

## Anticipating a new conservation bureaucracy? Land and power in Indonesia's Essential Ecosystem Area policy



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### ABSTRACT

As an emerging policy in Indonesia, “Essential Ecosystem Areas” (EEA) is being established as an instrument to expand protections for conservation areas at sites beyond the classical domain of the conservation bureaucracy. The policy impetus is from recent global research identifying high conservation values located outside of formally designated conservation areas. EEA policy provides a foundation for justifying conservation practices at sites based on high biodiversity indicators, but which might not have previously held formal protections. This policy instrument is particularly unique in Indonesia because it is envisioned to support initiatives that emerge voluntarily, even in areas that might not have been historically thought of as conservation areas. This is unusual because it applies to all land categories, including private and public lands. In this article, we introduce the EEA policy and identify the potential applications it might have, considering the possibilities for future conservation area management in Indonesia. In particular, we identify some key principles for researchers and practitioners to follow when assessing EEA implementation. Our organizing framework consists of several elements based on existing land and power characteristics, which we connect to the institutions that might emerge amidst these new policy arrangements. We apply the land and power framework to two emerging EEA sites in Sulawesi to anticipate the extent to which the policy suggests a future trajectory for conservation management, or whether conservation policy will remain tied to existing rigid bureaucratic structures. Findings from the two cases point to the continued primacy of the centralized conservation bureaucracy, indicating that EEA sites are being negotiated through the classical approach for administering conservation areas.

### 1. Introduction

The classical conservation model is premised upon the notion that people are somehow separate from nature. Indeed, the early formulations of conservation policy led to the justification for evicting people from sites designated for conservation (Tsing, 2011). Although a global movement since the 1980s began to acknowledge a more explicit role for communities in natural resource management and conservation (Brosius et al., 1998), as well as polycentric models formally engaging multistakeholder arrangements (Armitage et al., 2009; Fisher et al., 2018), the legacy of strictly bounded and controlled conservation areas to deny access remains a central feature of conservation policy worldwide (Peluso, 1993; Sahide et al., 2018; Fisher et al., 2019).

Bureaucratic systems that manage conservation areas are incredibly rigid, with strong regulatory backing difficult to unravel or challenge, and institutional frameworks that continue to function under directives of keeping people out. Even when exceptions are made for other zoning categories within conservation areas, they are typically done for particular niche uses that remain highly restrictive, such as landscape views for tourism purposes or limited non-timber harvests, and thus rarely formalize the role of local communities in managing lands that they might have a claim to for generations (Sahide et al., 2018).

Meanwhile, rates of land-use change and deforestation in tropical forests pose immense concern among global interest groups to protect conservation areas and expand them. International regimes continue to press for more stringent and expanded policies for ensuring

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conservation outcomes (Giessen and Sahide, 2017a). Indeed, recent studies have shown that achieving formalized conservation targets will require a strategy beyond those within existing spatial boundaries of conservation areas, and in the Indonesian case, a specific directorate on essential ecosystem services has been established (Direktorat Bina Pengelolaan Ekosistem Esensial of MEFOR, 2018). The basis for establishing the unit emerged from the Conservation Action Plan for the Indonesian Orangutan (or Strategi dan Rencana Aksi Konservasi Orangutan Indonesia, SRAK) (2007–2015), due to the discovery that 75% of orangutans are located outside conservation areas (Ministry of Forestry, 2007). In Kalimantan, 60% of protected species are located outside conservation areas, located in areas such as production forests or among oil palm plantations (Meijaard et al., 2011). Another study showed that 80% of protected area species habitats are located outside of conservation areas (Geldmann et al., 2013). In recent years, conservation policy and conservation area management have sought to find new ways of engaging policy instruments to incorporate considerations beyond its borders.

This paper is about one such experimental initiative entitled the Essential Ecosystem Area policy,<sup>1</sup> which seeks to establish conservation area management mechanisms beyond the classical areas of the conservation bureaucracy in Indonesia.<sup>2</sup> The policy also expands the scope of conservation area management approaches to be more inclusive of multiple stakeholders, while also explicitly extending the territorial scope to areas beyond classical conservation zones. The EEA policy is thus unique because it can apply to diverse settings and involves numerous stakeholders, engaging across land classifications of public and private lands. EEA policy is also viewed as a strategic mechanism among various actors. One of the crucial elements is that the policy does not challenge the rigid bureaucracy that administers management arrangements in existing formal conservation areas. This is because the proposed EEA areas are located outside of the jurisdiction of conservation areas. On the other hand, however, the EEA does present an indirect challenge to the conservation paradigm in Indonesia because it creates a new approach for administering conservation area management, which some envision could unravel the rigid structures defining the existing conservation bureaucracy, allowing for more collaborative approaches and new actors to participate.

This paper examines this tension of conservation policy, namely to what extent does the EEA change conservation politics in Indonesia. To do this, we begin by examining the context for the emergence of the EEA policy and compare it with the hallmarks of the classical conservation policy paradigm (section 3). Next, we propose a set of principles that form a framework for assessing EEA implementation, which considers land characteristics, actors and institutions, and the power struggles that determine outcomes (Section 4/MethodsX). Thereafter (Section 5), we apply the framework by assessing the challenges for implementation at sites preparing to apply the scheme. To do this, we examine the benefits and the burdens of the actors interested in taking part in the EEA scheme, as well as the likely contestations determining implementation outcomes. The policy analysis, framework, and empirical evidence leads to our conclusions on the extent to which EEAs represent a potential breakthrough, or whether implementation will reinforce the status quo.

