

SEAG-Symposium, 27.-31.8.2001, Los Baños, The Philippines

“Resource Management:

Private-Public Partnership and Knowledge Sharing”

***Problems and Perspectives of Private Sector and Forest Village
Farmers Collaboration in Natural Resource Management***

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ABSTRACT

In the realm of Natural Resource Management (NRM) the devolution paradigm has already gain a strong foot hold. That is true even in Indonesia where centralized management of forest areas has been accepted as the most normal management approach for decades. NRM concepts like Social Forestry, Community Forestry; Collaborative State-Local Community Forest Management (*Pembangunan Hutan Bersama Masyarakat*) has been accepted even in the highest level of the government. These concepts place the local communities and private initiative into the foreground of local resource management. Unfortunately at the level of praxis the process of devolution is still hampered by many obstacles, ranging from vested interest of the dominant stakeholders of the past to the lack of legal and operational mechanism.

This paper likes to share some experience of private - local community collaboration in NRM in Indonesia. Material for this paper came from evaluation studies on the implementation of collaboration of private sector and local community in NRM, namely: the establishment of small scale private village forest (*Hutan Rakyat*); in protection of catchment area through the development of Siri culture and the distribution of small scale credit for farmers to establish field terraces. Main factors that contribute to much problem in the implementation of these collaboration type of NRM are: the half hearted devolution of the state role in the NRM; the bias toward government and private sector interests; and the unwillingness of the programs to place the local communities as an equal partner.

The paper also try to illuminate a somewhat different type of devolution process, where local farmers organizations try to gain more control over the process of production by strengthening their independence from the power exerted by private sector and the market. By adoption and developing appropriate (and more sustainable) agricultural technology instead of become dependent on expensive imported seeds and biochemical. In many cases activities to gain more control over the process of production by necessity evolve into a struggle to gain legal access to land.

Here so to say we are observing two forms of devolution process: the first represents a devolution process by grace; the second represents what can be termed a struggle for a devolution process by-leverage. It seems that a smooth devolution process has to be a combination process of voluntary change from the center and genuine empowerment at the grass root level.