

Women and Peatlands

Editorial

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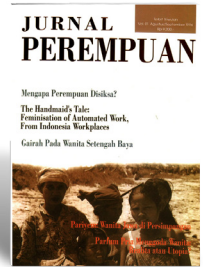
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Women and the Peatland

Indonesia's peatland areas reach to 22.5 million hectares. It contributes to the 47% of the whole peatland area in the tropical region, and it is considered as a country with the widest peatland area in Southeast Asia. Therefore, the existence of peatland in Indonesia brings important meaning to the global environmental sustainability. Unfortunately, the discourse around peatland rarely surfaces except during certain situation such as during forest and land fires. The emerging discourse on peatland generally evolves around ecological and economical aspects, though its existence has such bigger dimensions, from social, cultural, political, including gender justice dimension. With such extensive peatland areas in Indonesia, it is obvious that peatland has important meaning to the lives of Indonesians, especially for people who live around the peatland area, including women.

As an environmental issue, discourse on peatland has been deliberately discussed for quite some time, at least since the adoption of *the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat* (Ramsar Convention) in the city of Ramsar, Iran, in 1971. Ramsar Convention has emphasized on the importance of prevention from destruction, prevention of the loss of wetland, and the importance of preservation of wetlands as part of sustainable development. Indonesia has already ratified Ramsar Convention since 1991. International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) classify peatland as a valuable earth's ecosystem due to its highly regarded function for biodiversity sustainability, as source of water, prevention of flood, and to overcome climate change.

Ecofeminism generally identifies the roots of natural destruction, and oppression of women as the result of patriarchy dominance. Inline to Karen J. Warren's view, the hierarchical and oppressive of patriarchy's point of view have oppressed both the nature and women. The destruction of peatland area in Indonesia has happened since the New Order regime, and one of the examples of this was the *Rice Mega Project* that has turned the peatland area in Kalimantan into rice fields. Aggressive development, and disasters such as forest and land fires, that have been going on for decades have accumulated and became legacy of problem to the peatland area in Indonesia that we are facing today.

The biggest land and forest fires in Indonesia in the middle of 2015 was a warning and important threatening signal to the peatland area in Indonesia. This

was then marked by the establishment of the Peatland Restoration Agency (Badan Restorasi Gambut-BRG) by the government of Indonesia in 2016. BRG is a non-structural agency that reports directly to the President that is given mandate to coordinate and facilitate peatland restoration measures in seven provinces, namely: Jambi, West Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan, South Kalimantan, Riau, South Sumatera and Papua. BRG's peatland restoration concept acknowledges that land/ soil restoration cannot be implemented solely in its ecological-geological dimension, but it should also consider social recovery of the community as part of the peatland ecosystem. Consequently, then women should also be both beneficiaries and agent in the restoration process.

Women have big interest for environmental sustainability. Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva, ecofeminism thinkers and activists, argue that women have big stake in environmental sustainability. It is because the gender role charged to women to do parenting and daily life management. In order to give sufficient nutrition for their children and/or family, getting clean potable water, and to meet all daily needs, women would have the interest on the availability and sustainability of natural resources such as water, air, land, and flora and fauna.

Women who live in peatland area are clear depiction of the interrelation between environmental destruction and its consequence to women. One of the local economic and cultures in peatland area in Kalimantan is *purun* weaving (*purun* is one type of grass that commonly grows in peatland area and often used as weaving material). The skill of *purun* weaving is generally done by women, and are usually done during women's spare time of their work in caregiving in their household or family. The destruction of peatland area has caused the diminishing of *purun* that previously grew wild in nature around villages. When *purun* is no longer grow around the village, the women traditional weavers have to procure *purun* from outside of their village, or have to incur extra cost to purchase *purun* for their handicraft materials.

Forest and land fires in peatland areas have cause economic loss and trauma to the community. Women are the group who experience the direct impact of land and forest fires in their daily lives such as draining of water source, destruction of farms, and the extinct of

local natural resources such as fish. Despite of that, the forest fire's prevention programs still disregard women. Though when the fire happens, women also participate in extinguishing fires whether in the farm fields or housing settlement. Women also have to find measure to address the following impacts of forest and land fires to their families. For example, women have to find ways to prevent smoke to get into their homes, or they have to take care of family members who get ill due to the smog coming from the forest and land fires.

The experience of peatland destruction and its impact to communities and women amplify ecofeminism argument such as Ynestra King. King argue that the destruction and/or oppression against human being is rooted in the hierarchal and unequal relations. Similar to the unequal power relation between men and women, the impact of peatland area destruction, forest and land fires, smog, and many others, also describe the power relation in the existing management and use of peatland areas.

Nevertheless, ecofeminism does not stop on the argument of the interrelation between the exploitation against nature and the domination towards women. Ecofeminism also views women's agency in restoring and preserving the environmental sustainability. The experience of women facilitators in the Desa Peduli Gambut (villages that involve in peatland restoration program) show the political women empowerment in finding solutions in addressing structural and cultural challenges in the peatland restoration processes. Ecofeminism offers a transformation to the human perception that act superior against of the nature, through gender justice lenses. Similar call then is also proposed through the knowledge that are presented from women's experiences, as well as their efforts in restoring and maintaining the peatland areas, in the current Jurnal Perempuan's edition. Have a great time exploring! (**Atnike Nova Sigiro**)

Abstracts Sheet

Myrna Asnawati Safitri
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**Manifesting Ecofeminism in Peatland Restoration:
Policies, Actions, and Challenges**

Kode Naskah: DDC 305
Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 25 No. 1, Februari 2020, hal. 1-11, 24 daftar
pustaka

Degradation of peatland ecosystems occurs as a result of excessive exploitation leading to peat drainage and fires. This was influenced by a masculinity perspective in resource tenure and utilization. Ecofeminism presents a different perspective on narratives and inter-relationships of human with nature, including the place of women in them. Injustice that befalls women occur due to unequal power relations in the control and utilization of resources in the peatland ecosystem. This paper discusses the Government of Indonesia's efforts to reduce gender injustice through Peatland Restoration's policy. Two policies are discussed here, namely the Social Safety Safeguard and Peat Cares Village Program. It is concluded that women's participation must be able to resolve the imbalance of power relations among women as well as between gender. This requires sufficient time and everlasting education.