<sup>1</sup> We realise that there is no strong formal definition of this policy. In Bahasa Indonesia the Essential Ecosystem Area policy is entitled *Kawasan Ekosistem Esensial*, which relies on Government Regulation No. 108 year 2015, which includes a paragraph regulating the protection of nature preservation areas and nature reserve areas, including the protection activities of EEA. MEFOR has since drafted the formulation of MEFOR Regulation on the Protection Guidelines of EEAs, which at the time of writing, is currently under discussion for finalisation and stipulation

<sup>2</sup> By conservation bureaucracy in Indonesia we mean the formal government agency within the current Ministry of Environment and Forestry that holds the mandate for conservation listed in Law 5/1990.

## 2. Methods: Reflexive theoretical framework supported by case studies

As of January 2020, at the conclusion of this research, the EEA policy is still in draft form. Our research can thus only be assessed in terms of the preparations that have been made to prepare for policy implementation. We did not view the lack of case implementation as a barrier for waiting to conduct this research. Rather, we applied an innovative approach for assessing research in ‘real-time,’ centering our research on the political dimensions unfolding during policy preparation stages. Therefore, although we cannot yet trace direct empirical outcomes from the policy measures taking place, we believed it essential to produce timely, yet robust research on emerging policy situations. Indeed, criticism of peer-reviewed journal articles is that they tend to lag behind policy implementation, coming to the surface long after the policy moments have passed. We, therefore, believed it essential to develop the frameworks and study the experiences related to EEA policy preparations as they are currently being contested and reshaped.

Three methods were employed. The first included a comparative theoretical and policy approach, examining the origins of classical models, new conservation policies, and the similarities and differences between them. We drew from our collective understanding of the evolution of conservation laws in Indonesia. We contrasted the long term sustained policy engagement with a close document review of the EEA policy. This method directly maps to the results produced in Section 3.

The second methodological element drew from a series of studies on bureaucratic politics (Allison, 1971; Peters, 2001; Halperin, 1974; Giessen and Sahide, 2017b), which we applied to conservation policy in Indonesia. We also compiled methodological approaches in the form of frameworks for conducting studies on these topics (see Fisher et al., 2019; Sahide et al., 2018; Fatem et al., 2018; Tajuddin et al., 2019; Sahide et al., 2019; Rahayu et al., 2020; Sahide et al., 2020b). We thus tailored a framework for examining power dynamics on conservation policy in Indonesia, which includes the critical elements of actors and institutions, and incorporates the realm of policy struggles common among institutional dynamics in studies relating to natural resources. However, as we will show, the EEA consists of a distinct policy without direct precedence in the Indonesian conservation policy context, and therefore, we slightly tweaked our framework by including a key dimension that considers land characteristics. Our framework thus takes shape intending to provide clarity on whether the EEA will return to the classical top-down paradigm of the conservation bureaucracy, or whether the new contestations of the EEA policy can serve as a tool for anticipating and pre-empting the way a new conservation bureaucracy might take shape. The results of this approach of building a framework are presented in Section 4.

To extend beyond the conceptual dimensions of analysis, our third methodological approach is to apply the framework for assessing a set of cases undergoing EEA policy preparations, which is presented as results in Section 5. The lead author had the opportunity to facilitate a dialogue on initiating a multistakeholder forum on EEA at the karst ecosystem in Maros and Pangkep Districts of Sulawesi Selatan Province on October 25, 2019. This engagement required reviewing the policy basis, the official reports, interacting with the actors and institutions, and directly participating in facilitating discussions (Rahayu et al., 2019; Maryudi and Fisher, 2020). Meanwhile, the third author also served as part of the HCV assessments at a second site in private lands managed by PT Vale Indonesia Tbk in Malili, in September 2019 and January 2020.

### 3. Emergent conservation areas category: the new politics of conservation?

#### 3.1. Establishing and contesting conservation in Indonesia

Conservation areas date back to the colonial era as natural forest parks (Goss, 2011). These were at once tied to research, recreation, and interests in identifying new commodities for the colonial state (Brockway, 1979; Peluso, 1992; Scott, 1998). Conservation areas also became a global movement through the discourse and material establishments of national parks in the United States, which also sparked the creation of similar land management categories throughout the 20th century (Tsing, 2005). During the New Order era in Indonesia (1966–1998), a series of policies in the late 1960s established the zoning categories for conservation, followed by land surveys in the ensuing decades that expanded the area formally categorized as conservation areas (Peluso, 1995). Although surveys mostly prioritized natural resources for state economic development purposes, significant studies were undertaken to identify endangered and charismatic species, high conservation value regions, unique landscapes, and steep slopes as indicators for establishing protection and conservation forests. As part of international pressure for conservation and biodiversity, the national government passed a stringent conservation law in 1990, limiting zoning for any other uses beyond forest conservation.<sup>3</sup> This law followed the values model of the United States National Parks and public lands system established in the early 20th century, whereby people are seen as separate from nature, and subsequently justified the removal of people from areas designated for conservation (Myers et al., 2017). As widespread land enclosures by the state forestry bureaucracy increased evictions and enforcement to keep people out of conservation zones, opposition to these practices also began to influence international policies on governing people in forests (Gilmour, 2016). Particularly in regions where people held deep historical relations with landscapes and the environment, in which natural resources formed a central role in their livelihoods, and in which people played a crucial role in sustaining ecosystems, policies began to emerge to accommodate the role of communities as partners in forest management (Ostrom, 1990). Commonly described as community-based natural resource management (CBNRM), nature parks were critiqued for their dispossession effects and destabilizing effects on conservation, which led to the formulation of initiatives to explicitly involve communities in the management of natural resources on the premises of justice and livelihoods, and on the basis that local involvement in resource management was good for conservation (Zerner, 2000; Agrawal, 2005; Agrawal et al., 2006; Maryudi et al., 2012; Fisher et al., 2019, 2020). This broader policy objective of CBNRM has since sparked widespread international support, mainly through funding streams tied to bilateral and multilateral programs.

