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# **The Impacts of Forest Management Discourse and Conservation Practices**

**The case of Hutan Harapan in Indonesia**

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**Abstract**

Political ecology research has been prone to link conservation efforts and development programmes with structural relations such as neoliberal political economy. This thesis argues that this linkage is a too simplistic judgment and that more nuanced contextual understandings of the impacts of conservation programmes are needed. It does this by contextualizing the links between international conservation agendas and everyday environmental management. Using the framework of Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis this thesis analyses the impacts of United Nations forest conservation discourse and practical conservation efforts. Empirical field work from the 'Hutan Harapan' ecosystem restoration concession in Indonesia is used in this thesis and demonstrates the usefulness of contextual research in theoretical discussions. Working within a relational worldview, the results show that customary land claims, historical implications and international conservation discourse contributes to an ambiguous understanding of property over forest land. With an emphasis on the importance of language the thesis further shows that holistic perceptions of forest-based benefits are permeated through conservation efforts that differs from that of forest-dependent people who resides in conservation areas.

<b>Chapter 1: Framing the problem</b>	<b>4</b>
Introduction and background	4
Research problem and questions	7
Structure of analysis	7
Previous research	9
The contribution of this thesis	12
Theoretical framework	12
Philosophy of science	12
A Theory of Access	14
Methodology	16
Grounded Theory	16
Critical discourse analysis	17
The strength of this approach	20
The limitations to the use of critical discourse analysis	20
Description of interviews and coding	21
<b>Chapter 2: Analysis</b>	<b>27</b>
Analysis part 1: How are conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan anchored in United Nations forest discourse?	27
United Nations Global Objectives for Forests	27
From UN objectives to Hutan Harapan: Discursive points of convergence (and divergence)	30
Analysis part 2: Conflicts over access to forest-based benefits within the Hutan Harapan concession area	38
What are the benefits?	38
Access to capital, markets and labour	40
Ambiguity over property rights	43
Power relations in Hutan Harapan	46
The internal challenges of Hutan Harapan	50
<b>Chapter 3: Discussion and conclusions</b>	<b>52</b>
Discussion	52
Discursive formation of indigeneity	53
Global valuation of nature	56
What is the alternative?	57
Conclusions	58
References	60

## **List of figures**

Figure 1: Type of natural forest products harvested by each group.....	38
Figure 2: Power relations in the Hutan Harapan ecosystem restoration concession.....	48

## **List of pictures**

Picture 1: Aerial photo of the staff camp in Hutan Harapan ecosystem restoration concession.....	5
Picture 2: Recently planted trees and crops in accordance with landscape agreements.....	41
Picture 3: Border area between the concession area and adjacent palm oil plantations.....	49

## **List of tables**

Table 1: Description of the analysis' use of theory and critical discourse analysis.....	8
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## **List of maps**

Map 1: Map of the Hutan Harapan ecosystem restoration concession.....	6
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## **List of annexes**

Annex 1: United Nations Global Objectives for Forests.....	64
Annex 2: Transcript of interview with Operational Director in PT REKI.....	65
Annex 3: Transcript of interview with Head of Stakeholder and Community Engagement.....	68
Annex 4: Transcript of interview with Project Manager in Burung Indonesia.....	71
Annex 5: Transcript of interview with Manager of Environmental Research Department.....	77
Annex 6: Transcript of interview with Nardawo, a migrant living in the concession area.....	80
Annex 7: Transcript of interview with Aini, a leader from the indigenous group Batin Sembilan.....	83
Annex 8: Transcript of interview with a policeman and a delegate from the army.....	86
Annex 9: Coding of interviews and categories.....	89

# Chapter 1: Framing the problem

## Introduction and background

Nature conservation programmes and natural resource management have been heavily debated issues within political ecology, human geography and development studies. Within these debates issues of land appropriation for environmental ends and land property rights have been analysed in-depth including their relation to forest conservation practices and sustainability agendas (Deininger, 2011; Bulkan, 2014; Hein and Faust, 2013; Buergin, 2016). Many scholars have raised concern over land rights to local communities, as land pressure issues arises many difficult problems such as issues of ancestral versus legal rights (Anaya, 2005), economic potential versus protection of indigenous peoples' rights (Beckert et al., 2014), and numerous related land pressure issues which in one way or the other relates to the valuation or commodification of nature. However, within the debates of land appropriation and political ecology there are often used definitive terms such as "green grabbing" or land grabbing which can obscure intrinsic nuances in conservation efforts by conclusively portraying that livelihoods of local communities are challenged or neglected by structural relations such as neoliberal political economy. Based on qualitative research, it is within this debate that this thesis will attempt to nuance the picture. More precisely, the focus area of this thesis is exactly *how* local forest-dependent communities are affected. Moreover, in an attempt to understand the link between overarching structural agendas and practical conservation efforts, this thesis will through a discursive lens analyse the impacts of international conservation discourse upon forest-dependent communities that reside within conservation areas.

The point of departure for analysing the above issue will be the case of a lowland rainforest area in Sumatra, Indonesia, called Hutan Harapan, meaning the "Forest of Hope" in the Indonesian language. The area is an approximately 100.000-hectare conservation area under heavy pressure from adjacent palm oil plantations. Historically, forest land in Indonesia, and on Sumatra in particular (Fearnside, 1997, p.553), have been under heavy pressure as a result of Indonesian "transmigration" programmes from 1905-1989 that relocated millions of people from the overpopulated islands of Java, Madura, Bali and Lombok to Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi and other islands that possessed "unharvested" natural resources (Fearnside, 1997; Hardjono, 1988). By 1989 a total of approximate one million families as part of the official program and an approximate of two to three million families independent of the transmigration programme had been relocated from Java to the outer islands of Indonesia (Fearnside, 1997, pp.553-555).

The Hutan Harapan project is managed as the first ecosystem restoration concession (ERC) in Indonesia. The concept of ERC was developed, together with the Indonesian Ministry of Forestry (today merged to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry), by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), Burung Indonesia (Birdlife International's Indonesian affiliate) and Birdlife International, as a strategic legal instrument to reverse the deforestation caused by logging companies and subsidised palm oil companies and paper pulp companies (Buergin, 2016, p.280).

To manage the Hutan Harapan concession area the three NGOs Burung Indonesia, RSPB and Birdlife international created the non-profit foundation Yayasan Konservasi Ekosistem Hutan Indonesia which is the major shareholder of the private company PT Restorasi Ekosistem Indonesia (PT REKI), which has been established to fulfil legal requirements in the management of the concession (Buergin, 2016, p.284). PT REKI and its approximately 200-man staff (annex 2) is the presence of the ecosystem restoration concession 'on the ground' in a staff camp located in the northeast corner of the Harapan concession area with their security personnel, researchers, community engagement personnel, patrol guards, management, kitchen staff and drivers. The creation of the company PT REKI makes an interesting case for this analysis as their goal first and foremost is to restore Hutan Harapan's ecosystem balance rather than achieving financial revenue. However, as the analysis will show, the balance between financial income and environmental protection is a delicate one.

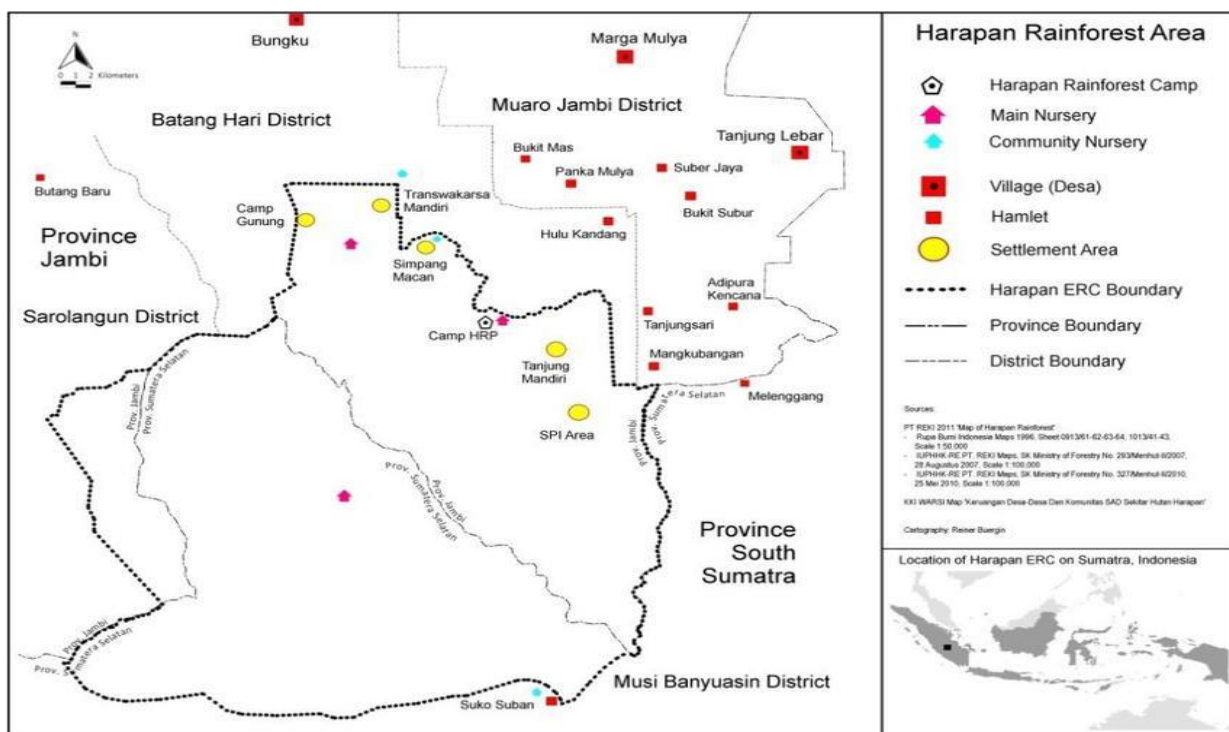


Picture 1: Aerial photo of the staff camp in the Hutan Harapan ecosystem restoration concession (PT REKI, 2018).

Conservation concessions in Indonesia date back to national forest management reforms in 2004, after which private actors were able to implement forest conservation within state forest land (Walsh et al., 2012, p.35; Hein 2013 in Hein and Faust, 2013, p.22). In short, responsibilities previously undertaken by the Indonesian government such as forest conservation, environmental protection and allocation of land use permits could after the reforms be exercised by private

conservation companies (Hein and Faust, 2013, p.22). Within the concession area PT REKI has made landscape agreements with local communities which allow them to reside in the area. The primary condition in these agreements is that the communities stop deforestation which can be further promoted through collaboration on sustainable forest management through agroforestry practices. Agroforestry is a concept derived from combining agriculture and forestry which in short can be described as the cultivation of trees in combination with crops and livestock (World Agroforestry Center, 2013, p.7). The concept of agroforestry is by the United Nations considered a sustainable model for combining environmental, social and economic aspects of forest practices (FAO, 2017).

The concession area is located in the two provinces of South Sumatra and Jambi (see map below) with its main area in Jambi. Jambi is a province which is prone to many multi-layered conflicts over land claims due to the presence of numerous different actors with different economic and socio-cultural incentives (Beckert et al., 2014, p.76). Further, the struggle over Indonesia's rapidly diminishing primary forest resources is rooted in a long history of contradictory laws and regulations and an accompanying struggle of power between different actor groups (Beckert et al., 2014, p.85).



Map 1: Map of the Hutan Harapan area (Buergin, 2017).