Key words: Ecofeminism, power relation, peatland, peatland restoration.

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**Women Fighting Peatland Fire:
Rural Women's Experiences in Central Kalimantan
and Riau Provinces**

Kode Naskah: DDC 305
Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 25 No. 1, Februari 2020, hal. 13-23, 1 grafik, 9
daftar pustaka

Forest and land fires that repeatedly burned millions of hectares of peatlands in Indonesia were the result of decades of unsustainable peatland governance and management. Rural women and men living on peatlands have different experiences of forest and land fires. Intersectionality between gender and classes, geographical locations, and ethnicity further adds nuances to these different experiences. This article explores women's experiences of fighting forest and land fires in three target villages in Central Kalimantan and Riau provinces where the Peat Care Village Program was implemented by the Peat Restoration Agency. The network of power relations that women must endure and a priori arguments on gendered roles and responsibilities have weakened women's position in fighting land and forest fires. Women do not have access to resources to prevent and fight against land and forest fires, while in reality firefighting activities require the involvement of women, particularly when they happen on their land or living space. Women's experiences of facing forest and land fires are reflected using the feminist political ecology approach to highlight the multifaceted impacts on women.

Keywords: forest and land fire, intersectionality, peat villages, women's access.

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**Being Away from Purun: Women's Experiences in Peatland
Area of Hulu Sungai Utara, South Kalimantan**

Kode Naskah: DDC 305
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daftar pustaka

Purun is a typical plant that grow in peatland area that has important functions for people living in peatland area. The availability of *purun* is now decreasing due to changes in land management and environmental destruction. Almost all of the plantation commodities in the peatlands area, management of peatlands in the forestry, agriculture, plantation and fisheries sectors apply exploitative and pragmatic methods, while ignoring environmental sustainability. Furthermore, environmental damage also occurs due to disasters such as forest and land fires that often occur in peatland areas in Indonesia. One of the damages happen to peatland area is the damage and scarcity of *purun*. As users and beneficiaries of *purun*, women become the affected group that face the impact of peatland destruction. This paper describes the experiences and efforts of women in peatland areas to restore land and restore the existence of *purun* in their villages.

Keywords: women, peatland, *purun*, peatland restoration.

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***Purun* and the Bitter Realities of Women's Struggle in
Peatland Areas**

Kode Naskah: DDC 305
Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 25 No. 1, Februari 2020, hal. 35-42, 2 gambar, 21
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This paper aims to examine the elimination process of traditional conservation that has been built for many years by women on peatlands. This article reveals the struggle and multiple burdens of women in conservation, to do reproductive and productive work in the midst of clashing interests in peatland area. Research conducted shows that there is a shift in the mode of production from subsistence toward exploitative hegemony by capitalistic interests, as a product of modern scientific knowledge. Corporations compete for peatland areas to accumulate capital which then threatens the *purun* and the *purun* weaving community of women. This has not only led to degradation of the *purun* ecosystem but also the loss of source of life and cultural identity for the *purun* weaving community. From an ecofeminist perspective, investment policies and regimes with minimum controls have systematically destroyed peat ecosystems, resulting in economic powerlessness and impoverishment of women.

Keywords: *purun*, women and natural resources, women and peatlands.

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**Women Village Facilitator Action on Economic
Revitalization of the Women's Group: A Case Study in 3
Peatland Villages, Central Kalimantan**

Kode Naskah: DDC 305

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grafik, 17 daftar pustaka

Peatlands play an important role in the ecological and economic aspects. Peatlands degradation in various regions in Indonesia brings economic issues, especially for women. The involvement of women in

the peatland restoration program as a strategy needs to be reviewed. This study focuses on the involvement of women in the peatland restoration as a village facilitator, mainly on aspects of economic revitalization. This study focuses in 3 Villages in Central Kalimantan Province, Jabiren Village, Tumbang Nusa Village, and Gandang Barat Village. The main question of this research is how are the actions, challenges, and strategies experienced by women as village facilitators in DPG program. Based on in-depth interviews with relevant actors and literature studies, this research finds, 1) the economic revitalization program conducted by women village facilitators build the economic resilience of rural women communities and changes the gender relations; 2) women village facilitators faced structural and cultural obstacles in their action; 3) the program is also the part of political actions for peatlands preservation.

Keyword: women village facilitator, peatlands restoration, economic revitalization, power.

Manifesting Ecofeminism in Peatland Restoration: Policies, Actions, and Challenges

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Abstract

Degradation of peatland ecosystems occurs as a result of excessive exploitation leading to peat drainage and fires. This was influenced by a masculinity perspective in resource tenure and utilization. Ecofeminism presents a different perspective on narratives and inter-relationships of human with nature, including the place of women in them. Injustice that befalls women occur due to unequal power relations in the control and utilization of resources in the peatland ecosystem. This paper discusses the Government of Indonesia's efforts to reduce gender injustice through Peatland Restoration's policy. Two policies are discussed here, namely the Social Safety Safeguard and Peat Cares Village Program. It is concluded that women's participation must be able to resolve the imbalance of power relations among women as well as between gender. This requires sufficient time and everlasting education.