The reformulation of land management rights through the discourses of CBNRM continues to challenge the conservation law through various initiatives, particularly through the growing policy interest in Social Forestry (Fisher et al., 2018). Though joint management rights and collaborative landscape initiatives have succeeded in other forest zones, their policies remain a rigid legal construct for conservation areas that are still in effect. Indeed, several initiatives were unsuccessful in their efforts to conduct multistakeholder management arrangements in the name of collaboration in conservation zones. For example, the MEFOR<sup>4</sup> revoked a potential collaboration scheme (Santosa and

Setyowati, 2016), and has consistently denied community forestry schemes in conservation areas (Sahide et al., 2018).

Though the language of collaboration remains in many policies, the conservation bureaucracy leaves no room for interpretation that might trump their responsibility for upholding the stringent clauses embedded in the 1990 conservation law. Meanwhile, the EEA policy is an example of a conservation-orientated policy being applied beyond conservation areas. The opportunities for establishing new management guidelines on doing conservation outside of conservation zones present an opportunity for challenging the broader paradigm of how conservation is defined and what legitimizes activities. In this way, there is a sense that a new paradigm for approaching conservation elsewhere could be grounds for challenging the legitimacy of conservation zones.

#### 3.2. Origins of the EEA experiment

The origins of the EEA in Indonesia emerged through voluntary initiatives among the private sector. As part of growing global concern on illegal logging and rapid deforestation dating back to the mid-1990s, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) introduced the concept of High Conservation Value (HCV)<sup>5</sup> as a way for companies to gain certification of sustainable practices (Brown et al., 2013). Such certification schemes have since become famous, such as palm oil through the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) (Ruysschaert and Salles, 2014). On a voluntary basis, large scale companies began to examine their value chains, identifying lands relative to their impacts on the environment. These voluntary certification schemes included stipulations on the environment and terms of engagement on interactions with local communities. Principles include aspects such as consultation and consent with communities, and in some cases, began to involve local communities as part of institutional arrangements that supported broader management practices for land management. Though still unusual, and often part of the “boutique market” of high-value goods (Edwards et al., 2012), there were several cases of success (Purwanto, 2019). However, institutional arrangements were unprepared for this global standard and did not have the policy mechanisms to implement them. In Sumatra, a palm oil company applied for RSPO through HCV standards for conservation on lands under their jurisdiction. However, due to regulations at the Agrarian Affairs Ministry/the Land Agency on the permit uses on those lands, the company was actually censured for not utilizing the concession land based on its permit (Sahide et al., 2015). In this way, even though the company tried in good faith to introduce conservation practices, they had difficulty implementing them due to the lack of institutional mechanisms for carrying out their interests in conservation.

Meanwhile, international conservation regimes, such as those shaped by the Convention on Biological Diversity, began to identify research that highlighted how many priority regions for conservation area located on lands beyond sites zoned for conservation (Smith and Maltby, 2001; Morand et al., 2017).. Indonesia also signed on to commitments to expand an additional 11% of the land area managed under some form of ecosystem conservation as ratified under Aichi targets (Antara, 2019). The official response resulted in the establishment of a specific directorate (Directorate General of Conservation of Natural Resource and its Ecosystem of MEFOR) tasked with overseeing the implementation of this process (MEFOR, 2019a, b). The HCV concept was also being translated into policy at that time, with its own institutional mechanisms termed *Areal Bernilai Konservasi Tinggi* (ABKT) (Purwanto, 2019; Widayati et al., 2018), which is also under the subcategory of

<sup>3</sup> Conservation Act 5/1990 on conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems

<sup>4</sup> Forestry Ministerial regulation P.85/2014 revoked Forestry Ministerial regulation 19/2004 concerning Collaborative Management of conservation areas where the role of the Conservation Unit manager is strengthened as the first party in conducting management cooperation, while in P.19/2004 other parties can act as initiator of collaborative management of KSA/KPA

<sup>5</sup> Indonesian regulations have translated High Conservation Value as Area Bernilai Konservasi Tinggi, which includes a list of core values as part of their assessments (see regulation the Directorate General of Conservation and Natural Resources and Ecosystem (KSDAE) through regulation No. P5/KSDAE/2017).