## Research problem and questions

Land claims and deforestation in Indonesia to a large extent caused by palm oil companies (Hunt, 2010, p.188) and conservation agencies is therefore often depicted as their natural counterpart as they work to conserve protected areas and ecosystems, and the local communities that may reside in the conservation area. However, and as will be analysed in this thesis, conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan, justified by normative green narratives, can also affect livelihoods and the land claims of forest-dependent communities living within the concession area. While this impact on local livelihoods may be happening as an unintended side-effect of conservation efforts, it is relevant to uncover exactly how international conservation discourse can affect forest-dependent communities. The case of Hutan Harapan will thus be used as an exemplification of how international conservation rhetoric is executed in local conservation projects and the consequences it entails.

The above considerations have led to the following research question and sub-questions:

Research question:

- **How can international conservation discourse affect Indonesian forest-dependent communities?**

Sub-questions:

1. *How are conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan anchored in United Nations' forest discourse?*
2. *How are conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan affecting local forest-dependent communities' access to forest-based benefits?*

## Structure of analysis

The sub-questions are used as tools to answer the main research question above. The analysis for this paper is therefore carried out in two steps, each step following the above two sub-questions. Further, the two steps will be guided by the three-dimensional model of Norman Fairclough's (1993) critical discourse analysis. The specific elements of the model will be presented later, where the reader also will be reminded of the different dimensions' application.



The first step of the analysis will analyse United Nations forest discourse with the aim to understand the motivation and global rhetoric that guides conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan. This step of the analysis will make use of three interviews carried out with staff from PT REKI and Burung Indonesia in Hutan Harapan and analyse the discursive areas of convergence and divergence to the United Nations “Declaration on Global Objectives for Forests”. Accordingly, the first step will make us of the first two dimensions of Norman Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis which is i) the analysis of discourse practices at a macro level and ii) the analysis of texts (Fairclough, 1993, pp.3, 231).

The second step of the analysis will analyse how the conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan are affecting the access to land and forest-based benefits of the local forest-dependent communities residing in the concession area. This step of the analysis will be based on interviews with staff working with various aspects of conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan, as well as people that reside in the concession area. The second step is thus applying the third dimension of Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis as a tool to understand iii) the social practice of which the discourse is a part (Fairclough, 1993, p.231). To understand the social practice in Hutan Harapan, and the impacts of conservation efforts, “A Theory of Access” (Ribot and Peluso, 2003) will be applied. The specific contents of this theory will be presented later.

It should be made clear that the purpose of this analysis is to understand the impacts ‘on the ground’ by way of Fairclough’s three-dimensional model and that the purpose of this thesis is not to demonstrate the applicability of Fairclough’s approach. Finally, to assist the reader in understanding the connection between critical discourse analysis, sub-questions and theory, the table below has been developed.

Sub-question and part of analysis	Dimensions of Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis	Theoretical application
<i>1. How are conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan anchored in United Nations forest discourse?</i>	i) Analysis of discourse practices ii) Analysis of texts [with the focus on interdiscursivity]	This section follows the outline presented by Fairclough in “Discourse and Social Change” (Fairclough, 1993)
<i>2. How are conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan affecting local forest-dependent communities’ access to forest-based benefits?</i>	iii) Analysis of the social practice of which the discourse is a part	A Theory of Access

Table 1: Description of the analysis’ use of theory and critical discourse analysis

In sum, the purpose of the two steps of the analysis is to understand how global rhetoric on forest conservation efforts are used in conservation projects which can affect local forest-dependent communities' access to forest-based benefits. A second purpose of the two-step analysis is to clearly depict and understand the transition from global fora to local engagements and their impact on the ground. Before we move on to the theoretical framework and methodology it is necessary to present the research area that this thesis operates within.

## Previous research

Within political ecology and critical geography numerous contributions portraying critical perspectives on conservation efforts have been given. As already mentioned, perspectives on appropriation of land for environmental ends and capitalist oriented incentives on resource extraction have been presented to explain how green agendas and neoliberal political-economy are fundamentally linked (Brockington and West, 2012; Fairhead et al., 2012; Rulli et al., 2013; MacDonald, 2005; Corson and Macdonald, 2012). 'Green grabbing', or the appropriation of land or resources for environmental ends, has been argued to constitute an important part of an explosion of land grabs 'disguised' as, or justified by, conservation efforts (Corson and MacDonald, 2012, p.263; Fairhead et al., 2012, p.237). While the rhetoric or justification for appropriation of land can initially appear as unethical or misleading of the actual purpose, the term 'green grabbing' also covers unintended consequences of conservation projects which transfer ownership of land from the powerless to the powerful (Fairhead et al., 2012, p.237). Corson and MacDonald describe how green grabbing is part of an enclosure of the 'global commons' in which historically influential conservation actors have embraced the market, resulting in privatised, commercialised and commoditised nature under a neoliberal umbrella (Corson and MacDonald, 2012, p.264). Despite the numerous academic contributions concerning land and green grabbing it is, in effect, an example of a "counter discourse" in opposition to neoliberal land appropriation and resource extraction. As this thesis will pay great attention to, the shaping of discourse and "counter discourse" are at the root of struggles over land (Escobar, 1995, p.170) in which development agencies, local communities and national policies are intertwined. With reference to land claims, the importance of discourse in social mobilisation and hereditary land claims are equally important. Accordingly, as David Harvey argues, discursive formation is operating simultaneously on various scales (Harvey, 1996, pp.173-174). Attention in academia has been given to wide-ranging aspects of this issue from formulation on intergovernmental panels on indigenous rights, (Anaya, 2005) to specific cases of cultural affirmation (Bont, 2015) as well as on competing discourses of sustainability (Kopnina, 2013). Further, Arturo Escobar has analysed the politics of difference that

evolve around place-based ethnic and environmental movements in the context of neoliberal globalisation (Escobar, 2008). Escobar in particular has paid great attention to the academic bias of Western scholarship, development discourse and programmes (especially the World Bank) and its implications for struggles in the developing world (Escobar, 1995, 1998). In sum, critics of environmental conservation projects often argue that it involves alienation of land as well as negative implications for local livelihoods (Fairhead et al., 2012 p.242; Corson and MacDonald, 2012, p.264).

In an attempt to counter negative implications and the disarmament of 'local' communities and indigenous people, participatory or community-based approaches to conservation and forest practices have gained ground. Poor conservation outcomes have further shifted policy makers to re-evaluate the role and perception of communities in natural resource conservation from *barriers* to *instrumental drivers* (Agrawal and Gibson, 1999, p.629). Accordingly, decentralisation within forest management has in the past decades progressed extensively around the world as it, at least in principle, brings control of forest management closer to forest-dependent communities (Larson et al., 2007, p.252). An increase in academic literature concerning 'forestry decentralisation' and community participation naturally followed the forest reforms and shift in policy to determine the effects on livelihoods and conservation efforts (Larson et al., 2007, 2010; Larson and Ribot, 2004, 2007; Duncan, 2007; Ribot et al., 2010; Kellert et al., 2000; Agrawal and Gibson, 1999). Jesse C. Ribot has written extensively on this topic and contributed with critical approaches to community-based forest resource management. Correspondingly, Ribot has provided scholars with analytical tools to approach and cover aspects of participatory natural resource management, making room for both global and local scales (Ribot, 1993, 1995, 1998, 1999; Larson and Ribot, 2004, 2007; Ribot et al., 2010, Ribot and Peluso, 2003).

Critics of decentralisation policies have argued that they are less than effective as they do not consider the differential aspects of 'community' but rather treat it as a simplistic and holistic notion (Agrawal and Gibson, 1999, p.629). Larson and Ribot have further argued that seemingly "neutral" or "fair" decentralisation policies reproduces unequal access to resources in which structural inequalities are reproduced that favours urban-based and local elite (Larson and Ribot 2007, p.189). As such, they argue that "efforts to increase the rural poor's benefits from forests cannot rely on "neutral" policies" (Larsen and Ribot, 2007, p.189). Their perception is instead that policies must be designed, implemented and enforced with an affirmative approach (Larsen and Ribot, 2007, p.201; Larson et al., 2007, p.251).

Taking a step further back, implications of natural resource management is part of a wider debate on perspectives on place and the role of capitalism in conservation. Accordingly, David Harvey argues that local conflicts over natural resources are transcended by a more structural class struggle (Harvey, 1996, p.359). Doreen Massey adopts a different perception and advocates for the understanding of place as processes instead of static enclosures (Massey, 1995). Noel Castree has questioned Harvey, Massey and other critical geographers' perspective on place by arguing that the notion of a 'local' domain is misguided as it contradicts "a fundamental ontological fact of our time: namely, that the global is in the local" (Castree, 2004, p.135). In his 2004 article "Differential geographies: place, indigenous rights and 'local' resources" Castree discuss the work and perceptions of place of Michael Watts, Doreen Massey and David Harvey. He does this by contesting a presumed progressiveness of working *with* the people on the ground by arguing that indigenous communities "are struggling for differential geographies: that is, the right to make their own places rather than have them made for them" (Castree, 2004, p.136). The discussion on place and the role of indigenous communities are therefore closely interlinked. Or as Manuel Castells argues, resistance identity of local communities struggling for territorial claims are international in compass (Castells, 1997).

In sum, the issues of place, territoriality, capitalist discourse in natural resource management and the commodification of nature are not new and have been prone to scrutiny in particular from the critical authorities of Escobar and Harvey. The issues have been, and still are, an integral part of the school of Political Ecology which in its modern neo-Marxist use got a revival from Eric Wolf's 1972 essay on the connections between ownership, ecosystems and economic change (Wolf, 1972). Harvey further argues that the interrelation between ecology and politics makes it imperative that we get a better handle of environmental management and ecological questions (Harvey, 1996, p.182). While the first generations of political ecologists were attentive to structures and less to actors and their agency, today's political ecologists engage with both through "practice theory" (Biersack, 2006, p.5). Following this, Castree argues that more flexible explanatory and evaluative vocabularies are needed to understand the diversity of place projects around the world (Castree, 2004, p.163).

Finally, as this paper is based on field work in Indonesia it is relevant to mention that large amount of previous research on conservation, natural resource management and community engagement in the context of Indonesia and Southeast Asia have been conducted. With a vast amount of natural resources, forest land and numerous different ethnic groups the region is naturally subject for research. The work of Marcus Colchester (Colchester, 1994; Colchester et al., 2007) has paid

great attention to the rights of indigenous people while Stephanie Steinebach (2013) has analysed local communities' strategic constitution as indigenous. Others have covered the local impacts of the decentralisation and land allocation policies within Indonesia's forest sector (Palmer and Engel, 2007; Brockhaus et al., 2011; Resosudarmo, 2004). Within the province of Jambi, struggles and conflicts over land and natural resources has been studied by Beckert et al. (2014), Buergin (2016; 2017) as well as by Hein and Faust (2013).

## The contribution of this thesis

This thesis contributes with insights that can help nuance the debates within political ecology that critically assess the impacts of conservation programmes and environmental discourse. Further, through the use of discourse analysis and field work the strength of this thesis is the combination of a theoretical discussion and an empirical case. Additionally, this thesis will showcase the importance of critical awareness of language and the practical implications discourse entails for everyday practices. A case study as this will thus offer concrete and context-dependent knowledge (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p.303) through a theoretical and discursive lens. Finally, as the Hutan Harapan ecosystem restoration concession is the first of its kind in Indonesia, and aims to work as a model for replication, it is relevant to contribute with case-specific knowledge under the Indonesian institutional framework which can help balance future issues of conservation practices in Indonesia.