Keywords: Ecofeminism, power relation, peatland, peatland restoration

Introduction

Forest and land fires that occurred in 2015 had burnt 2.6 million hectares of land which 800 thousand hectares of them were peatlands (KLHK RI 2020). The fires were among the most severe fires in addition to the fires happened in 1997. The economic loss due to the fires in 2015 was estimated by World Bank to reach IDR 221 trillion (World Bank 2016). Meanwhile, a Researcher Team from Harvard University and Columbia University estimated that there were 91,600 cases of early mortality in Indonesia as the impact of smog disaster from the forest and land fires (Koplitz 2016). The fires on peatland is interesting to observe. The characteristics of peatland allow the fires to prolong, because the burnt area is mostly located underground. Studies and observations showed the environmental loss due to the peat fires (Page et al. 2002; Turetsky et al. 2015; Schulz et al. 2019). The carbon emission resulted from the peat fires is considered as one of the important factors that threatened the realization in controlling the impacts of climate change.

Woman is the party that often suffer from the occurrence of environmental degradation and pollution. Reflecting on the peatland fires' case, the damaged environment requires women to try harder in order to be able to access better and healthier resources (Indirastuti

& Pratiwi 2019). In addition, women have also to bear respiratory health problems (Awaludin 2016).

Various kinds of environmental destruction mostly happen due to the overly dominance of anthropocentric philosophy, that negates harmony, environmental carrying capacity and volume. The exploitative perspective colored by masculine's point of view in controlling and utilizing natural resources, undeniably, bring impact. Therefore, reversing the environmental philosophy becomes one of the offered choices. This where ecofeminism exists to provide a different point of view on the narration and the relation between humans and nature, and how women to be part of it. Ecofeminism used in this article refers to the domain of environmental ethics. This article chose ethical perspective because the data and information presented are derived from the author's experience as policy maker and the guard of its execution. The environmental ethics is fundamental in the decision making by the public officers (Keraf 2010).

Different from most of studies on women and peat ecosystem, this article takes different point of view. Instead of describing and finding the causes of why women become the victims of environmental injustice, this article wants to answer question on what should be done to reduce the injustice. The injustice experienced

by women are undeniable facts. Nevertheless, what efforts have been made to eliminate the injustice, what is the ethical rationale underlies the policies and actions, and what are challenges faced in the implementation? Those all are the main points to be assessed in this article.

This article is presented using an actor's point of view from the author, as the policy maker and implementor. The data are obtained from participatory experience. Subjectivity could possibly happen, but it is open to further debate. In this article, the author will discuss consecutively the conceptual debate in Ecofeminism's ethic, data and facts of peat ecosystem destruction in Indonesia, and some policies to respond its recovery. Peat Restoration and policies that relate to women's participation will be specifically discussed. For enrichment, three cases of women from peat villages will be also presented. Then, analysis on challenges in the realization of gender justice in the implementation of Peat Restoration will be also analyzed. In the last part, this article will be closed with some conclusions.

Ecofeminism Ethics in the Approach to Power Relations

This article uses Ecofeminism Ethics as part of Environmental Ethics. A. Sonny Keraf (2010) said that Environmental Ethics becomes one of important basis in the decision making by the public officials. A decision which is related to or bring impacts to the environment. Ethics is understood as guidance that lay the direction on how life and action should be undertaken. For the public officials, ethics also to be understood as reflective and critical processes in determining the policy options and actions, by considering the existing values and norms, the specific situations faced, and the beliefs adhered (Keraf 2010)

Fieser divided theory of ethics into three groups, those are meta-ethics, normative ethics, and applied ethics. Theories in the meta-ethics inquire the sources of moral and ethics. Whether they stem from a universal truth, God's will, human reasoning, or other factors. Meanwhile, the normative ethic encompasses moral standards that regulate behavior and action that are considered to be right and wrong. Whereas, the applied-ethic is directed to answer the actual problems that in some parts are controversial. Fieser gave examples on issues such as on abortion, war, nuclear, and homosexuality, including environmental issues. (Fieser n.d.)

One of theories in the Environmental Ethics is Ecofeminism. In general, Ecofeminism views how to correctly place women in the narration and in the relation

between human and nature. An article that explains the journey and debate on Ecofeminism in simple way was written by Resurrección. She explained how the cultural approach in Ecofeminism finally intersects with Political Ecology (Resurrección, 2017).

Vandana Shiva, a Indian scholar activists, was mentioned by Resurrección as an influential figure in the early course of Ecofeminism. In her book entitled "*Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development*" (Shiva 1989), she explained that in the Third World during the pre-colonial era, women have important role taking care of the environment. Feminism, according to Shiva, is a philosophy that existed in the pre-colonial rural life. However, colonialism that also brought in capitalism, developmentalism and modern science, have eroded them. Society are absorbed into the big wave of natural resources exploitation. This is where men then took the role. Women who work with values of caring and conservation of nature were slowly marginalized.

Ecofeminism which is introduced by Shiva views a diametrical relation that sharply different between the North-South developments, developed countries-developing countries' development, and between Colonial and Pre-colonial development. One of the criticisms addressed to Vandana Shiva came from Bina Agarwal who argue that Shiva and her followers have made many simplification (Agarwal 1992). Assumption that patriarchy was being brought by colonialism, according to Agarwal, was not the case. In reality, the pre-colonial rural politics were not all egalitarian. Rural society which is perceived as homogeneous in Shiva's point of view, is actually is a differentiated society based on class and caste. India is a plural society with many religions. According to Agarwal, Hinduism is an important moral value in the human-nature relationship in India, is also not the case (Agarwal 1992).

Agarwal then offered a different approach. Instead of agreeing to the approach that she called as 'essentialist' and 'single pivotal' that view women as one social category, homogeneous and classless; she proposed to observe in a more complex intersection between ideology, power and inequality that occur in women. In fact, the environmental destruction, land grabbing, and resources grabbing have impacted greatly on poor women.

What Agarwal conveyed above correspond to the Feminist Political Ecology. Here, power and difference become two important keywords in understanding the politics of allocation and distribution of natural resources use. It is in this perspective then women, who have no

power and marginalized from ownership and access, will become the victims.