EEA policy and management. Four areas fall under the EEA category, such as wildlife corridors, wetland ecosystems, high conservation value areas, and biodiversity parks. That HCV has entered the Indonesian policy lexicon and includes policy instruments to implement it presents a unique development that could influence various bureaucratic mandates.<sup>6</sup> In Section 3.3 we explicitly highlight the differences between the classical bureaucracy and the emergence of the EEA policy instrument, thus teasing out the potential implications of new policy trajectories.

### 3.3. Classical bureaucracy vsv Voluntary conservation

Table 1 differentiates between formal conventional conservation areas and the new EEA conservation scheme by examining their overall governance principle, the areas/zones they can be applied, and the institutions that administer and manage them. The conventional conservation schemes are highly centralized, whereas the EEA areas are premised on voluntary arrangements. Classical conservation applies to areas that have long been established and zoned as a conservation area, with strict singular zones. EEAs are not intended to apply to other conservation areas, and the sites under preparation are located among various zoning categories, ranging from different types of public and commons lands and a variety of arrangements for private land. More detailed clarifications on these divisions are provided in Table 1.

## 4. A land and power framework for assessing EEA

This paper was co-submitted alongside a MethodsX paper, which provides a detailed explanation of our land and power framework. We have also presented the MethodsX paper as an appendix to this paper. We felt our approach to analyzing ongoing policy implementation was innovative in the way it tried to design a method that could support policy research in real-time. We, therefore, felt we needed a great deal more space to articulate the nuances within the mechanics of the framework. However, to ensure that the analysis in this paper can stand alone as an analytical piece, we also felt the need to provide an adequate summary of how we derived the framework and applied it to our results on the two case studies in Section 5.

The land and power framework is based on an interest-based power framework. What this means is that we examine the key bureaucratic actors and their power backgrounds by exploring dimensions of dominant information, coercion, and [dis]incentives (Krott et al., 2014; Sahide et al., 2020a). The EEA framework also considers these dimensions in terms of accountability across scales. One shortcoming among existing research on natural resources, however, is that this EEA proves challenging because it can apply across different land categories. Meanwhile, bureaucracies often have very rigid land management regulations and practices that determine applications and monitoring in a specific land category. Therefore our framework specifically established our analytical instrument by focusing on power across the land dimensions. In particular, we divided the analysis between private, public, and commons land arrangements. We also subdivided these land administration categories into state public lands (state forest or APL lands), whereby the leading proponents are either national state land managers, regional government land managers, or a multistakeholder entity of civil society sanctioned by the state (usually with international links). On private lands, we further subdivided the land categories as concessionaires among the large landholdings as distinct from the

privately-owned lands among smallholders. On commons lands, we describe emergent categories being formulated for recognizing communal and/or indigenous (customary) lands (Fisher et al., 2017).

The overall intent of the framework was to identify whether voluntary conservation initiatives such as the EEA would result in a new management approach. The heuristic is thus geared towards determining whether the bureaucracy will be “tied” to previous mechanisms, or whether we could identify the conditions whereby a new “anticipated” bureaucracy might take shape. By splitting the land category types, the framework helps to analyze the likely outcomes based on the framing of centralized conservation bureaucracy (CCB) versus a multistakeholder arrangement (MSA).

In Section 5, we turn to two case examples, evaluated through the heuristic of the land and power framework.

For the detailed framework, please see the MethodsX article on the method of “Land and power framework for assessing voluntary conservation development.”

## 5. Two EEA experiments: comparing cases on public and private land

To apply our methodology, we select two cases in the preparation process for EEA implementation. We recognize the limited availability of case studies but have already made the case that this should not create obstacles for examining emergent policies and their potential implications. Indeed we see the examination of preparation stages as an inherent strength of inquiry. The two sites include a case from the karst limestone of Maros-Pangkep, which is located on public lands. This case has already entered into a multistakeholder management forum. The second case is from an ecosystem corridor planned for the Malili ancient lakes region. This site is distinct from the first as it is located on private land, which involves a large corporation (PT Vale) initiating the early phases of preparation. The comparative between a private and public land case also fits nicely into testing the overall land-power framework.

### 5.1. The Karst limestone ecosystems of Maros-Pangkep: an EEA on public land

#### 5.1.1. Land and power in the Maros-Pangkep EEA

The Karst ecosystems of Maros-Pangkep, located north of the regional metropolitan area of Makassar, provide a majestic view of a unique landscape. Not only is it a striking landscape, but it is also unique for its biodiversity and local variation within the region (Brumm et al., 2019; Marwoto, 2008), with unique cultural differences (Duli and Mulyadi, 2019). At the same time, studies have shown particular sensitivity among local ecologies against external stressors (Clements et al., 2006; Ahmad and Hamzah, 2019). Furthermore, the karst region has also been identified for its strategic role as an important water resource for the region (Arsyad et al., 2016), not only in providing drinking water supply to the large populations in the lower valleys but also for irrigating the region’s vast paddy fields. Meanwhile, the karst is also site to a coveted mineral resource (Arsyad et al., 2016; Ahmad and Hamzah, 2019), and is also the site of lucrative economic activities for the many visitors that seek out the region’s views for tourism (Yusran et al., 2017). In 2017, the region was also identified for its strategic role in the development of a broader geopark region, and in 2019, the region was identified as an ASEAN World Heritage Site (ASEAN Biodiversity Centre, 2019).