## Theoretical framework

Below the critical realist position of this analysis will be presented followed by a presentation of the theoretical foundation of A Theory of Access.

## Philosophy of science

The analysis and the methodology in this thesis is operating within a political ecology framework and with the use of theory (A Theory of Access) that evolved out of critical reflections from empirical research. Correspondingly, this thesis has its offset in critical realism in which the ontological field is of great importance to the choice of methods as it is related to the material circumstances and practical contexts (Sayer, 2000, pp.17, 19). Furthermore, the thesis' analysis of international forest discourse's impact on local forest-dependent communities leads into the

ontological realm of critical realism in which the underlying structures of society influences the observed development within the field of research (Sayer, 2000, pp.14-15). It does this by identifying underlying discourses' impact on social practice while recognizing historical discursive transformations that have formed current and 'settled' discourses, and the human agency and material reality that they have been shaped upon (Bhaskar, 1998, p.136).

The epistemological approach in this thesis also follows critical realism as the knowledge obtained refrain from stating conclusive laws regarding open systems while emphasizing that this does not include abandoning explanation (Sayer, 2000, p.5). Further, a critical realist position assumes that the ontology of society is an open system which is prone to changing circumstances (Bhaskar in Laclau and Bhaskar, 1998, p.11). Thus, the constantly changing field of research is a key point which relates to the critical discourse analysis and the political ecology framework. As will be elaborated upon below, the critical discourse analysis is based on the premise that power relations and discourse is constantly challenged and changing in the social domain. This thesis shares this ontological point of view, which guides the epistemological approach in which the aim is to uncover the underlying structures, and in this case discourses, that influences the observed reality. Further, Roy Bhaskar argued that society and open systems exists irrespectively of our knowledge about it, but that there is an "extra-discursive" reality in which discourse is a case of mechanism that operates "on the world and is embedded in the world" (Laclau and Bhaskar, 1998, p.11-12). Following Roy Bhaskar's perception, this thesis will thus, particularly by drawing on the work of Norman Fairclough, bridge discourse analysis and critical realism as it usefully puts the discursive practice in an active relation to reality (Fairclough, 1993, pp.41-42).

An important element which have guided the outcome of this paper thus relates to that of the epistemic fallacy. In this thesis, the relational character of subject-matter and the dualistic notion of structure and praxis have been adopted through a critical realist perception of transcendental realism (Bhaskar, 2011, pp.184-185). The consequence is thus an approach which acknowledges underlying structures' impact on social practices and the limits to our knowledge of them. Further, the approach involves a stratified ontology (Sayer, 2000, p.12) through an analysis of discourses and their relation to, and impact on, social practice.

The implications of these choices naturally lead to the acknowledgement that other choices would induce other interpretations of the social practice. However, due to the limited empirical material, I shall argue that critical realism in this case remains the most feasible approach for generating relevant knowledge. As an example, a positivistic determination of conclusive laws that shapes the

social practice, based on eight days field work (despite the interesting methodological exercise it may entail) appears untenable. Consequently, it is not expected that social science's description of reality remains stable across time and space (Sayer, 2000, p.13). Finally, the critical realist expectation of open systems and discourses to be more "messy" than our theories and interpretation of them has led to the choice of a very contextually founded theory: A Theory of Access.

## A Theory of Access

The theoretical foundation for this thesis' analysis of social practice will be based on Nancy Lee Peluso and Jesse Ribot's (2003) "A Theory of Access". Nancy Lee Peluso is a Distinguished Professor of Forest Policy at the Department of Environmental Science, Policy, & Management at the University of California, Berkeley and Jesse Ribot is a professor in Geography and Geographic Information Science at the University of Illinois. A Theory of Access is developed by the two authors because they found the need for an adequate theorisation and definition of the term access. In their theory of access, they describe how property analysts and natural resource theorists frequently use the term access without contesting or considering its inherent notions (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.153). The key elements of their theory will be presented below followed by a description of its relevance for this thesis.

### *Ability over rights*

The main anchor of the theory is the definition of access as "the ability to benefit from things" (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.153). This definition distinguishes itself from prior approaches as it differentiates between having the *ability* to benefit from property rather than having the *rights* to property (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.154). By focusing on the actual ability to benefit from things the theory opens up for a useful contextual theoretical approach for analysing complex patterns of property rights over natural resources. After obtaining a first-hand observation of the complexities in Hutan Harapan it has become clear that a clear delineation is needed of the implications for what actors officially have the right to and who the actual beneficiaries are. Thus, the theory proves useful as it provides a framework for analysing:

"(...) all possible means by which a person is able to benefit from things. Property generally evokes some kind of *socially acknowledged and supported claims* or rights- whether that acknowledgement is by law, custom, or convention. The rights associated with law, custom and convention are not always equivalent." (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.156).

In this regard, the theory provides an adequate toolbox for the analysis of social practices. It further helps to theorise social change by putting the concept of access in the contextual political-economic framework (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.160), which in this case is the conflicts over forest-based benefits in Hutan Harapan. Correspondingly, the multiplicity of ways that these access mechanisms work is key in understanding the complexities of resource access (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.172). Taking a step deeper, A Theory of Access provides a framework for analysing power patterns as well as their influence by structural mechanisms.

#### *Bundles and webs of power*

Around benefits and beneficiaries are various types of power relations that must be analysed to understand the “webs of access” in question (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.159). According to Ribot and Peluso, the range of power over the natural resources in question are exercised and embodied through and in the mechanisms and processes which affect people’s ability to benefit from resources (Ribot and Peluso 2003, p.154). They explain how the “webs” or “bundles” of power over resources are constituted by the material, cultural and political-economical dimensions of the case in question: “Some people and institutions control resource access while others must maintain their access through those who have control” (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.154). The dimensions and the power relations change over time, which thus transforms the access to resources (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.154).

#### *Structural and Relational Mechanisms of Access*

In connection with power relations, Ribot and Peluso pays attention to the importance of structural and relational mechanisms. The structural and relational mechanisms can be described as the political-economic and cultural frames within which access to resources is sought (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.164). They further nuance the structural and relational mechanisms by describing how they are influenced by access to technology, capital, markets, knowledge, authority, social identities and social relations (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.165). In the multi-layered conflictual province of Jambi and with a pressure on land from Indonesian and international political-economic conditions, it is necessary to identify the structural and relational mechanisms of access at play. As put by Ribot and Peluso: “The ways various access mechanisms fit into political-economic moments must be determined empirically” (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.160).



### *Relevance and use of theory*

A Theory of Access provides a comprehensive framework for analysing power relations in the context of natural resource management. As the core of the theory is the actual ability rather than the right to benefit from things it is useful for analysing the complex patterns of forest-based benefits and power relations of the numerous stakeholders in and around Hutan Harapan. By applying the theory in relation to the empirical foundation it works as a toolbox to systematically approach a case with a multitude of interests. Further, by involving structural and relational mechanisms of access the theory can support an analysis of the discursive impact on the social practice in Hutan Harapan. The dimensions of structural and relational mechanisms also help nuance the discussion that follows the analysis. The theoretical backdrop therefore contributes to an informed interpretation of interviewee's statements in relation to the social practice. As such, this thesis is both informed by the theory as well as applying it contextually.

## Methodology

This section will outline the methodology used in answering the research question: *"How can international conservation discourse affect Indonesian forest-dependent communities?"*

The section on methodology is divided into three sections. First the grounded theory framework is introduced. Secondly, the use of critical discourse analysis will be discussed including its strengths and limitations. Finally, the field work, interviews and their coding and categorisation are presented. Particularly because of this thesis' dependency on the empirical data I have sought to be as transparent as possible in my description of the interviews. Accordingly, the number of pages spent on the interviews may seem excessive but should provide the reader with an ability to critically reflect upon the conclusions drawn. The criteria of transparency and self-critique is often an integral part of political ecology research (Biersack, 2006, p.26).

## Grounded Theory

This thesis draws on "grounded theory" methodology in which data collection and analysis reciprocally inform and shape each other through an emergent iterative process (Charmaz, 2011, p.360). The thesis' grounded theory character differs from that laid out by Glaser and Strauss as it does not generate its own contextually founded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.6), but instead borrows from the empirically founded theory presented by Ribot and Peluso (2003). Following this, the research design has been shaped upon and around the collected data and not vice versa. It is in this regard important to emphasise that this thesis does not abide fully to Glaser and Strauss

principles of “generating” theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.31) but instead adopts a grounded theory *character* which ensures flexibility and adaptability towards the empirical data.

The foundational data collection took place at an earlier time and it is thus the extraction of new knowledge from coding and interpreting the interviews, which iteratively (re)shape the analysis, that provides the thesis with its grounded theory character. In particular within grounded theory coding of interviews is a fundamental strategy. An example of research adaption from this thesis is the focus on forest-based benefits in the second part of the analysis which was extracted from the analysis of discursive points of convergence in the first part of the analysis.

Within grounded theory, different epistemological positions have evolved. This thesis adopts the aspects of relativity and reflexivity in the research process of the constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2011, pp.364-365) and endorse its belief about nature and reality in which we are influenced by and influencing history and culture (Mills et al., 2006, p.2). Further, the analytic power of grounded theory in social justice inquiry (Charmaz, 2011, p.361) reads well into the realm of political ecology, in which critical nature towards environmental management and political-economic organisation are uncovered (Harvey, 1996, p.176).

## Critical discourse analysis

In order to identify linkages between international forest discourse and the conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan I have chosen to perform a “critical discourse analysis”. A critical discourse analysis is based on text analysis in which empirical data is analysed in the social context (Fairclough, 1993, p.1). On a more general level, discourse is by Fairclough considered the determination of meaning or structuring of knowledge and social practice (Fairclough, 1993, p.3). This determination or structuring do not just reflect social relations, but construct or constitute them in which certain discourses are in the process of fixating their meaning (Fairclough, 1993, pp.3-4).

The critical discourse analysis is based on Norman Fairclough’s three-dimensional model for text analysis that maps the connections between language and social practice (Fairclough, 1993, pp.225-240). The model provides a rather comprehensive toolbox for critical discourse analysis, which can be used as guidelines in various arrangements depending on the nature of research (Fairclough, 1993, p.225). As such, I will not describe the three dimensions in detail but instead describe Fairclough’s model on a more general level and subsequently discuss its strength and

limitations for this analysis. When considered necessary in the analysis, detailed explanations of Fairclough's model will be presented.

The three dimensions in Fairclough's model includes i) analysis of discourse practices (at a 'macro' level), which mainly focuses on intertextuality of "discourse samples", ii) analysis of texts and iii) analysis of the social practice of which the discourse is a part (Fairclough, 1993, p.231). Although Fairclough allows different offsets for a critical discourse analysis he suggests an overall pattern which involves a progression from interpretation of the discourse practice, to description of the text and finally to an interpretation of both of these in the light of the social practice in which the discourse is embedded (Fairclough, 1993, p.231). Further, the objective of a critical discourse analysis is to show features, patterns and structures which are typical of certain types of discourse (Fairclough, 1993, p.231).