From the explanation above, it is clear that the Feminist Political Ecology bring the pendulum of analysis to the power relations. Meanwhile, Ecofeminism according to Resurrección's understanding holds a monolithic view and it is based on culture. Is it true? If we consider what Karen J. Warren (2015) wrote, it can be seen that Ecofeminism also has developed.

Warren explained clearly the three prominent views in Ecofeminism Ethics. The first is what she called "Ecofeminism care-focused ethics". This view believes that the ethical logic should be built with values of care and empathy. With this 'care-focused ethics', women are placed in the context of care and empathy.

The second view is called as Environmental Virtue Ethics. Here, Ecofeminism argue that human being must act in the good ways in order to maintain and increase individual health and welfare, including women, species, and community.

Then, the last view is the Environmental Justice-focused Ethics. Such ethics question about how, for example, the environmental danger is distributed disproportionately against women and children. Moreover, to poor women, colored women, women who become single heads of family, etc. How the environmental problems that are not solved well have caused in a disproportional environmental justice to women with their various statuses and roles (Warren, 2015).

Therefore, it is clear that Ecofeminism ethics also consider the issue power and justice in the context of social structure with full of classes. Thus, there is a clear intersection between Environmental-Justice focused Ecofeminism and the Feminist Political Ecology. Therefore, both of them are no longer relevant for debate. This article believes that the issue of women and environment usually arise because of the imbalance power relation towards natural resources. Those situations are found in many levels and arenas. As the result, the distribution of benefit and the burden of responsibility operate unfairly.

Women in a patriarchal culture structure that are positioned as disadvantage, would further become more disadvantage in controlling and using of natural resources. Women, therefore, also become the most vulnerable parties who are more prone to receive the worst impact from the environmental and

natural resources mismanagement. The impacts of environmental destruction and pollution on women are bigger. Ironically, many of them are not calculated and considered in policy making. In short, women often become victims of environmental injustice.

In a changing environment, including those resulting from climate change factor, the Ecofeminism ethics that coming from environmental justice is highly required. It is because women's vulnerability to climate change is not merely relate to gender and culture, but relate to other problems such as age disparity, poverty, inter-ethnic relations, etc. Adelle Thomas (2020) in her article entitled "Power Structures Over Gender Make Women Are Vulnerable to Climate Change", said:

Women are not more vulnerable to climate impacts simply because of their gender, but because of a range of factors. Characteristics such as age, levels of poverty, ethnicity and marginalization in combination with gender intersect to result in higher vulnerability for women. Acknowledging this intersectionality underscores that women are not inherently vulnerable, but that there are complex power relations and socio-economic characteristics that result in climate impacts being experienced differently. (Thomas 2020)

Paris Agreement, made in 2015 as a part of the implementation of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, also recognizes the importance of women equality and empowerment. Therefore, actions of climate change encourage gender responsive actions.

Thus, issue of justice is central to the climate change actions. Those (including women) who did nothing that causing the occurrence of and the increase in Greenhouse Gas Emission (GHG), in the reality should bear the heavy burden of climate change's impact. Industries that emit GHG may not feel much of the impacts of climate change compared to farmers and fisherfolks who should adapt to the extreme climate, the unpredictable growing season and fishing season. Similarly, draught in farm fields have forced women farmers and rural women to find source of water farther away.

Poor women, low-educated women, women from low-social class or lower caste, ethnic minority and other social attributes, bear heavier burden when climate change occurs. Therefore, policies related to the recovery of destroyed and polluted environment, as happened to the peat ecosystem, must depart from this ethics. The next parts of this article will discuss them further.

Peat Ecosystem Destruction and the Recovery Policies

Basically, peat land is a wet land. Physically it has moisty character due to its the high level of water content. Beside fires, the other indication of peatland destruction is subsidence. Subsidence of peatland is the sinking of peatland surface due to the change of land use and wrong water management. As the result of the subsidence, the peat will undergo irreversible drying. It could decrease the peatland ability to retain water (Nugroho 2015). In the end, the land will become flammable during the dry season, and will be flooded during the rainy season.

In the last three decades, the peat ecosystem in Indonesia continues to suffer destruction. The mismanagement occurred to the peat ecosystem contributed in acceleration of the destruction rate. Massive peatland clearings were conducted, either for the interest of forestry industry or plantation, or for other development purposes such as agriculture and transmigration. Artificial canals were built in many places. Moreover, the peat domes that should be protected, because of their capability to retain water, were dismantled in a great number. The situation ends up in a peat drying. As the result fire and subsidence occur, and are often uncontrollable. It takes longer time to extinguish fires in the peatland area because the fires burn beneath the soil.

Peat destruction management is inevitable. This ecosystem has important contribution to carbon saving, clean and smoke-free air quality, and for water reservoir for agriculture, and others. Peatland area could retain 550 gigaton of carbon, or 75% of carbon in the atmosphere. Therefore, in action for controlling climate change such carbon emission reduction, peat ecosystem contributes significantly.

One of the Government of Indonesia's efforts in controlling peatland destruction is through Peat Restoration. Restoration, according to the Law No. 32 of 2009 concerning Protection and Management of Environment, is one of the methods to restore environment destruction.

On 5 December 2019, Centre of Research and Development for Agricultural Land Resource of the Ministry of Agriculture (BBSDLK Kementan) released the recent map of the width and distribution of peatland in all over Indonesia. It was reported that currently there are 13.43 million hectares of peatland (Gatra 2019). From those areas, the Peatland Restoration Agency (BRG) identified of 2.67 million hectares were in severely damaged condition that immediately require restoration.

BRG is a non-structural agency under President that was established according to the Presidential Regulation No. 1 of 2016. Its tasks are to coordinate and to facilitate peat restoration in seven provinces, those are: Riau, Jambi, South Sumatra, West Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan, South Kalimantan and Papua. About 90% of peatland areas in Indonesia are located in those seven provinces. Most of the land underwent destruction, with the above-mentioned width of about 2.67 million hectares, or 4 times of the width of Bali island. The common cause of peat ecosystem destruction occurs because of land clearing and burning. The developments of artificial canals have huge impact to the drying of the peatland.