Taken together, there are various institutional actors and jurisdictional considerations in managing the broader karst region. The Karst is the largest limestone area in Southeast Asia, which covers an area of around 46,200 ha. About 22,800 ha of the limestone karst has been protected as a National Park (Ahmad and Hamzah, 2019). Another 1,100 ha are allocated to PT Semen Bosowa (henceforth, Bosowa) for cement mining (Rusdianto, 2019), as well as another 715 ha to PT Semen Tonasa (Semen Tonasa, 2019). An additional 30,000 ha are

<sup>6</sup> Indonesian HCV technical guidance on area identification outside natural reserve area, conservation area, and hunting park was released by the Directorate General of Conservation and Natural Resources and Ecosystem (KSDAE) through regulation No. P5/KSDAE/2017. This HCV approach gained legal support as part of the implementation process of the EEA policy and bureaucracy

**Table 1**  
Comparison between EEA and formal conventional conservation areas in Indonesia.

	Formal conventional conservation areas – classical bureaucracy	EEA conservation areas – voluntary initiatives
Governance Principle (niche)	Relies on the protections of the state bureaucracy, which define conservation areas as highly enclosed and restricted areas to provide the maximum protection for ecosystems. The principle is highly centralized with authority controlled by the government	Based on polycentric governance involving potentially multiple institutions and actors that are dependent on the process and willingness of actors to yield vibrant ecosystem outcomes. In contrast, the principle in the conventional formal category premised on government, the EEA conservation areas are contingent upon governance
Location (land characteristics)	<i>Public areas:</i> State forest – conservation areas. These were historically identified as sites with unique ecosystems, landscapes, flora, and fauna, which were decided in a top-down fashion by the central government.	<i>Public:</i> State forests, such as production or protection forests), or sites with no permits or licenses <i>Public:</i> non-state forest area owned by the local government <i>Private:</i> Concession land with an existing license <i>Private:</i> Privately owned lands by smallholder or larger scale private business privately owned land <i>Common:</i> Indigenous lands or forests <i>Common:</i> Community cooperative lands or other means for co-management of land
Institutional and management considerations	Single institution administered and managed by the central government, MOEF (except for the <i>Tahura</i> forest parks, which is a regional management scheme under provincial and/or district government.	Multistakeholder institutions, Main actors (Conservation bureaucracies, Governor, Head of the district (Bupati/Walikota), Collaborative forum, Private business) Additional actors (indigenous actors, individual farmer) Single Institution, Governor, Head of the district (Bupati/walikota), Private company

located outside the conservation and mining areas (under the jurisdiction of the regional government). These lands are under the APL jurisdiction (area for other development purposes, located outside of the forest estate) and are viewed by formal institutional actors as largely unmanaged lands. In reality, any cultivable lands are generally claimed by local communities, or have been under the management of customary institutions for generations. These APL lands were identified for inclusion in the EEA, amounting to a total of 24,413 ha. We now turn to the ways that the institutional mechanisms emerged to implement the EEA, and describe how the multistakeholder elements were approached and applied, before assessing the extent to which the Karst example fits our framework as a tied or an anticipated model.

### 5.1.2. Establishing the Karst limestone EEA

As early as 2006, MEFOR provided an indicative map for potential EEAs in Indonesia. The initial idea for developing an EEA in the Karst region was thereafter formalized as part of the 2014–2019 national medium-term development plan. The Directorate for EEA management at MEFOR provided the indicative map. By 2017 however, there was no progress about the EEA, and without any proof of implementation, this would reflect negatively upon MEFOR achieving its targets. Budgets were allocated to begin fulfilling the various mandates. One of the key steps as part of decentralized governance systems in Indonesia, required a regional regulation to be prepared as a prerequisite for implementation. The Directorate supported consultancies in preparing the draft regulations to fulfill the overall programmatic mandates. Meanwhile, in coordination with the regional MEFOR implementing unit, The South Sulawesi Natural Resource Conservation Agency (Balai Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam Sulawesi Selatan, or henceforth BKSDA), invited and convened local partners to identify the specific location of the EEA. Two main actors were invited by BKSDA, including conservation researchers from the local university (Universitas Hasanuddin) and Burung Indonesia (as an NGO/civil society representative). BKSDA also involved the management organization of the Geo Park Karst Maros-Pangkep and reached out to related regional local government agencies, such as provincial bodies, as well as the Maros and Pangkep districts. The mining corporations PT Semen Bosowa and PT Semen Tonasa were also encouraged by BKSDA to be involved in the EEA scheme but declined the inclusion of their concessions as part of the EEA. However, the mining corporations remained eager to be part of the overall EEA multistakeholder forum.

### 5.1.3. An EEA tied to the conventional bureaucratic model

The conceptual guiding process for preparing EEAs is designed in very deliberate steps, including the identification of sites, establishment, and dialogue among collaboration forums, which then lead to the results of the broader mapping of the site agreed upon by the forum. Once these steps are completed, only then are the sites formalized and designated as EEAs, which is then followed by EEA management formalization. These steps are taken from those listed out in the draft ministerial regulation on the protection of essential ecosystem area). However, the EEA process implemented at the Karst site points to a process that was geared towards fulfilling the technocratic requirements.