For this analysis i have chosen to follow this progression by first scrutinizing what discourse(s) that guide international forest rhetoric by identifying relevant patterns and structures of reasoning in the UN document on "Global Objectives for Forests". This document has been chosen as I, partly due to my own work in the field, consider the UN's agenda on forest conservation representative for the agendas of national development agencies and conservation NGOs as those working in Hutan Harapan. Numerous other UN policy documents could have been analysed, which would induce different results, and the document should therefore be seen as a tool to understand the relation between international discursive formations and the social practice. Secondly, the transcript of three of the conducted interviews will be used in the critical discourse analysis to depict the 'interdiscursivity', or points of convergence and divergence, between conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan and United Nations discourse. The three selected interviews<sup>1</sup> are 1) Operational Director in PT REKI, 2) the Head of Stakeholder and Community Engagement in PT REKI and 3) Project Manager from Burung Indonesia. These three were chosen as they by way of their positions are well informed of PT REKI's agenda, are involved in broad range of the conservation efforts and for the simple reason that I consider the interviews of appropriate quality and length. In neither of the three interviews a translator was needed. Additionally, I consider the opinions of interviewee 1) and 2), by way of their leading positions, representative for the work of PT REKI. Interviewee 3) has been selected because of his key position in Burung Indonesia, in which he is both critical towards the activities of PT REKI while maintaining a representative position for an environmental NGO. Thirdly, the social practice of which the discourse is embedded in will be analysed in the second

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<sup>1</sup> Three of the interviews are used both in the first and second part of the analysis albeit with different purposes. In the first part they are used in the text analysis for identification of 'interdiscursivity', and the second part as part of the coding of all the seven interviews.

part of the analysis with the application of Ribot and Peluso's A Theory of Access. Fairclough's position on relational power relations reads particularly well into the theoretical position on ability over rights which will be elaborated upon later.

When engaging with discourse analysis and discourse theory it is necessary to touch upon the notion of dialectics. In his book "Discourse and Social Change" Fairclough pays great attention to Michel Foucault and his attention to "interdiscursivity". Correspondingly, Fairclough advocates for use of Foucault's dialectical position and "sees social subjects as shaped by discursive practices, yet also capable of reshaping and restructuring those practices" (Fairclough, 1993, p.45). Following his conception, it implies that power and discourse is not something that someone possess, but rather that which is constitutive of *and* constituted by the social order and has an active relation to reality (Fairclough, 1993, pp.41-42). Accordingly, Fairclough argues that:

"[a] consequence of the articulatory struggle I am envisaging is that new elements are constituted through the redrawing of boundaries between old elements"  
(Fairclough, 1993, p.70).

The difference between Fairclough and Foucault lies in Fairclough's emphasis on the discursive practices constraint because they take place within a constituted material reality, with preconstituted objects and social subjects (Fairclough, 1993, p.60). This indicates the importance of the ontological field of research as referred to in the section on critical realism. Further, it points to the relevance of the social practice which will be analysed in the second part of the analysis. Moving deeper into Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, the notion of hegemony indicates that there exists overarching construction of meanings (Fairclough, 1993, p.93) which is worth a study in itself. In the analysis below I have, partly due to my own preconceptions, presumed a hegemonic role for the United Nations. I will further argue that UN discourse represents what Fairclough terms an "institutional order of discourse" or more broadly "societal order of discourse" (Fairclough, 1993, p.207) within development work. Fairclough further elaborates upon the "technologisation of discourse" in which the order of transnational or international discourse is an increasingly important factor in bringing (discursive) change about, often through designated social agents (Fairclough, 1993, pp.200, 215).

Correspondingly, I will by answering the sub-question "*How are conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan anchored in United Nations forest discourse?*", seek for three possible outcomes. First, to understand the underlying discourse(s) behind international forest rhetoric. Secondly, to find

similarities and differences in the interviewees' reasoning and the UN objectives. Thirdly, it will work as an offset to discuss the social practice in which the discourse is embedded.

## The strength of this approach

The purpose of a critical discourse analysis is to understand the linguistic-discursive dimension of social and cultural phenomena which according to Fairclough has been neglected in solely linguistic approaches (Fairclough, 1993, pp.19-20, 35). Correspondingly, the critical discourse analysis reads well into the purpose of the research question of this thesis, as it provides a toolbox for linking social practice with discursive macro-practices and in this case the link between discursive formations in the UN to everyday environmental management. Further, this approach strengthens the relevance of the rather limited number of interviews as the critical discourse analysis is especially relevant for a small number of "discourse samples" (Fairclough, 1993, p.230). Finally, the relational understanding of discourses and their constitution reads well into this thesis' emphasis on a relational understanding of place and the interrelation of physical settings and "outside" influences (Massey, 1995, p.190).

## The limitations to the use of critical discourse analysis

One of the limitations to the critical discourse analysis in this thesis is the rather simplified way of approaching the UN document on global objectives for forests. According to Fairclough, an analysis of the discursive practice involves scrutinizing "(...) the processes of text production, distribution, and consumption", (Fairclough, 1993, p.78) which, besides from a few general remarks on the UN's role, will not be dealt with in detail. Following this, I consider the discursive practices around political negotiations of UN policy development a mouthful too big to be fully uncovered in this analysis. Finally, as mentioned in the section on critical realism, the underlying premise for working with critical discourse analysis is that discursive practice both reflects and actively contribute to social change, and to uncover that social change (Fairclough, 1993, p.12). Therefore, this application of critical discourse analysis is operating at a meso-level, which identifies impacts of discourse, but refrain from uncovering in detail why discursive formations have taken place. To diminish this limitation the issue of historical discursive formations will be considered in the discussion.

## Description of interviews and coding

As presented earlier, the systematic analysis and coding of interviews have been shaped by the grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.18). Following this, the research in this thesis is based on collection of information and interviews conducted through an internship in the second half of 2017, before the actual process of thesis writing and the development of a research design began. This has implications for the conclusions that can be drawn and for the operationalisation of the analysis. Naturally the scope and depth of the thesis would benefit from an additional field visit and additional interviews. This is, due to practical matters such as distance, time, money and access to interviewees, not possible. Consequently, I will in the following sections describe the interviews, their limitations as well as the coding and categorisation of statements.

### Description of interviews

In September 2017 seven interviews were conducted with eight different people who are affected by, or working with, conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan. The eight interviewees were: Project manager from the NGO Burung Indonesia, a leader from the indigenous group Batin Sembilan, a migrant who have settled in the area, Operational Director from the concession holder PT REKI, Head of Stakeholder and Community Engagement in PT REKI, Manager of Environmental Research Department in Hutan Harapan, police officer working with forest protection and a delegate from the army working with forest fire prevention. The latter two were interviewed together, due to a not yet understood misunderstanding, as both of them showed up for an interview and I thus considered it impolite to ask one of them to leave.

The length of the interviews ranged between 25-60 minutes, depending on the interviewee's eagerness to talk. In three of the seven interviews it was necessary to use a translator who during the field visit also acted as gatekeeper to the interviewees. The interviews were all semi-structured "life-world" interviews, sharing a similar structure with the aim to uncover a personal story on the matters at hand (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p.19). The questions were, however, all adapted to the circumstances and situation of the interviewees. All of the interviews were recorded and subsequently transcribed. The quotations used will be directly extracted from the transcripts which means that the word order, in some cases, may appear somewhat peculiar in relation to the rest of the text.

## Positioning

The interviews were made on behalf of the Danish embassy in Indonesia as a continuation to a biannual monitoring visit. The reason for performing the interviews was for the embassy to get a better understanding of the complex issues on the ground as well as to communicate difficulties with forest conservation issues. Luckily, I was able to get the embassy's and not least all the interviewees consent to use the interviews for this master thesis. I was further authorised by the embassy to direct the interviews in any manner I would find relevant.

The Danish embassy has since 2010 supported the activities in Hutan Harapan through the NGO Burung Indonesia. As the Danish funds are the main contribution to the conservation activities in Hutan Harapan, there is an important matter of positionality regarding the interviews which needs to be touched upon. One could anticipate that a more glorified picture of the activities would be presented to those 'paying the bills'. Luckily, perhaps only for the quality of the interviews, the Danish funding for the activities will come to an end by December 2018, which by the time of the interviews was a well understood and fixed certainty. Secondly, as my position merely was an intern or what many understood as the rank of an assistant, and because I, in most cases, was of much younger age than the interviewee, there was no admiration or prestigious attentiveness to my position. A phenomenon which, in my experience, is otherwise heavily tended to in Indonesia. Correspondingly, it was only in the joint interview, with the police officer and delegate from the army that a willingness to 'please' and request for additional funding came across. This may have been due to their less central and thus less informed positions about the expiration date of funding. In the remaining interviews with staff from the concession holder and the NGO critical reflections on the role and expectations of donors came across. Further, the interviewees presented numerous seemingly unsolvable problems which in a different context could have reflected poorly in a potential request for additional funding. As such, it was my experience that positionality did not influence on the honesty of the interviewees' responses. However, my position as embassy employee may in some cases have directed the discussion in the interviews towards the common reference point of donor funding. Correspondingly, the interviewees may (perhaps unconsciously) have expressed themselves in a manner they expected that I wanted to hear (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p.52). Secondly, as the interviewer has control of the interview there always exists some notion of asymmetrical power relations between interviewer and interviewee (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p.52).

Interviewing people from a culture different than your own can also lead to misunderstandings and difficulties due to both cultural and linguistic barriers (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p.164). Although I was, due to my internship, somewhat acquainted with Indonesian culture and customs there were examples of misconception or confusion. One example was related to translation in which an Indonesian phrase repeatedly was referred to or translated as “stomach” or “for their stomach”. I later discovered that there were no direct English translation of this phrase and that the closest reference was, perhaps unsurprisingly, ‘basic needs’. Another example of misconception was related to customs or difference in reference points. I considered it the appropriate approach to start every interview with a polite explanation of my background, the purpose of the interview, in what context it would be used and finally for their consent for this use. However, in the interview with the leader from the indigenous group Batin Sembilan it was clear from his (and the translator’s) body language and answer that this was an unnecessary and time-consuming exercise of politeness as we were ‘just talking’, and whether or not the interview would be part of my master thesis were of no interest to him.

### Limitations to the interviews

There are a number of limitations to the interviews and their use in this thesis. Firstly, the fairly small number of interviews with people from different positions and perspectives makes it difficult to make conclusive generalisations based on the interviewees’ statements. Secondly, the interviews were carried out over an eight days field visit and therefore only provide a snapshot of the daily reality in Hutan Harapan. Thirdly, my access to interviewees were provided by the NGO Burung Indonesia and there may be a bias in relation to who they were acquainted with in the concession area. To diminish these factors of the limited material I have systematically selected and analysed the instances in which there are overlapping statements and shared reference points through both a coding and in three of the interviews also a critical discourse analysis. Finally, contextual academic literature from the area have been used to enhance the understanding of the complex patterns in Hutan Harapan. Below the coding of interviews will be described.

### Coding of interviews

In order to answer the sub-question “*How are conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan affecting local forest-dependent communities’ access to forest-based benefits?*” a coding of the seven interviews has been done. This involves fragmenting empirical data through codes and working with these to create abstract categories which fit these data and can be conceptually analysed (Charmaz, 2011,



p.361). Following this, it can saturate data with meaning that leads to innovative analyses (Charmaz, 2011, p.363). It is in this regard crucial to mention that the coding of relevant statements has been done according to my own preconception and understanding of the issues at hand in Hutan Harapan. As Glaser and Strauss argues, insights from personal experiences should form the systematic theorising of data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.252). Consequently, in the process of coding, special attention has been given to general notions of conflicts, solutions, challenges, constraints, (power) relations and beliefs.