Policies concerning peat ecosystem protection has actually existed since 1990 by the issuance of Presidential Decree No. 32 of 1990 concerning Protected Area Management. Furthermore, there is National Strategy for Peatland Management (2012). Peat protection is also included in the Law on Spatial Management year 2007, and Government Regulation about National Spatial Management Plan 2008 (Safitri 2018). Nevertheless, peat protection finally received serious attention in 2014, through the issuance of Government Regulation No. 71 year 2014 concerning Peat Ecosystem Protection and Management. This regulation was amended in 2016 through Government Regulation No. 57 year 2016. Land and forest fires and issue of climate change control were the two important factors behind the issuance of this regulation.

This part will discuss again the Peat Restoration. This program is implemented by BRG using three approaches. The first approach is through rewetting of the damaged peatland. The lands that were burnt or cleared, and dried using artificial canals, are built with rewetting infrastructure. The infrastructure mentioned here are partition or piling up the artificial canals, or establishing artesian wells. These wells have function to support rewetting or as the water sources for fighting fires.

The second approach is revegetation. Revegetation are mainly done to the burnt lands. Suitable plants for peatland are planted around those locations. The third approach is economic empowerment for revitalization of livelihood. The revitalization activities aim to give alternative of income that do not harm peat ecosystem, also to give incentive to community groups that have maintained the peat.

Peat Restoration policies take the society as an important part. Public participation at the site level are

organized and strengthened through a program called *Desa Peduli Gambut* - DPG (Peat Care Village). DPG program is established as a framework to harmonize activities related to protection and management of peat ecosystem at the rural/village level, and also social and economic empowerment for the community (BRG 2017).

Placing village as a center of the program is the right decision. There are at least 1,205 villages exist in the Peat Restoration's targeted areas. Based on the Developing Village Index (Indeks Desa Membangun/IDM) issued by the Ministry of Village, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration in 2016, there were approximately 80% of the villages were in underdeveloped and very underdeveloped villages.

Since DPG program has been implemented, from 2017 until end of 2019, there were 394 villages have been assisted. As many as 225 villages were directly assisted by BRG, and the rest were through collaboration with NGOs and business sectors. DPG program is implemented through some activities. It started from assigning villages' facilitators, rural social-economic and ethnography researches, participatory mapping, assisting villages' planning, and facilitating inter-villages collaborations, and the establishment of rural areas. Aside from that, strengthening villages' institutions, economic empowerment, local knowledge innovation, and applying compatible technology for communities' agricultural activities, are also conducted. Following that, facilitating conflict resolution, legalization of communities' land tenure, and encouraging communities' participation in monitoring the implementation of Peat Restoration, are also undertaken (BRG 2017).

DPG Program implementation give attention to five following strategies. The first is data-base. Therefore, socio-economic studies, ethnography and participatory mapping, are the some of the first things implemented during this Program. The second strategy is inclusiveness. The implementation of activities is as much as possible must involve all elements of rural community, including women, young people, and the poor group. The third is respecting local initiative. This program believes that local knowledge in managing peat ecosystem is a valuable asset that needs to be developed. Nevertheless, this knowledge is considered as a dynamic and adaptive toward any change, including the change in the peat ecosystem condition.

Women is a group that own the local knowledge about peat. This principle influence DPG Program. Therefore, some of DPG's activities tried to provide the right space

for women to express and develop their knowledges. Some of the examples are the activities of economic empowerment using natural fiber, and agricultural work, that are run by women.

The fourth strategy supports collaboration with all stakeholders. It is impossible for BRG to encourage community participation only by itself, since it has limited authority and has limited period of mandates. Collaborating with many parties, therefore, is one of the keys to success.

DPG Program is not a stand-alone program. Since the very beginning of its initiation, this Program tried to integrate with other development policies, such as poverty alleviation, women empowerment, the development of creative economy, up to the legal empowerment for the people. Hence, the fifth strategy is implemented by integrating of Peat Restoration activities into other development policies (Safitri 2018a). The DPG Program wraps together environmental recovery with social restoration. The inclusion strategy of this Program is translated into, among others, women participation peat restoration. The following parts will explain it thoroughly.

Women in the Peat Restoration

BRG includes women's important role into two policies, those are: Social Safeguard Framework and Peat Care Village Program (DPG). Social Safeguard Framework is a BRG's policy that aim to ensure that the implementation of Peat Restoration would not reduce people's rights and access, and would not incur loss. It is a mitigation effort for occurrence of any social conflict (Chief of BRG Decree No. P.6/KB BRG-SB/12/2016). Meanwhile, DPG Program (Chief of BRG Decree No. P.11/BRG-KB/2017), as explained above, is a policy to ensure the participation of rural community in the Peat Restoration.

The Implementation of Social Safeguard Framework is conducted through three stages namely social mapping, implementation of *Padiatapa* (Free, Prior and Informed Consent/ FPIC), and community's monitoring. In the Guidance for Implementation of Social Safeguard Framework, it is mentioned that:

The Social Safeguard Framework contains several stages of activities to ensure that the implementation of restoration would not derail from the aimed target. This includes a good program governance, its impacts on people's rights, accesses and livelihood, particularly to vulnerable community groups, such as women, children and poor community. (BRG 2016)

Referring to the policy, therefore the social mapping, that is actually a brief ethnography study on the community that might be impacted by the restoration activities, had collected data on women's involvement and gender analysis. The documentation was collected so that women's role in the social structure and in the usage of natural resources in peat ecosystem can be described.

Meanwhile, in the stage of *padiatapa* (FPIC), information and consultation processes of Peat Restoration implementation plan, BRG asked all of the restoration's executors to conduct genuine FPIC. "Transfer of information and consultation processes have to reach all community groups representatively. Women's groups have to receive special attention," as written in BRG's Social Safeguard Framework.

