mobilization of conservation and sustainability discourses did not go unchallenged. Local community organizations highlighted the notion of “green grabbing” to

draw attention to the injustice experienced by the Indigenous communities who are using the courts to try to retain control over their forests.

Another important finding was around the role of women at the community level in countering the government discourse. Women played a key role in the fight to defend their land rights, and they saw the land as closely tied to their identity. This finding raises questions for further inquiry, namely, why were Batak women, who were a part of a patriarchal culture, and who did not have land rights, at the forefront of and more persistent in fighting for land rights? Exploring this question requires an in-depth examination of gender relations, culture and development to understand how identity and agency play out in the context of this community.

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