### Categories and their descriptions

Based on an initial coding of statements in the interviews 30 codes were created (see annex 9 for specific codes and their connection to categories). The 30 codes were subsequently transformed into seven categories which were coined to separately approach and understand the issues that were considered most relevant as well as most often referred to. It is in this regard important to mention that all categories have not been given equal amount of attention in the analysis. While the categories are used specifically in the analysis they also have a crucial function for a mapping of the issues in, and my personal understanding of, Hutan Harapan. The seven categories are presented below followed by a description of their relation to each other.

#### *Memorandum of Understanding*

An incremental part of PT REKI's work in Hutan Harapan is their community engagement with the local communities, which is based on mutually agreed upon and signed landscape agreements or *Memorandum of Understandings* (MoU's). The details of the MoU's differentiate based on the involved stakeholders. However, the overall objective of the MoU's is to ensure forest-dependent communities' commitment to stop deforestation.

#### *Provision of information*

This category was formed based on statements which relates to PT REKI's attempt to educate and provide information on sustainable forest practices for forest-dependent communities. This category includes PT REKI's promotion of information about agroforestry practices and is nicely problematised by the statement by one of the interviewees "you should inform them that you are actually helping them" (annex 4, p.73).

### *PT REKI's overall mission, accomplishments and challenges in Hutan Harapan*

This category is formed from the largest number of identified codes and includes interviewees' view on the visions, accomplishments, critique of approaches, and financial situation. The category is based on statements regarding the general rather than specific challenges of PT REKI.

### *Benefits of forest land*

The benefits of forest land category is based on the interviewee's statements about financial and other potential benefits from forest land.

### *Encroachment*

A continuing factor to the problems of forest conservation is the encroachment from migrants working with adjacent palm oil companies. Continuous encroachment of forest land area is further the principal reason for PT REKI's creation and their operation on the ground. Interviewees' statements regarding law enforcement as a necessary tool to prevent encroachment has laid the ground for this category.

### *Batin Sembilan*

The Batin Sembilan is the indigenous group residing in the concession area. Although this thesis has its offset around impacts for forest-dependent communities, which the Batin Sembilan is part of, the interviewees' continuous differentiation of the Batin Sembilan from other local communities was incentive for the creation of this category.

### *Historical implications*

Changing political circumstances and historical state regulation is of great relevance to the current situation in Hutan Harapan. Additionally, migrant settlements prior to the creation of PT REKI and the ecosystem restoration concession framework, have created delicate problems of legal property rights versus ancestral land claims.

The seven categories are of very different and overlapping character and it is thus important to describe their relation to each other. *Historical implications*, *encroachment* and *benefits of forest land* are impetus factors to *PT REKI's overall mission, accomplishments and challenges in Hutan Harapan*. The *Memorandum of Understanding and provision of information* is part of PT REKI's solution to the challenges on the ground. The *Batin Sembilan* is both a historical presence and representing the necessary consideration of human settlements in conservation efforts. Finally, *benefits of forest land* are of great importance as PT REKI are encouraging forest-dependent

communities to change their forest practices, in which the discussion of economic potential versus environmental consideration are essential.

## Chapter 2: Analysis

This chapter is divided into two parts that deals with the following aspects. The first part will solely focus on the discursive relation between the United Nations' Global Objectives for Forests (hereafter referred to as the "UN objectives") and the physical setting of Hutan Harapan. This will in some sections include a return to the specifics of Fairclough's thoughts on critical discourse analysis. The second part will use these identified points in an analysis of the internal challenges within the physical setting of Hutan Harapan. This separation of the analysis has been made to clearly understand the global discursive 'translation' into the physical setting and thus the impacts of international discourse in relation to the social practice.

### Analysis part 1: How are conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan anchored in United Nations forest discourse?

To understand the 'translation' of United Nations discourse to the physical setting of Hutan Harapan it is necessary to first uncover what discourse(s) that lie behind the UN objectives. Therefore, I have with the use of Fairclough's model for critical discourse analysis firstly analysed what discourse(s) that the UN objectives are guided by and subsequently the relation to the three selected interviewees' statements concerning Hutan Harapan.

#### United Nations Global Objectives for Forests

In order to understand the UN Objectives (the full objectives can be found in annex 1) it is necessary to touch upon the reason for producing and communicating the messages. It is in this regard that Fairclough's model asks the guiding question: "What is represented?" (Fairclough, 1993, p.234).

The UN objectives was the outcome of the United Nations Forum for Forests' (UNFF) sixth session. As is stated in the objectives, it is representative of the United Nations and agreed upon by the delegates of the member states. It therefore represents "shared global objectives" which the member states "agree to work globally and nationally" on (annex 1, p.64). When considering the United Nations' all-encompassing and guiding role in international fora it can initially be concluded that the objectives anticipate more than one sort of audience (Fairclough, 1993, p.233). Correspondingly, words and phrases such as "increase efforts", "significantly increased" and

“additional” (annex 1, p.64) portrays the rather simple rhetoric of ‘doing more’ rather than setting specific quantified targets, which member states can abide to or work towards. Accordingly, the UN objectives have a more general, or even universal, character as they should be adoptable in forest practices in various social and political settings around the world. One could therefore expect that a policy document at a ‘lower’ level would consist of more quantified targets. Nevertheless, there are relevant points which can be extracted from the objectives.

The UN objectives are comprised of four different and related targets: 1) Reverse Forest Loss, 2) Enhance Forest-Based Benefits, 3) Increase Sustainability Managed Forests 4) Mobilize Financial Resources. The first and fourth target relies on the similar assumption that current conditions of forest practices are insufficient or unsustainable. This is visible in the wording of *reversing* the current conditions of *forest loss* (target 1) and the *decline in official development assistance* as stated in target 4 (annex 1, p.64). Additionally, the advocacy for additional funding demonstrates an affirmation of the necessity for financial capacity to promote “sustainable forest management”. In general, there is an overarching attentiveness to the relevance of “sustainable forest management” as it is mentioned as a final outcome in three of the four targets. The definition of the concept is not stated in the UN objectives but the Food and Agriculture organization of the UN (FAO) defines sustainable forest management as:

“[a] dynamic and evolving concept [that] aims to maintain and enhance the economic, social and environmental values of all types of forests, for the benefit of present and future generations” (FAO, 2018).

Accordingly, there is an intrinsic alertness in the UN objectives towards securing benefits of future generations as well as optimising forest value. The third target can therefore be characterized as the overarching end-goal in which the proportion of sustainably managed forest is increased, which is achieved by following the three other targets. The observations most relevant for this analysis can be made when turning to target 2, which is to:

“Enhance Forest-Based Benefits: Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people” (annex 1, p.64).

This indicates a clear acknowledgement of forests as a benefit on various parameters rather than simply an area to be cleared for financial purposes. This acknowledgement and change in approach historically grew across the world following the 1992 Earth Summit, which highlighted the

problems of deforestation and its threat to biodiversity (Escobar, 1998, pp.56-57; van der Maesen and Cadman, 2015, p.48). The perception of forests as a benefit is interesting because it also explains the cause for continuous struggle over land, or rather, over benefits from land (Beckert et al., 2014, p.76; Hein and Faust, 2013). Moreover, such an understanding or the 'commodification of nature' is deeply ingrained in forestry-practices all over the world and valuation of ecosystem services and biodiversity has thus been heavily debated. While some scholars have tried balancing the social, ecological and economic elements of nature through valuation models (Laurila-Pant et al., 2015) others have discussed the implications of the valuation in itself. An example of the latter is Zografos and Kumar's analysis of biodiversity valuation, in which they argue that valuation of biodiversity can function as a system of cultural projection and further that it can increase self-reflection upon consumption choices, thus increasing attention to conservation (Zografos and Kumar, 2010, p.4). Arturo Escobar has described discourses, such as the UN objectives, that guide global development fora as the "Globalocentric perspective" of global discursive formations in which "resource management" is the focus point of global contexts of science, cultures and economies (Escobar, 1998, p.55). Finally, commodification of biodiversity and forests are an integral part of neo-Marxist critique of (predatory) capitalism concerning natural resources and land appropriation. As touched upon in the section on previous research, numerous critiques of commodification of nature and appropriation of land for environmental ends have been presented with David Harvey as one of the most prominent critical authorities. He points to the eighteenth-century thought of Bourgeois political economy which articulated nature as a "resource" which have been impetus to the current valuation or commodification of nature (Harvey, 1996, p.150). The reason for this sudden short deviation and rebound to assessment of literature is twofold. One is an acknowledgement of the challenge the discourse on 'commodification of nature' has been through, which requires a larger scrutiny too big for this analysis to uncover in detail. Second is to display the linkage of discursive formations in global fora and their impact on the ground by portraying its wide-ranging impact and attention.

Another relevant point to make regarding target 2 is the inclusion of forest-dependent people to enhance forest-based benefits. As will be discussed further in the context of Hutan Harapan, forest-dependent people have also been perceived as a barrier to the enhancement of economic forest-based benefits, which further constitutes the delicate balance between "economic, social and environmental benefits" of forests (annex 1, p.64). Accordingly, it is important to point to exactly how forest-dependent people are alluded to in the UN objectives. Forest-dependent people are only mentioned once and with the use of the determiner *including*, which establishes its connection to forest-based benefits. Historically, the acknowledgement of forest-dependent (and

especially indigenous) people in UN forest and conservation practices has been a continuous struggle. An example is the UN Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) programme which have been subject for critique by indigenous groups who argue that it fuels and justifies state control over forest resources (Hein and Faust, 2013, pp.3-5). Increasingly, indigenous people have expressed their demands and dissatisfaction through channels of international decision making (Anaya, 2005, p.238; Aiken and Leigh, 2011, p.491) and the importance of their stewardship of nature have similarly been stressed by large conservation organizations (Bont, 2015, p.216). With this historical context in mind, the word *including* can be interpreted as a political correct or obligatory remembrance of the role of forest-dependent people which could be replaced by a phrase such as “without neglecting”. A different perception of target 2 is that it is an actual consideration or acknowledgement of forest-dependent people’s important role in the enhancement of economic, social and environmental benefits. With the two perceptions in mind, it appears that the formulation in the UN document most likely is a negotiated outcome of divergent interests. Finally, as we shall turn to later, it is important to note the UN’s use of the term “forest-dependent” instead of “indigenous” people.

In sum it is now possible to ascertain that the discursive practice in the UN objectives is based on forests as a benefit, inclusion of forest-dependent people, reversing current conditions and increasing sustainable forest management for the benefit of present and future generations. To understand the discursive practice of Hutan Harapan we shall now move to the discursive points of convergence and divergence between the physical setting and the United Nations.

## From UN objectives to Hutan Harapan: Discursive points of convergence (and divergence)

Fairclough describes that an analysis of the discursive practice involves a scrutiny of the *production, consumption, and distribution* of texts (Fairclough, 1993, p.78). As this exercise involves simultaneous analysis and identification of connection of discourse samples, the discursive practice has been dealt with through the lens of conservation efforts in Hutan Harapans’ discursive *relation* to the UN objectives.

### Production

‘Interdiscursivity’ and ‘manifest intertextuality’ are the key elements in the analysis of the text production. Again, interdiscursivity is in this case of a peculiar size as it relates to the whole

purpose of the analysis, to identify linkages between the conservation efforts and the UN. This of course produces a risk of generating a self-fulfilling prophecy, which amplifies the need for identifying areas in which conservation efforts and the objectives do *not* converge. As such, the areas identified are also used for portraying how discourse diverges or rather adapts to the social reality. Therefore, 'manifest intertextuality' is in this analysis particularly relevant to touch upon as it concerns features that are "manifest" on the surface of the text but can be interpreted or "translated" in various ways (Fairclough, 1993, p.233).