Realizing that women are often receive insignificant position and role in collective decision making, the Peat Restoration policies recommended the inclusion of women's voice in decision making process on peat restoration activities at the site level. FPIC becomes a medium that ensure this process.

In the DPG Program, women's involvement was initiated by conducting sensitivity in data collection and analysis when formulating villages' profiles. Initial simple ethnography that is conducted prior to the commencement of activities requires attention to data and information on women's status and role in the use of natural resources. Data on calendar of season, in example, is one of the data that contains information about women's important roles in all of the agricultural cycles in peat villages.

In addition, women's involvement has become a requirement in all matters related to transfer of information and decision making, similar to the facilitation of village's planning to integrate the needs for peat protection. Similarly, women also receive special attention in the formation of community groups for economic empowerment. Specific groups of women farmers and artisans are formed for this purpose. Recently, hundreds of women are actively involved in these groups.

Intervention to local knowledge is one of the activities that are conducted by DPG Program. The assigned village facilitators are equipped with guidance to explore local knowledges that are derived, maintained, and developed by women. Therefore, these activities facilitate various forms of knowledge development related to agriculture and peatland's usage that can be done by women.

Activities such as planting vegetables, medical plants, and the utilization of home yard. Women's farmers who becomes cadres of Peatland Farmer Field Schools are being encouraged to develop this model of agriculture. The purpose is simple, that is to support the food resilience at the household level.

The other DPG Program's priority is crafts' development using women's local knowledge. Crafts is considered as cultural material. Value, tradition, and art are blended as one. In Sungai Bungur village in Jambi Province, for example, it is found that the crafts of plaiting *Pandanus* nearly extinct. People no longer plait *Pandanus* due to its scarcity. The time needed to get *pandan* become longer due to the distant location from residence area. In the end, the skill of plaiting is only owned by elderly women.

When BRG supported the development of craft's product and facilitated the formation of craftsperson groups, the interest to plait started to grow among the young women. Then transfer of knowledge between the older generation to young generation took place. Interestingly, the transfer of knowledge took place were not only on the skill of plaiting, but also in the art of traditional poetry. Supposedly, in the past, the craftsperson communities used to verse traditional poetry while plaiting. When there plaiting was less done, consequently the art of traditional poetry started to erode. Then the culture revitalization of culture took place. Young people started to recognize the art of tradition poetry.

Similar story above also experienced by women *purun* (*Eleocharis dulcis*) crafter in South Kalimantan and Central Kalimantan (see the case study explained after this part). *Purun* is one of endemic plant of the peatland. Usually, it is used to make mattress or household furniture. *Purun* woven plaits are slowly replaced by the presence of plastic products. The price of *purun* crafts decrease, because of that the communities are no longer see its production as a source of livelihood.

Then, BRG introduced innovation for *purun* crafts into fashion product. Several trainings that were held since 2017, had involved hundreds of women. As the result, markets started to have interest in *purun* crafts. This brought self-confidence to the women crafters. They sensed the increased household income from this economic activity.

The aforementioned policies aim to present Ecofeminist ethic in the Peat Restoration. As discussed earlier, women's involvement, normatively, found their

place, both in Social Safeguard Framework or in Peat Care Village Program. These two policies open up space for women to substantively involve in the Peat Restoration.

Behind those two policies, the underlying ethics is that to restore peat is to take care of the damaged ecosystem. In this case, women were proven to have their own capacity. The destruction of peat ecosystem destruction, similar to environmental destruction and other natural resources destruction, happen because of excessive exploitation to the ecosystem. As previously discussed, the peat destruction is caused by the massive clearing and drying. Vandana Shiva maybe right by saying that this contradicts the essential use of the environmental by local community in the pre-colonial era. Nevertheless, it is not the issue to be discussed here.

Why women should play a more extensive role in the Peat Restoration? That is the subject matter to be discussed here. Providing space for women, in this case, is not a matter of empathy as presented by *Ecofeminist care-focused ethics* (please refer to Warren's explanation in the earlier part of this article). More than that, the first reason to provide space for women in the Peat Restoration is a rational choice upon the needs of the ethics holder and the right behavior. Once more, to recover, to restore, essentially is to take care. To take care of a destructed thing to be in function again. It requires patience, diligence and great care. Woman is an entity where we often find all of those requirements. Hence, Ecofeminism ethic is inevitable along with the needs in restoring peat ecosystem.

Nevertheless, such essential view of Ecofeminism may cause stereotyping against women. Instead of voicing out to protect themselves, women might bear heavier burden. Burden from damaged environment as well as burden to restore it.

Therefore, a second reason is necessary, that is, to balance the power relation over peatland to women. Based on the view that the exclusion of women and environmental injustice they face are not merely gender issue but also a matter of power relations, therefore, Peat Restoration policies and actions are intended to balance the unequal relation. This second reason is important to prevent re-manipulation into the patriarchal culture by asking them to take care of damaged peat ecosystem without giving them a substantive power over the natural resources.

BRG seeks for the suitable arena for women participation, in controlling and utilizing the peatland resources. As explained earlier, horticultural farming,

home yards utilization, medicinal plants and crafts, are the arena for that. These are objects that traditionally 'belong' to women. Therefore, these arenas need to be strengthened.

If the above arenas are successfully occupied, then women will be able to win the power contestation. In several places that are assisted by BRG showed some results. The success of handicraft production, for example, has encouraged the village government to allocate village funds for further craft production development.

Stories of Three Women

Her name is Theti Numan Agau. This woman of Dayak Ngaju ethnic lives in Mantangai Hilir Village, Kapuas District, Central Kalimantan. The author met her for the first time in 2018. At that time, she was part of the non-burning plot management farmer group. The farming pilot project was facilitated by BRG and UNDP.