There are a couple of key areas that point to the continued application of bureaucratic processes tied to previous norms. First, the composition of the forum shows that there was minimal dialogue or representation. Only larger formal organizations were invited. Local NGOs that had long been working within the site area were not invited to participate in the process. Second, the extent of the land area was also seemingly arbitrarily selected, and the basis for the delineation of the map remains unclear. Key indicators that point to a new bureaucratic model for conservation area management revolve around representation and the establishment of joint monitoring targets that fulfill mutual interests on conservation and site management. Indeed, the approach to establishing the EEA has not followed any significant interest in establishing responsive management among the key stakeholders that might have vested interests or hold key roles in biodiversity conservation. Indeed establishment of the EEA has focused its attention on fulfilling technocratic requirements as defined by central actors at MEFOR rather than establishing targets premised on responsive multistakeholder processes (Fig. 1).

## 5.2. An EEA on the ecosystem corridors of the Malili ancient lakes: A private land example

### 5.2.1. Land and power at the Malili ancient lakes EEA

The Malili ancient lakes consist of an extremely vulnerable and unique ecosystem (von Rintelen et al., 2007). The lake complex, which includes the Matano, Mahalona, and Towuti lakes have unique ecosystems, exceptional faunal endemism, and floral diversity (Costa et al., 2015). The lakes are known as ancient lakes for their ecological characteristics and are extremely sensitive to invasive species, water pollution, and the way that water levels are regulated (Sirimorok and

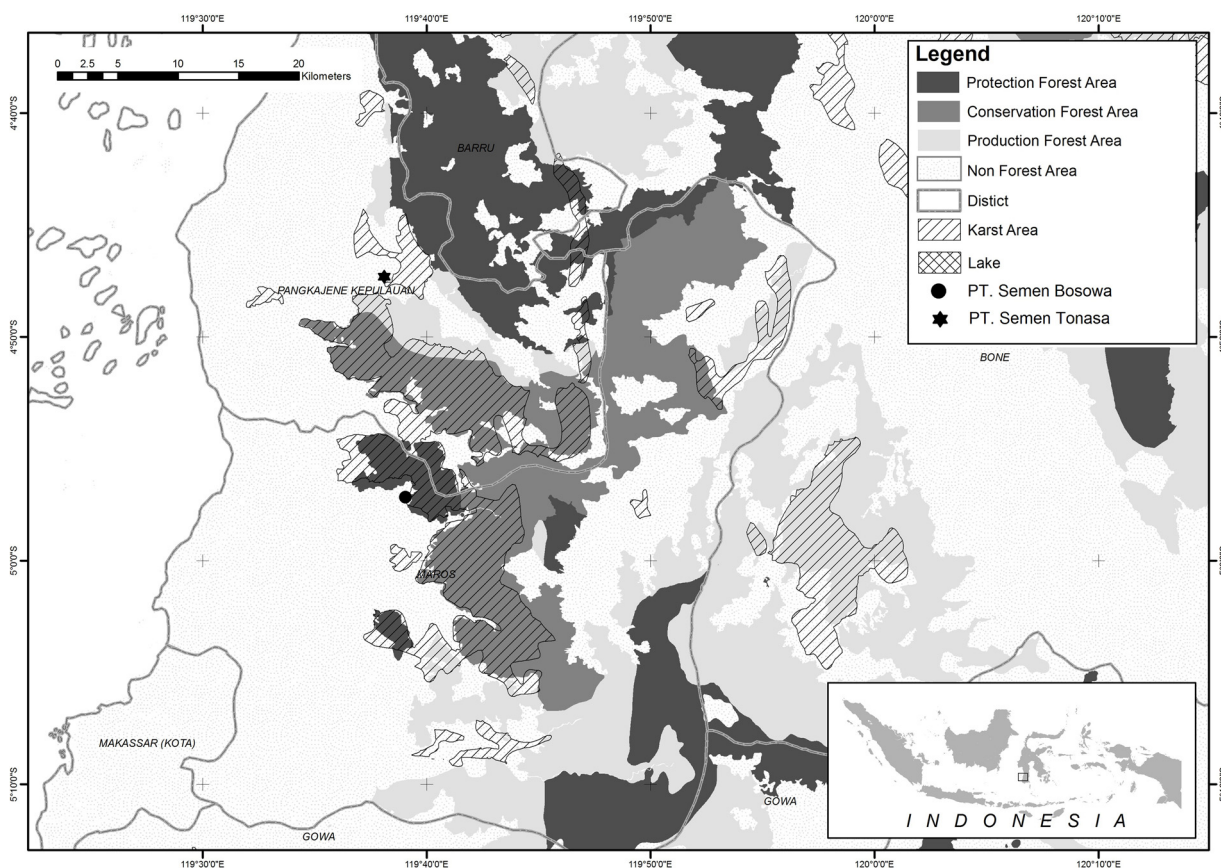


Fig. 1. The karst limestone area ecosystem in Maros and Pangkep.