The connecting elements that are identified between the conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan and the UN objectives are: 1) forest-based benefits 2) Official Development Assistance (ODA), and 3) forest-dependent people. The notion of sustainable forest management is also present in the conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan, but as it works as a more general discursive frame it will be dealt with separately under the section on consumption. The points of convergence and divergence will be elaborated upon below.

#### Forest-based benefits

The UN objectives' focus of enhancement of forest-based benefits is clearly enunciated in the conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan. As we shall see, this attention is further fuelled by the need to provide a financial alternative to deforestation for forest-dependent people. Accordingly, the Operational Director in PT REKI explained the importance of high prices on rubber:

"We think that planting rubber will be the backbone of our project, since it is closer to the forest species, which do not harm the forest. (...) Maybe there is something valuable in the forest, which we don't know now, but we may know in the future"  
(annex 2, p.65)

He thus confirms the need to both protect and restore the forest while acquiring financial revenue, and thus balancing the economic and environmental benefits presented in the UN objectives. He further explained the importance of having fertile land and the need for introducing fast growing species, which is thus a faster way to create financial revenue (annex 2). The general understanding of forests as a benefit on various parameters is further established by his mentioning of the potential 'unknown' benefit. Similarly, when asked about the prospects for agroforestry the Head of Stakeholder and Community Engagement in PT REKI responded with a critique towards narrow-minded focus on solely monetary benefits:



“If we talk about the benefit now, please don’t say the money first. We are talking about the future” (annex 3, p.70).

He and the Operational Director in PT REKI further argued for the benefits of community engagement *for* the forest rather than *from* the forest, thus emphasizing the overarching environmental value forest protection entails (annex 2 and 3). Finally, the Project Manager from Burung Indonesia highlighted the importance of having a benefit from living in the field while emphasizing that:

“There are also some aspects that cannot be measured just by financial income” (annex 4, p.72).

With an offset from the thoughts of Foucault, Fairclough argues that ‘interdiscursivity’ involves the relation to other discursive formations and the context in which it is articulated, which can explain the rules of a given discursive formation (Fairclough, 1993, pp.45-48). An adoption of this connection thus leads to the conclusion that the attention towards forest-based benefits in Hutan Harapan is driven by global discursive formations which emphasises a multitude of benefits. In sum, we can conclude that the conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan are deeply anchored around the perception of the forest as a benefit on various parameters. Despite the holistic understanding and articulation of forest-based benefits above, we shall see below that financial revenue from forest-based benefits is given an increasing amount of attention.

#### Official Development Assistance

As already mentioned, the conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan are funded by ODA, with the Danish development aid (Danida) as the current main contributor, but with ultimo 2018 as the end date of Danish funding. At the time of the interviews, a prospect for German funding of the activities was discussed but not yet settled (annex 4). Correspondingly, the attention is big towards future financial solutions in management of the concession area.

While the UN objectives clearly state the need for mobilising additional funding through ODA, the perspectives in Hutan Harapan are not as stringent. It can be concluded from their statements that the discontinuation of Danish funding of conservation activities has created an urgent need for financial revenue from forest-based activities thus enhancing the need for forest-based benefits in a more narrow financial sense. The Operational Director from PT REKI stated that:

“Until now, our financial situation is just cost, cost, cost and no actual revenue”  
(annex 2, p.65),

indicating that the discontinuation of funding has been a wake-up call for a change in practice. Or as explained by the critical Project Manager from Burung Indonesia:

“Yes, that [financial sustainability] is another aspect that we are trying to reach. (...)  
But in order to make everybody understand the situation, they should feel it first”  
(annex 4, p.72).

It is thus clear that the source of income for PT REKI's operations are at a potential turning point, which increasingly have turned the focus towards a financial understanding of forest-based benefits.

The awareness of independence from ODA in PT REKI, is somewhat contradictory to Global Objective 4 of raising additional ODA to implement sustainable forest management. While Burung Indonesia and PT REKI are not opponents of ODA (annex 2 and 3), they are very aware of the unsustainability of depending solely on ODA and the willingness of external donors. While there is an aim to balance social, environmental and economic benefits, the initial goal of PT REKI appears to maintain activities through a focus on financial income from forest-based benefits. As such, discourse is both constitutive of and constituted by its relation to social realities (Fairclough, 1993, pp.39-40, 226). Or in this case, PT REKI's social reality of realising the need for different sources of income has directed the discursive practice in Hutan Harapan to rather deviate from ODA and focus on financial revenue from conservation practices through the enhancement of all types of forest-based benefits.

In sum, despite the holistic articulation of forest-based benefits, PT REKI are very aware of the need to acquire financial revenue from the conservation activities. As we shall return to in the discussion, the rather holistic articulation of benefits is not shared by the forest-dependent people in Hutan Harapan.

#### Forest-dependent people

A crucial element of the balancing of benefits in Hutan Harapan is the forest-dependent people that reside in the concession area. As the Project Manager from Burung Indonesia explained:

“The best way to protect the forest is by bringing the community together”  
(annex, 4, p.73).

This statement nicely encapsulates the difficult balance of conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan and the relation to the UN objectives. It indicates the conviction among the PT REKI and Burung Indonesia staff that forest-dependent people are instrumental in bringing about the desired change. The alignment with the UN objectives is thus visible in who the relevant drivers or ‘agents’ of social change are. This attentiveness to forest-dependent people in the UN objectives and Hutan Harapan as instrumental in bringing about desired change is arguably an example of a process of “democratisation of discourse”. While not arguing the process’ finalization, the acknowledgement of forest-dependent people in conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan and the struggle for acceptance in UN fora are interlinked in a “certain democratization of access to discourse” (Fairclough, 1993, p.202). The notion of a democratization of discourse points towards a larger discussion of the role of discursive formations of indigeneity, which we will return to later.

The adaptation of UN discourse to the physical setting of Hutan Harapan becomes interesting when pointing to how the local communities are referred to. In Hutan Harapan there was a clear differentiation between the indigenous group Batin Sembilan and the other forest-dependent communities. They were in the interviews described as having “local wisdom” (annex, 3, p.69) and considered willing to protect the forest “because they consider it their home” (annex 2, p.67). As mentioned by Harvey, indigenous people has been deemed closer to nature (Harvey, 1996, pp.187-188) and therefore considered “natural custodians” of nature (Bont, 2015, p.215). Furthermore, other forest-dependent groups were repeatedly referred to as “migrants” (annex 3 and 4) which specified their historical origin in the area as a result of Indonesian transmigration programmes. What is further interesting in this regard is that while this thesis has attempted an understanding of impacts for *forest-dependent* people the coding of the empirical data showed that indigenous self-constitution is ever-present in Hutan Harapan. Particularly one code labelled “Differentiation of Batin Sembilan from other people” (annex 9), presents the importance of language and adaption of discourse to the social reality. We will later return to the implications of this differentiation but for now it is important to determine that the UN objectives is referring to forest-dependent people and therefore a livelihood-based category rather than historical or cultural categorisations as are used in Hutan Harapan.

In addition to the differentiation identified above, we can now conclude that there are discursive connections between conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan and the United Nations in the perception of forest-dependent people as instrumental drivers of social change as well as in the holistic perception of forest-based benefits, albeit influenced by an urgent need to create financial revenue. Below we shall turn to the implications of these connections.

## Consumption

The consumption of text involves the identification of *coherence* with the aim to analyse the *interpretative implications*, and research into how texts are actually interpreted.

As explained by Fairclough, a text only makes sense to someone who makes sense of it (Fairclough, 1993, p.84). Therefore, I will now pay attention to the interpretative implications or in other words how discourse is effectuated in conservation efforts.

By first attending to the forest-dependent people an example of discursive struggle and its implications come to light. As now firmly established, the inclusion of forest-dependent people has undergone a discursive trial for the acknowledgement in global fora. What is interesting in this regard is its interpretive implications in Hutan Harapan. The Project Manager from Burung Indonesia pointed to the change in approach towards the forest-dependent people:

“Previously we have seen the community as something we should manage. Which means that we have seen them as an object and not seen them as subjects. (...) And now we have to deal with it, while the distrust is already there” (annex 4, p.75).

The current conditions are therefore affected by prior carelessness towards forest-dependent people, which highlights the importance and implications of continuous discursive struggle. Furthermore, the attentiveness to forest-dependent people in Hutan Harapan indicates the impact of global discursive formations and its active relation to reality, as well as the settling or construction of certain systems of belief (Fairclough, 1993, pp.41-42, 64).

With reference to ODA the section on *production* has already covered the connection and implications for efforts in Hutan Harapan, as the discontinuation of funding has directed PT REKI and Burung Indonesia from ODA towards a focus on financial revenue from forest-based benefits. Because of this new direction, the need for maximising forest-based benefits has fuelled the promotion of benefit sharing from agroforestry products and become an essential part of PT REKI's conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan. The revenue from agroforestry products is, unsurprisingly,

following the timeline or life cycle of crops and trees, and the recently implemented practices are therefore still at an early stage (annex 5). This may be impetus to the rather slow transition and acceptance of agroforestry among the forest-dependent communities in Hutan Harapan. Despite struggles over transition to agroforestry (annex 3), the perception remains that it is a crucial element in bringing about the desired change. All three interviewees selected for the critical discourse analysis considered agroforestry the sustainable model for balancing the different economic, social and environmental needs. The Head of Stakeholder and Community Engagement summarised:

“If you ask how to develop Hutan Harapan? The way is agroforestry to connect community needs with forestry.” (annex 3, p.70).

It is therefore possible to conclude that the implications of the discourse of a holistic perception of benefits and the promotion of sustainable forest management have gained foothold in conservation efforts through agroforestry practices. While keeping the reservation that it is not directly extracted from the UN objectives it does work as an exemplification of the implications of international conservation discourse. Appropriately the dialectic relationship, as advocated by Fairclough, between subjects as ideologically positioned and active agents (Fairclough, 1993, p.91) becomes relevant. Whether individually or collectively as active agents promoting sustainable forest management through agroforestry, discourse is communicated while simultaneously being subject to restructuring in accordance with the social practice in question.

## Distribution

The distribution of text involves an identification of the intertextual chains, which is the transformation a discursive sample undergoes in its interpretation and translation to other texts (Fairclough, 1993, pp.232-233). An analysis of the distribution will therefore be at risk of simply echoing the points of convergence and divergence presented above. Therefore, this section will instead be used as a summary of the intertextual chains identified in the analysis above and as a leap to the analysis of the social practice.

To come to an understanding of the discursive practice it is relevant to repeat that this analysis is applying critical discourse analysis at a “meso-level”. This means the identification of linking points in which current and settled discursive formations are adopted or shaped according to the social practice while not neglecting the importance of ever-present historical discursive formations (Fairclough, 1993, pp.47-48). Correspondingly, the instances in which conservation efforts in Hutan

Harapan diverge from the discourses present in the UN objectives are the reconstitution of the discourses through their active relation to reality.