Theti was so confident and without hesitation explained about the pilot farming that was located not far from the residents' areas. "Initially this groups consisted of men. But they were not active. I asked permission from the chief of the village that the group could be managed by us, the ladies," said Theti. The membership of the group then moved to women. There were approximately 20 women became its members.

In the hands of these women, the appearances of the planting areas were changed. They chose vegetable plants and horticulture. They planted the peatlands with chili and eggplants for the first time. They applied the non-burning land cultivation technology and use the non-chemical fertilizer. They were failed at the beginning, but later the planting areas showed results. The chilies produced by Theti and friends were even displayed in an agricultural exhibition in sub-district's capital.

Theti chose to plant chilies and vegetables because these types of plants are much needed by every families in her village. "Usually, we bought chili. Sometimes the price reaches up to a hundred thousand rupiah per kilogram. That was very expensive. But we have to buy them anyway. We did not grow chilies. We bought them from the trans migrant's villages," explained Theti.

The matter that Theti revealed showed that the women in peat village have different agricultural preference from the men. Women prefer vegetable and horticulture in order to fulfill food resilience and family nutrient. A vulnerable issue in peat villages. On the one hand, residents must accept the prohibition of burning,

but on the other hand, agricultural farm areas are decreased due to the conversion of farm land into palm oil plantations. These all become important factors that influence food resilience at the household level.

After a year managing the pilot planting area, Theti shared some updates. The planting plot continued to grow. The other women were interested to follow her footsteps. "We used to buy vegetables, but not anymore. We even have had a group-owned vegetable cart. We sell vegetables to other villages," Theti said proudly.

Not only a matter of food resilience, Theti's stories also show a shift in economic power in the household. This is implied from the following statement: "Members of our group already have had their own income now, they no longer ask money from their husband."

Theti is actually an ordinary citizen. She is not a part of the village's elites. However, she had the courage to try new things. According to the classic theory of Innovation Diffusion from Everett M. Rogers, the dissemination of innovation in the society is determined by those who become the agent. An opinion leader is one of the agents explained here (Rogers 2003). Initially Theti was an opinion leader. BRG promoted Theti because of her determination to work. BRG facilitated Theti to be a speaker in several international forums, including one session in the Climate Change Conference in Madrid, Spain in 2019. Theti's presences in various forums received medias' attention and coverage. Until now, Theti has become a respected opinion leader in her village.

The second story comes Jambi. Precisely in Mandala Jaya Village, West Tanjung Jabung District. The village that often experiences fires, since last year started to improve. The community started to apply non-burning agriculture. Monihar is one of the initiators. This woman initially produced various snacks made of ginger. She bought the ginger from the market. Puti Pebrika, a BRG facilitator, suggested Monihar to plant the ginger herself. At the same time the Peat Farmer Field School was organized by BRG. Puti, the energetic young woman, then suggested Monihar to be a participant in the Field School.

When attending the Field School, Monihar was increasingly inspired to develop family medicinal plants (*toga*). She saw that many of the yards in her village were not utilized.

Upon finishing the Field School, Monihar immediately acted. She formed a women farmer group consisting of 10 members. The Women Peat Care Group 'Semangat

Jaya' is the name of this group. They built a *toga* pilot planting plot independently. Although only managed to get a quarter hectare planting plot, these women farmers were eager to plant their land with okra beans, red ginger, turmeric, white turmeric and ginger.

These women conducted ongoing observations and experiments on their planting plot. Some of them tried it on their own yards.

Like Theti, Monihar does not come from the rural elite group. She is an ordinary citizen. It can be said that Monihar is the backbone of her family's economy. Her husband, a person with disability, could not fully work on the farm land. So, Monihar has a greater role in managing family's farmland.

Meanwhile in South Kalimantan, in Jarenang Village, in Barito Kuala District, there is the story of Nani, purun craftswoman. Plaiting purun is an inherited activity carried out by women in this village, and in some peat villages in South Kalimantan. Usually purun is woven into mattress or cooking utensils such as colander and pan. The price of purun products was decreased. It could not compete with mattress and equipment made from plastics.

The community began to forsake purun. During dry season, the lands that grows purun were left stranded, and prone to burning. BRG saw that saving peat ecosystems can be done by making peatlands and resources coming from it to be more valuable. Purun was chosen as an option to develop creative economy from the peatland.

Since 2017, Nani and the purun craftswomen in South Kalimantan have been provided with various trainings to increase the added value of purun. Slowly, purun is shifted into fashion products. The income of the craftsperson groups began to increase. When purun bags becomes trendier, they were flooded with orders.

Nani and her friends were very happy with the activities as purun craftswomen. Their selves-confidences grew. Some national medias published news about their works as purun craftswomen as potential creative economic (Kompas 2019).

Nani's efforts to move forward sometimes are hampered by cultural burdens. In 2018, for example, BRG encouraged Nani to go to Oslo, Norway, to attend the Indonesia Festival. Nani was prepared to go. But at the end of the preparation, she chose to withdraw because her family was worried about her departure. For Nani's family, is not appropriate for a woman to travel abroad. This view is shared not only by family but also by local

government figures in Jarenang Village. In the end, Nani did not go, and was replaced by a craftsman, who was considered by the community to be “more appropriate” to go abroad.

Nani’s story shows that culture is still an important agenda that must be resolved. This is a problem that occurs in many communities. The community where Theti resides is also not exceptional. Different from Nani, Theti still could face the cultural domination that limited her space as a woman.

Challenges of Gender Fair Peat Restoration

Consistently implementing Ecofeminism ethics is not an easy matter. Although the existing policies have included women as important elements, but gap in the implementation remain to be found. The next part will explain various kind of challenges faced in incorporating gender justice into the Peat Restoration program.