Rusdianto, 2020). One of the key stressors affecting the lakes are not limited to what occurs within the lakes, but also the ecological processes that take place in the terrestrial ecosystems around the lake. Not only do the surrounding areas provide a pivotal buffer to the lakes, but these ecosystems are also unique for their biodiversity, including habitats for several endemic and threatened species, the Maleo (*Macrocephalon maleo*), and Anoa (*Bubalus quarlessi*) (Whitten and Henderson, 2012). Although the lake complex itself is already designated as a conservation area, MEFOR has acknowledged the importance of connecting the terrestrial and lake areas under a more integrated corridor conservation framework.

Nevertheless, the surrounding terrestrial areas are controlled by several land use and zoning authority, including a large international mining corporation (PT Vale), protection forests<sup>7</sup>, and production forests (see Fig. 2, Robinson, 1986). MEFOR recognizes the inconsistencies of assigning a conservation area limited to the lakes, which is further fragmented by different land ownership authority and uses and has sought to bring together the various actors for a more comprehensive approach. Meanwhile, PT Vale, as the largest nickel mining company in the world, has faced external pressures from activists on both social and environmental issues (Robinson, 2019). The company is also engaged in various corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, in part to improve their standing among multiple stakeholders. Their CSR profile includes various community engagement activities, and more recently, PT Vale has sought to incorporate conservation programming into their CSR portfolio. As a result, PT Vale mobilized consultants and engaged with authorities to conduct assessments to fulfill their HCV

commitments.

#### 5.2.2. CCB – MSA of the Malili ancient lakes

In expanding the areas of the EEA, MEFOR identified PT Vale as a strong partner. PT Vale conducted their HCV assessments through a well-funded and professional team, providing a strong basis for scaling up the assessments to form an EEA. The company's approach to the HCV assessments also applied the formal guiding principles listed in MEFOR's<sup>8</sup> conservation bureaucracy. PT Vale quickly mobilized the consultant team using their own funds, hired consultants to follow the seven principles of HCV contained in the policy, and identified potential spots to be included in the possible EEA site. Similar to the Maros-Pangkep case, the multistakeholder arrangements proceeded quickly, but because the land, in this case, was private land, there was even less of a mandate to reach out to other stakeholders. In this way, PT Vale worked through their consultant team of experts and expanded on their existing relationships with an NGO, Burung Indonesia (the national branch of Birdlife International), to conduct their assessments.

#### 5.2.3. Indications of an EEA tied to the conventional bureaucracy

Conducting HCV requirements 1–7 requires a considerable amount of time. However, the consultant contracts were limited in scope to fulfill the fact-finding dimensions, and the push to create an EEA was streamlined to follow material documentation against existing regulations. The fact that the EEA process is unfolding on private lands with a high degree of autonomy of a powerful land manager, in this case, has reduced the incentive to engage in more collaborative stakeholder

<sup>7</sup>In Indonesia, protection forests are distinct from conservation forests. Protection forests are designated to protect water resources and address erosion concerns, while conservation forests are specifically designated for species protection.

<sup>8</sup>In the form of Directorate Generale regulation 2017 on ABKT. The Indonesian version of ABKT, although mirroring the HCV requirements, slightly differ. For the purposes of this paper, we still apply the terminology of HCV for broader international readership and familiarity.