To summarize, the analysis of the two first dimensions of Fairclough's critical discourse analysis has identified the following discursive linking points and their reconstitution in Hutan Harapan. First, the impact of the discontinuation of development assistance has directed the focus towards financial revenue from forest-based benefits in opposition to reliance on external funding. Second, the categorisation of forest-dependent people in UN discourse has shown to be translated to be based on historical and cultural categorisations which are referred to as indigenous and migrant communities. Third, the analysis has shown that there has been a change in approach, as a result of discursive struggle, towards forest-dependent people. The change lies in the prior perception of forest-dependent people as objects to the current perception of approaching them as subjects and instrumental in bringing about change. Fourth, conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan are deeply anchored around the notion of forest-based benefits. Fifth, UN discourse of sustainable forest management, and the balancing of economic, social and environmental benefits, are effectuated through promotion of agroforestry practices in the physical setting of Hutan Harapan.

What has proven interesting in particular is that all the anchor points identified showed that the discourse in question is contested and reshaped in accordance with the relevant social conditions, and by the agents which are constitutive of, and constituted by, discourse. Where Fairclough's outline becomes further helpful is in his denotation of the technologisation of discourse and conscious design of language (Fairclough, 1993, p.216). It is in this regard that I later shall argue that PT REKI, or the 'social agents of conservation efforts', are permeating a different perception of forest-based benefits than that of the forest-dependent people who resides in Hutan Harapan.

In 1999 Norman Fairclough repeated (though with reference to a new social order, and thus out of the need to adapt to changing circumstances) the importance of critical *awareness* of language. He did this by highlighting that people are not simply colonised by discourses but appropriate them in particular ways and reflect upon them in their daily lives (Fairclough, 1999, pp.73-75). It thus becomes relevant to now turn to the social practice of Fairclough's three-dimensional model as it will help fully uncover the colonisation-appropriation dialectic at work (Fairclough, 1999, p.75). This will benefit the reliability of the conclusions drawn, as the entirety of the critical discourse analysis, and the dimensions' connections are an important part of Fairclough's model.

## Analysis part 2: Conflicts over access to forest-based benefits within the Hutan Harapan concession area

In order to understand the social practice, of which the discourses above are part of, the analysis will now apply A Theory of Access in a contextual analysis of the physical setting of Hutan Harapan. Following this, this part of the analysis will be performed with the guidance of the question: How are conservation efforts in Hutan Harapan affecting forest-dependent communities' access to forest-based benefits?

Inherent in Fairclough's model, and in this thesis, lies the assumption that interdiscursivity and other connections are not solely founded in linguistic relations. Evidently, it also spans from PT REKI and the forest-dependent communities' experiences concerning struggles over forest-based benefits. To understand the inherent struggles over benefits in the concession area an initial mapping of the benefit(s) of interest (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.161) is needed. To best conceptualize the forest-based benefits Hutan Harapan carry, a description from a demand-driven perspective will be enabled below. Or put differently, how the different actors in Hutan Harapan understand the notion of forest-based benefits.

### What are the benefits?

In the simplest form, forest-based benefits are that which can be sold as physical goods on local markets or on a larger scale through national or international value-chains. Examples of these are rubber, timber, and non-timber forest products (NTFP) such as animals, durian, nuts, berries, oil or resin. Forest products that are consumed for self-sufficiency are also considered as part of the physical benefits directly extracted from the forest. Historically the Hutan Harapan concession area have been under the license of logging concessions. Accordingly, financial benefits from timber are in the concession area only feasible in the number of instances in which owners have agreed to exchange the cultivation after a trees life cycle (annex 6).

As shortly touched upon, there are differences in the perception of forest-based benefits. A recent survey explored the connection of ethnic affiliation and income source in the Hutan Harapan concession area. While the study shows the interesting result that the Batin Sembilan group is the most dependent on natural forest products, it also provides this analysis with a clear overview of the forest resources harvested. Figure 1 below shows the observed forest products that each group harvested. The study further concluded that the Batin Sembilan was determined to be the

poorest of the three groups and that there is a relation between poverty and reliance on forest income (Widianingsih et al., 2016, p.14).

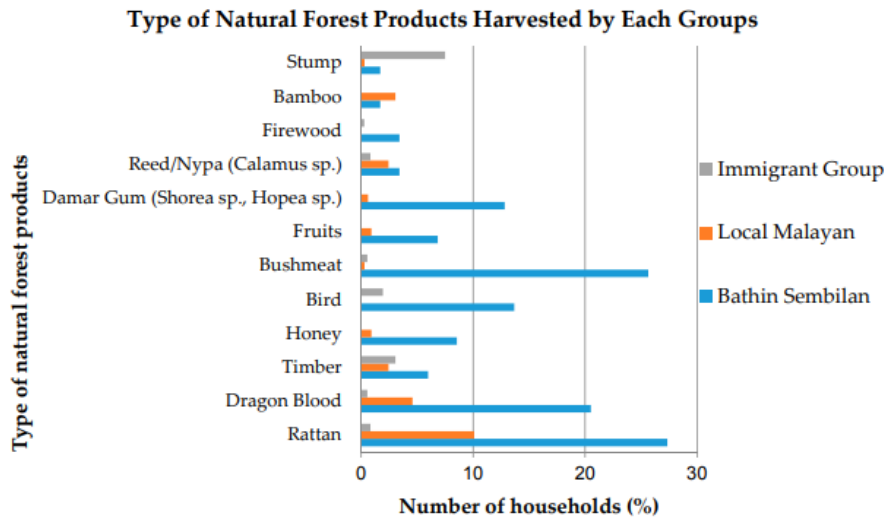


Figure 1: Type of natural forest products harvested by each group (Widianingsih, 2016, p.10).

The interviewee from the indigenous group Batin Sembilan argued that in terms of future prospects he preferred ownership of land over day-labour jobs as it provides safety in future profit, e.g. through the selling of rubber (annex 7). The less tangible notions of ownership of land and sense of security thus relates to the ability to gain financial income. On the other hand, PT REKI's main mission is based on a multitude of benefits such as environmental concern (annex 2), and their perception of benefits also includes environmental value such as reduced CO2 emission and biodiversity protection. It is in this regard that we shall return to PT REKI's articulation of a more holistic and normative perception of forest-based benefits through expressions such as:

“we are doing it for the planet” (annex 2, p.66), and “we are talking about the tiger, the elephant, the water, the landscape” (annex 3, p.71).

In stark contrast to this, financial revenue from the forest appears to be the primary concern for the forest-dependent people. As was nicely encapsulated by Nardawo, a migrant living in the concession area:

“I know that PT REKI is trying to restore the forest (...) But for the moment, since the most profitable is the palm oil, that is what I am planting, because of my stomach [basic needs]” (annex 6, p.81).



With reference to Marx, Harvey argued that money directly and simultaneously becomes the *real* community as it is the general substance for the survival for all (Harvey, 1996, p.120). While this notion reflects the forest-dependent communities current perspective, the adoption of agroforestry under landscape agreements, which will be presented later, points to signs of discursive change in Hutan Harapan. An endorsement of Fairclough's notion on social agents permeating discursive change through conscious design of language (Fairclough, 1993, p.216) thus leads me to the argument that PT REKI's dissemination of holistic perceptions has an impact. I will therefore argue that in the long run forest-dependent communities in Hutan Harapan are influenced to imbue forest-based benefits with different connotations than solely monetary.

What the above description means for an initial mapping of the valuation of forest-based benefits can in the first instance be described in the following way: Access to forest land can provide various sources of income for the forest-dependent people, and from PT REKI's perspective an overall balancing of social, economic and environmental benefits. As mentioned earlier, the idea of undetermined benefits of forest-land further illustrates the overall desirability for access to forest-land of all parties involved.

At a first glance, the *flow* of the benefit of interests (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, pp.161-162) can be determined quite simply as PT REKI's provision or control of access in the concession area. The access is controlled through promotion of agroforestry under landscape agreements. However, there are inherent and continuous power struggles in their management of concession land, and with the use of various access mechanisms, which will be elaborated upon below.

## Access to capital, markets and labour

It is in this regard relevant to ascertain PT REKI's access to capital, markets and labour, and what it entails for their control and maintenance of access to forest-based benefits. Accordingly, the reliance on donor funding again becomes relevant when understood in the light of A Theory of Access. Donor funding and financial capital not only becomes means of maintaining activities of community engagement but also essential in their continuous control and provision of access to forest-based benefits. Essentially, PT REKI's current access to capital is determined by structural mechanisms as the political-economic framework of global donors' willingness to enhance sustainable forest management. However, as now firmly established, PT REKI has shifted their focus towards financial revenue from forest-based benefits. As such, there appears to be a clear understanding of the importance of markets for the ability to acquire financial profit from forest

products. Appropriately, the Operational Director in PT REKI emphasised the importance of geographical proximity to global markets:

“(...) we are very close to Singapore and Jakarta, which means our products can reach everywhere. So we can both sell nationally to Java and Jakarta and maybe we can sell to international markets via Singapore. Which means we have an advantage” (annex 2, p.66).

The emphasis on the exchange value of forest products were considered crucial in the maintaining of activities and access to forest-based benefits. In addition to the access to markets it is similar relevant to underline the markets' structural influence upon the activities in Hutan Harapan. Several interviewees (annex 2, 3, 4) pointed to the changing price of rubber and its impact on the choice of products planted in the concession area. At the time of the interviews the price of rubber was considered prospect for the highest financial income, while still maintaining a sustainable forest product. As such, the Operational Director pointed to the relevance of diversifying agroforestry products to avoid complete dependence on changing market prices (annex 2). In this regard, structural market mechanisms influence PT REKI's ability to maintain and provide access to forest-based benefits.

Harvey explains how the elemental precondition of bourgeois society is that labour should directly produce exchange value (Harvey, 1996, p.120), which brings us to the relation of exchange value of forest products and labour. In their description of structural and relational mechanisms Ribot and Peluso points to the relevance of access to labour and labour opportunities (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.167), which proves helpful in the understanding of the challenges within the concession area. In Hutan Harapan the relation between labour and labour opportunities are not subject to classical patron-client relationships (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.167). Instead, PT REKI, as provisioner of access to land undertake the role of providing labour opportunities in the form of land management, under the precondition that the land is maintained through principles of sustainable forest management. But as we shall see the benefit sharing on forest products between PT REKI and the communities are not always abided to, despite its integral importance of the relationship institutionalised in landscape agreements.

Further, in order to maintain access control PT REKI's actions are dictated by the need to provide financial alternatives for forest-dependent communities. The manager of the environmental research department explained this difficult balance:

“It is frustrating because we battle with the people [who] need the land for their stomach [basic needs]. So conservation work can be very full of dilemmas because one part is the wildlife and the other part is the people” (annex 5, p.80).

Consequently, in order to stop deforestation PT REKI need to provide financial alternatives for the people that otherwise finds work in the adjacent palm oil plantations (annex 5).



Picture 2: Recently planted trees and crops in accordance with landscape agreements (own photograph).

A study of different agricultural land use systems in Sumatra showed an interesting relation between access to land and access to labour, and the socio-economic incentives it entails. In a comparison of jungle rubber, rubber plantation and palm oil plantation the results showed that palm oil demanded significantly less labour per hectare than jungle rubber but created a lower gross margin per unit area. However, the gross margin per unit of labour showed to be the highest in palm oil. The study thus concluded that when labour is limited, farmers have an incentive to grow palm oil, whereas when land is the scarcest factor there is an incentive for the farmers to grow rubber (Drescher et al., 2016, p.5). Within the Hutan Harapan concession area where land surely can be determined as scarce PT REKI's focus on jungle rubber (annex 2 and 3) thus proves to be the best suitable choice of providing financial, and environmentally sustainable alternatives to forest-dependent communities. While the mentality behind this sort of study most likely would be referred to by Escobar as a “quantitative rationality” (Escobar, 1995, p.168) it does portray an important component in the logic behind land clearing for palm oil plantations in Indonesia's vast forest areas.