The first challenge is the challenge from the bureaucracy, especially those involved in the implementation of Peat Restoration. For example, the Social Safeguard Framework has enabled women to participate in the planning and implementation of Peat Restoration. The implementor of restoration must carry out FPIC that involving women. This upstream aspect in the Peat Restoration activity’s plan is very strategic to ensure women are presence and play a role. Socialization and trainings have been held to explain this matter. Nevertheless, many Peat Restoration actors still carried out FPIC only compliance to the procedures. This situation can be found in local government officials who carried out restoration activities, as well as in the third parties and community groups that implement the infrastructure development projects of rewetting the peatland. Quite frequent, FPIC was considered as an obstacle to the implementation of activities.

The second challenge is cultural challenge. This challenge occurred both within the culture of bureaucracy and also society. Perspective of gender justice has not strongly adhered by the supervisors, including within the ranks of the Peat Restoration Agency. The main cause is the strong patriarchal value that is rooted in the bureaucracy. This is of course was found in many other government agencies. Meanwhile, within the community itself, this patriarchal culture is ingrained in various aspects of life (see Nani’s story above for an example). It takes a long time to explain that women’s substantive participation is highly required in the Peat Restoration. On this side, there is also the same cultural encounter between bureaucracy

and community, so that the attitude of ignoring women is regarded as normal, according to the ‘tradition’.

The third challenge is power relations. The writer realizes that woman is not a single social category. Therefore, class analysis between and within gender is very much needed. In reality, we often deal with poor and rich women, educated and uneducated women, women from high and low social classes, and so on.

Women’s genuine participation should not only improve power relations between genders, but also balance power relations between women. It takes a long time and stronger efforts to make this happen. The Peat Restoration Program, which is still very new (four years) and has to serve hundreds of villages and thousands of groups in the communities, has to be admitted, not yet reaching it as a whole.

The issue of women participation in various Peat Restoration’s activities must be resolved at this time. Not all of the bureaucracy’s officials and communities support this idea. When they ever supported this idea, then the village elites usually prioritize women from higher classes. Often, the activities were attended by the wives, children, or relatives of a village’s chief or community figures, rather than ordinary citizens. Women with better education rather than the illiterate. Rich women rather than the poor.

How was this problem resolved? BRG took a softer approach. Rather than using confrontational way to fight such habits above, it deliberately identifying women from disadvantaged social classes and giving them the opportunity to participate. Ordinary women farmers, for example, would have a greater opportunity to become field school’s cadres than the non-farmers (see Theti’s and Monihar’s story above). In this case, a lengthy discussion and awareness raising to the village’s elites are much needed. BRG’s village facilitators were tirelessly explained and reminded that the women involved should be those who had needs and abilities, regardless of their social status in the community. In some places, it worked. However, the same did not happened in other places.

A study conducted by Herawati, et. al. in peat villages in Riau Province suggested that empowerment interventions for women be carried out differently. To the poor farmers groups, capacity building to increase agricultural production can be done. While the more affluent group, it can be directed towards development of entrepreneurship. (Herawati 2019)

The author viewed that these matters cannot be fully carried out. During the initial phase, this strategy could

be implemented. The existence of women intermediary traders in the villages is a deniable fact. However, if the strategy to divide economic roles based on class is carried out, it could not change the structure of resources control. Poor women and their families would remain marginalized.

Another strategy to be chosen is by also introducing entrepreneurship to the poor women. Encouraging them to join a cooperative, for example, is something that can be done. The point is to give importance to economic democratization for rural women. One of the cooperatives formed by the peat village community is plaiting craftsperson cooperative so that the economic rights of craftsperson such as Nani and her friends can be protected.

Conclusion

Public policies related to environment and natural resources must integrate the Ecofeminism ethics to its policy processes and policy products. This view is made in order to understand clearly the issue of women in environmental destruction, especially in the destruction of peat ecosystems. Women become victims of injustice due to peat destruction, not only because of their social categories. Injustice that befalls on women occurred due to imbalance control and utilization of resources in the peat ecosystem.

Peat Restoration is a policy and action taken by the Government of Indonesia to restore the destructed peat ecosystems. Women's role is important because to restore is the same as to take care of the destructed ecosystem. Women have the capacity to do it. Aside from that, it would balance the power relations over peatland to women. The exclusion of women and the environmental injustice they face are not just a matter of gender but a matter of power relations.

The policy and action of the Peat Restoration aim to balance this unequal relation. Two things were carried out by the Peat Restoration Agency, namely the Social Security Framework policy and the Peat Care Village Program. Both of them put woman as an important party in the consultation and the empowerment.

Nevertheless, a number of challenges do exist. This article identifies three main challenges. The first is in the bureaucracy that implement Peat Restoration has not fully carried out consultations with the participation of women before an activity began. FPIC as an obligation was mostly done merely to fulfill procedural requirements.

The second is the cultural challenge. Patriarchal values still dominate the culture of bureaucracy and community. Because of these the marginalization of women's role often not were not seen as a problem, because it is seen as in line with the 'tradition'.

The third, it is related to power relations. In reality, woman is not a single social category. Within the, difference in social class exist. Genuine women participation must be able to resolve the imbalance of power relations between women. All of these would require adequate time as well as continuing education. The sustainability of Peat Restoration would also require such commitment to implement policies in favor of women.

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Jurnal Perempuan (JP) is a quarterly interdisciplinary publication in the English language that aims to circulate **original ideas in gender studies**. JP invites critical reflection on the theory and practice of feminism in the social, political, and economic context of Indonesian society. We are committed to exploring gender in its multiple forms and interrelationships.

The journal encourages practical, theoretically sound, and (when relevant) empirically rigorous manuscripts that address real-world implications of the gender gap in Indonesian contexts. Topics related to feminism can include (but are not limited to): sexuality, queer, trafficking, ecology, public policy, sustainability and environment, human and labor rights/ issues, governance, accountability and transparency, globalization, as well as ethics, and specific issues related to gender study, such as diversity, poverty, and education.

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