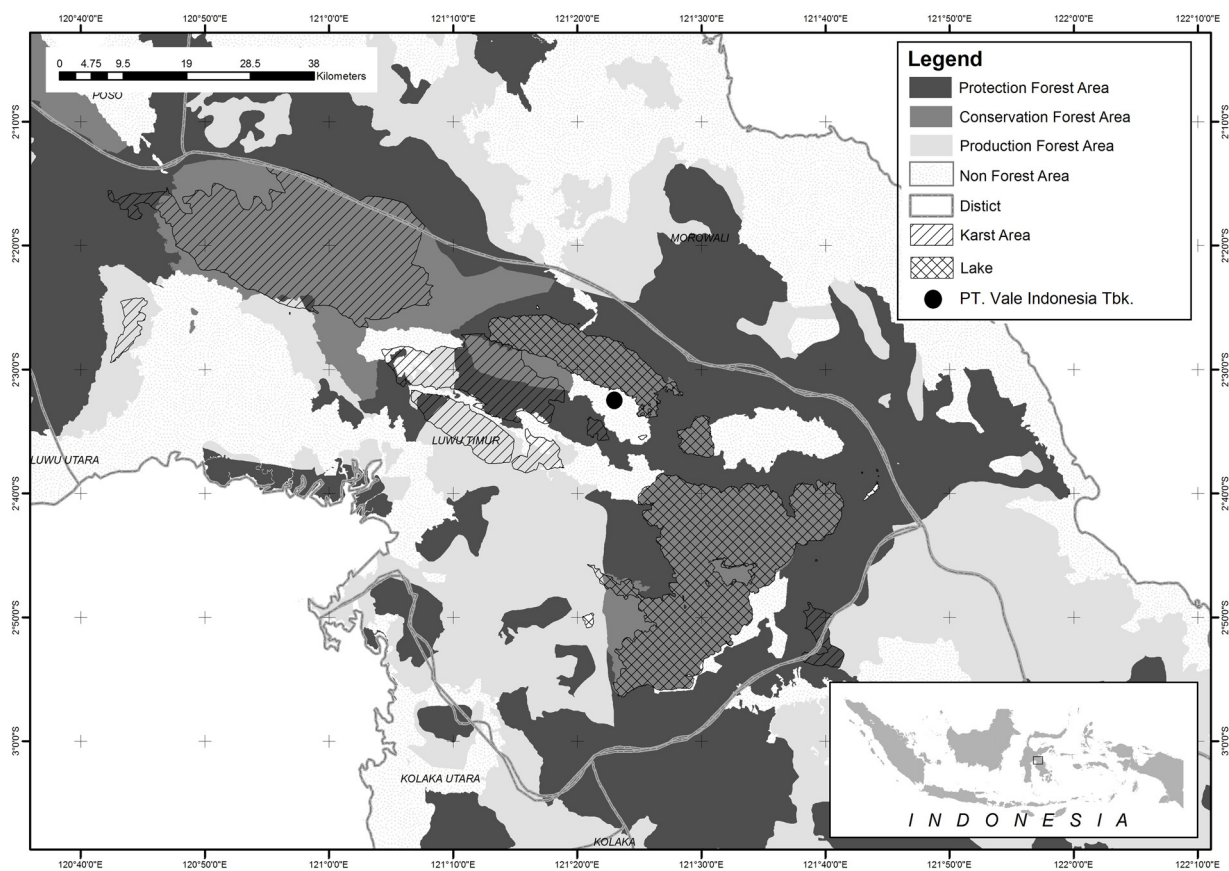


Fig. 2. The ecosystem corridors of the Malili ancient lakes.

forums that involve different actors. Indeed, PT Vale is comfortable following the instrumental policy dimensions, taking their cues from the existing conservation guidelines at MEFor without feeling the need to develop any meaningful targets that respond to other relevant partners. The historical issues associated with dispossession and the sensitivity of the extractive land development model has also led PT Vale as the main proponent to proceed cautiously with the sharing of information and led them to focus their interests on remaining compliant with national regulations. As a result, our assessment of this case points to seeking safety in the rearticulation of existing conservation policy, leaning on the dominant information of the classical conservation bureaucracy while maintaining overwhelming decision making autonomy and authority. Though still in the early stages of preparation, it is likely that this case does not point to a new paradigm of multi-stakeholder collaboration or the establishment of a new conservation model. Rather, PT Vale seems to prioritize the material interests of being legal, and although expressing a willingness to mobilize experts and finance the necessary assessments, they are less interested in establishing new mechanisms for more responsive and deliberative approaches to conservation.

## 6. Conclusion

According to the regulations, replacing the classical conservation bureaucracy model with the new voluntary mechanisms envisioned by EEA policy is not as easy to achieve as it might seem. We began by conceptually differentiating the two different policy approaches and highlighted the opportunities for a new model of conservation to emerge from outside of the classical conservation zones, pointing to the potential of new models to supersede the classical models from outside the conservation zone. We developed a framework for testing this policy potential at existing sites, and also sought to apply its heuristic at

two cases experimenting with early policy implementation. The framework we developed takes its strengths from the ability to categorize the overall background of land and power at the EEA sites. Several key findings emerge from our research.

The first is not only in the land and power framework that we propose for studying global interests to apply a new conservation area management model but also for the way that we approach studying policy in parallel with its formulation. Research often comes to its conclusions long after the policy moment has passed. Here we present a build-as-you-go framework that we envision others can apply to various stages of policy preparation. We believe that this model will serve to help researchers describe the challenging realities that exist in conservation area management in Indonesia, both in the classical and the newly proposed zones, even long after the policy moment passes.

Secondly, the site-specific findings of this research in the two cases we have explored – one on public and another on private lands – were unable to establish a new conservation paradigm beyond the classical approaches to conservation area management. The stakeholders at each site did not apply a new model that is responsive and deliberative of local and broader conservation interests. Over time, initiatives were trapped within the closed doors and rigid structures of the classical model, and although sites were outside of the classical conservation zones, they were relegated to the same treatment of classical bureaucratic conservation processes. In other words, though the cases were envisioned to apply a new model for conservation outside of the conservation zones, the bureaucratic considerations were interpreted from the viewpoint of the classical conservation bureaucracy. Although we showed these findings at the two sites examined, the findings cannot be generalized across all 35 EEA cases currently being proposed across Indonesia. Indeed in other provinces and districts, with other actors and contexts that can influence the process in different ways, there may be opportunities to establish new pathways for management regimes that

are more responsive to the broader vision of EEA policy.

The two sites also suggest a third early finding that requires further inquiry. These sites point to the ease that existing institutions go about co-opting the lofty goals of international initiatives through the quotidian processes of bureaucratic power such as, in this case, on EEA (and HCV) applications, and how quickly the bureaucratic instruments, in turn, mobilize to undermine them. Nevertheless, the findings from these two cases also highlight several principles for consideration in the policymaking process. The most obvious is in the process of creating and establishing the map. Even though the maps in these cases are still indicative, they were also quickly promoted to push for meeting formal area targets. More participation during these mapmaking decisions that allow meaningful stakeholder engagement could serve to introduce greater upward accountability. The same also applies to the comprehensive needs assessment, whereby planning processes and overall approaches for determining priorities and indicators are rooted in transparency and accountability that is more representative of key stakeholder interests, rather than pursued meeting formal bureaucratic targets.

### Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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### Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary material related to this article can be found, in the online version, at doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2020.104789>.

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