To summarize, PT REKI's competition over labour with adjacent palm oil plantations and the need to uphold access through provision of financial alternatives encapsulates the commodification of nature in Hutan Harapan. This emphasise the importance of access to capital, markets and labour. As we shall see below, the opposition towards benefit sharing stated in the landscape agreements and competition over forest products is to a great extent influenced by a diffuse understanding of property rights in Hutan Harapan.

## Ambiguity over property rights

Ribot and Peluso emphasise the relevance of “access control and access maintenance” (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, pp.158-159) which in this case points to the important role of the concession holder PT REKI. As the official property holder of the concession area they are mandated as the sole provider of access to benefits for forest-dependent people, and further as the enactor of legal violence through cooperation with authorities. The job description of the policeman and delegate from the army were partly to provide security and control towards encroachers in the concession area (annex 8). Access to authority is thus an integral part of PT REKI's mandate in Hutan Harapan and is therefore foundational for their access, and their provision of access, to forest-based benefits (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.170).

Despite PT REKI's official mandate, their role and responsibilities are both determined and contested on various levels. Firstly, the concession licence upholds certain criteria, which means that their mission cannot conflict with restoration objectives nor deviate from the criteria to equally share benefits with local communities (Walsh et al., 2012, p.35). This further establish PT REKI's perception of forest-based benefits as environmentally and socially constituted. Further, official and legal claims made by PT REKI can challenge forest-dependent communities customary claims. In the legal acquisition of the concession area, the historical implications show to be of great relevance and were exemplified by the interviewee who were identified as a migrant (due to his parents' migration to the area in the early 1980s). He shed light on the implications on the numerous legal changes and arrangements that Indonesia's forest areas have been prone to (Beckert et al., 2014, p.85):

“I know this forest since 1984, before PT REKI was created. (...) Before the permit to cultivate the land came through I was arrested and put before the court on the allegation that I used the forest without a permit. (...) PT REKI should acknowledge the people who were already living inside the forest” (annex 6, p.80)

The story portrays the legal entanglement in which forest-dependent people can find themselves in, under changing institutional legal regimes in the province of Jambi (Beckert et al., 2014, p.75; Steinebach, 2013, p.68). He further articulated his expectation of PT REKI to provide infrastructure for farmers and sellers (annex 6), thus emphasising the perception of PT REKI as the main representation of authority and provider of access in the concession area.

An element which opposes PT REKI's access to benefits is the global discursive formation of attentiveness to, or inclusion of, forest-dependent people. Ribot and Peluso points to the relevance of some groups' strategical self-constitution as indigenous people under the label of identity-based access (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.171). Global discursive formations used in local conflicts over land in Jambi appear to have an impact on PT REKI's attentiveness to local communities: An example of a case which may have been impetus to PT REKI's consideration, is the 2012 land conflict between the SAD 113<sup>2</sup> (of which the Batin Sembilan and migrant groups were assembling in) and the palm oil company PT Asiatic Persada in which SAD claimed customary land rights through linkage to international discourses concerning indigenous rights (Steinebach, 2013, pp.75, 78). The conflict was a showcase of social movement and mobilization in opposition to land acquisition (Beckert et al., 2014) which may have influenced PT REKI to tread carefully in their community engagement work. In her research of the conflict Stefanie Steinebach argued that "outside groups" brought in their own visions and goals to the SAD 113, thus merging their claims with those of the Batin Sembilan and producing a new dynamic which fought for social justice, economic participation and ancestral rights (Steinebach, 2013, p.74). It is in this regard interesting that the forest-dependent communities strategically emphasise customary land claims by articulating the language of international discourses.

Another show of force from the forest-dependent communities were described by the Head of Stakeholder and Community Engagement. He explained the migrant communities' reluctance in applying to the agreed 15-85 % benefit sharing from forest-based products which their landscape agreement dictated:

"I think it is difficult to get the 15 % from the income, because they want it all. (...) Until now this is the good way because we can't get them to give us 15 %." (annex 3, p.70)

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<sup>2</sup> Suku Anak Dalam (SAD) can be translated to "Tribe of the Children of the Interior", while the number 113 refers to the three villages involved (Steinebach, 2013, p.65).

Accordingly, the migrant communities attempt to be the sole beneficiaries from their agroforestry crops despite their official compliance to the signed agreement with PT REKI. This is further made possible by PT REKI's need to balance environmental and social benefits through inclusive practices.

In a similar line of thought, seven out of eight interviewees who were asked to describe the ownership of the forest argued that the forest belonged to "everybody" or "all of us" (annex 2-8). Despite the answers' rather normative connotations of forests as a common good, it does portray the difficult balance of determining property relations in areas which are enmeshed in historical disputes, legal changes, ancestral claims, socio-economic structural changes, migrant encroachment and land claims. In this regard Ribot and Peluso argues that powerful actors intervene in the name of environmental protection by speaking of a "global commons" (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.169). The intervention in Hutan Harapan is certainly justified by the argument of global environmental protection but in this instance, it also contributes to the ambiguity over property rights. This is particularly interesting when put in opposition to those who do *not* consider their home part of the global commons. Aini from the Batin Sembilan group firmly responded:

"It [Hutan Harapan] belongs to the community and the Batin Sembilan." (annex 7, p.86)

The examples above points towards Ribot and Peluso's arguments concerning ambiguity. In Hutan Harapan the overlapping systems of legitimacy, whether they be customary, legal or conventional notions of rights (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.163), constitute the ambiguity over property and rights, which further can incite forest encroachment. Similarly, several of the interviewees (annex 2, 5, 8) showed understanding of the encroachers perspective because they were merely encroaching for "their basic needs". As put by Ribot and Peluso: "Criminality is matter of perspective" and can in some sense be rights-based (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.164). While it has been argued that native peoples' customary land rights have little force in law and that it does not amount to ownership of land (Aiken and Leigh, 2011, p.479) I shall argue to the contrary within the Hutan Harapan concession area. Discursive formations in Indonesia and within development fora have been impetus to PT REKI's attentiveness towards customary land claims, which has been further nourished by the 2012 SAD 113 conflict.

Ambiguity over property rights is thus at the core of the structural problems in Hutan Harapan, with an inherent discussion of environmental protection versus inclusion of forest-dependent people. In conclusion, we can identify three elements which contribute to the ambiguity over property rights in Hutan Harapan. Firstly, the historical migration has led to a legal entanglement for forest-dependent communities in the aftermath of PT REKI's legal acquisition of the concession area. Secondly, forest-dependent communities are continuously pushing for customary land claims, thus increasing ambiguity over property rights. Thirdly, the articulation of forests as a common global good is diffusing the understanding of property, not least fuelled by PT REKI's understanding of benefits as environmentally and thus globally constituted.

Before this analysis moves on to the depiction of power relations in Hutan Harapan the reader should be reminded of the relationship between power and access mechanisms. The fundamental notion of Ribot and Peluso's theory is the ability to benefit from things, which means that the access mechanisms identified above are akin to "a bundle of powers" (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.153). The power relations described below therefore explains the internal struggles or "webs of power" (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.154) within the physical setting of the Hutan Harapan concession area.

## Power relations in Hutan Harapan

Despite ambiguity over property rights PT REKI is considered the main authority in Hutan Harapan. The perception of them as provider of infrastructure, security, information about agroforestry and as mediator of global discursive practices necessitates a short discussion of PT REKI's provision of information. An application of Fairclough's notion of subjects promoting ideologically invested practices (Fairclough, 2013, pp.90-91) emphasises the important role of PT REKI as main executors of power. In this case, forest-dependent communities' access to technology and knowhow is conditional of their willingness to abide to the landscape agreements, thus constituting PT REKI as the mediator of information (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.168). A related aspect of the provision of information relates to PT REKI's attempt to convince forest-dependent communities of the benefits of agroforestry. As social agents of global discursive formations, information concerning agroforestry as "the good approach" (annex 3, p.71) reiteratively push for the reshaping of forest-dependent communities' perception of forest practices, which establishes PT REKI's powerful position as "those who knows best". However, as the agroforestry practices are recently implemented, the difficulty to convince the communities of "the good approach" is increased as the outcomes and benefits follows the lifecycle of agroforestry products. In this sense, Fairclough's

discussion on social practice tells us that ideologies are first effectual when they become naturalised and achieve the status of “common sense” through the mediation of active subjects (Fairclough, 1993, pp.87-88, 91).

While a contextual analysis of power within the framework of ambiguous property relations proves somewhat complicated the theoretical framework becomes advantageous and particularly its emergence from contextual research shows beneficial. Hence, a determination of who can use *law, custom, or convention*, and for what purposes, uncovers the different instruments of power at stake (Ribot and Peluso, 2003, p.157). As we can now conclude, all three elements are present in Hutan Harapan. PT REKI operates under the law and with the support of state institutions of property. Additionally, through legal enactment they have the monopoly of violence through the upholding of security in the concession area. Despite this legal dimension, the elements of custom and convention are powerful tools in the conflict over access to benefits. Inclusion of forest-dependent communities are, as mentioned, an integral part of global discursive formations which further guides attentiveness towards forest-dependent communities and strengthen forest-dependent communities’ customary land claims. This being said, the power relations in Hutan Harapan remains unequal, especially due to PT REKI’s access to capital and authority.

There are also intrinsic power struggles between forest-dependent communities. As such, the differentiation of the Batin Sembilan in the interviews from other communities evolve out of practical experiences as they appear to rely heavily upon law enforcement and security in their conflicts with other forest-dependent communities. As were explained by Aini from the Batin Sembilan group:

“The migrant encroachers are the biggest challenge. (...) But we cannot do anything about it, because they are many and we are only few. And they have resources, money and connections. (...) For me the best way [to deal with encroachment] is the law enforcement of the government.” (annex 7, p.83)

Correspondingly, a differentiation in the formulated landscape agreements, depending on the recipient communities has been made by PT REKI which reflects their attentiveness to certain forest-dependent communities. As explained by the Head of Stakeholder and Community Engagement in PT REKI:

“(...) the Batin Sembilan agreement is based on landscape, but for the migrants our agreement [is based on] how many hectares each family has per household. So for



the Batin Sembilan it is more of a general agreement. (...) For the Batin Sembilan we didn't put any benefit sharing in [the] MoU" (annex, 3 p.69).

This portrays PT REKI's extraordinary consideration towards indigenous people, which finds its roots in hereditary land claims and global discursive struggles of indigenous people. Working under the discursive frame of international forest discourse, PT REKI thus protects the Batin Sembilan through attempts of inclusive agreements and recognizing greater amount of legitimacy to the land claims of the Batin Sembilan than the migrant communities.

What this analysis fundamentally is pointing towards is a determination of the unequal, dialectical and ever-changing power relations within Hutan Harapan. As depicted in figure 2 below, the forest-dependent communities in Hutan Harapan legitimise land claims through mechanisms of custom and convention and thus exercises power in claims for PT REKI's consideration and its effectuation in landscape agreements. The distinction between the forest-dependent communities depicts the internal struggle and process of constituting oneself as legitimate owner of land. In this regard we can return to Fairclough's perception of power to understand the relational aspects depicted in Figure 2: that power and discourse is not something that someone possess, but rather that which is constitutive of and constituted by the social order and has an active relation to reality (Fairclough, 1993, pp.41-42).

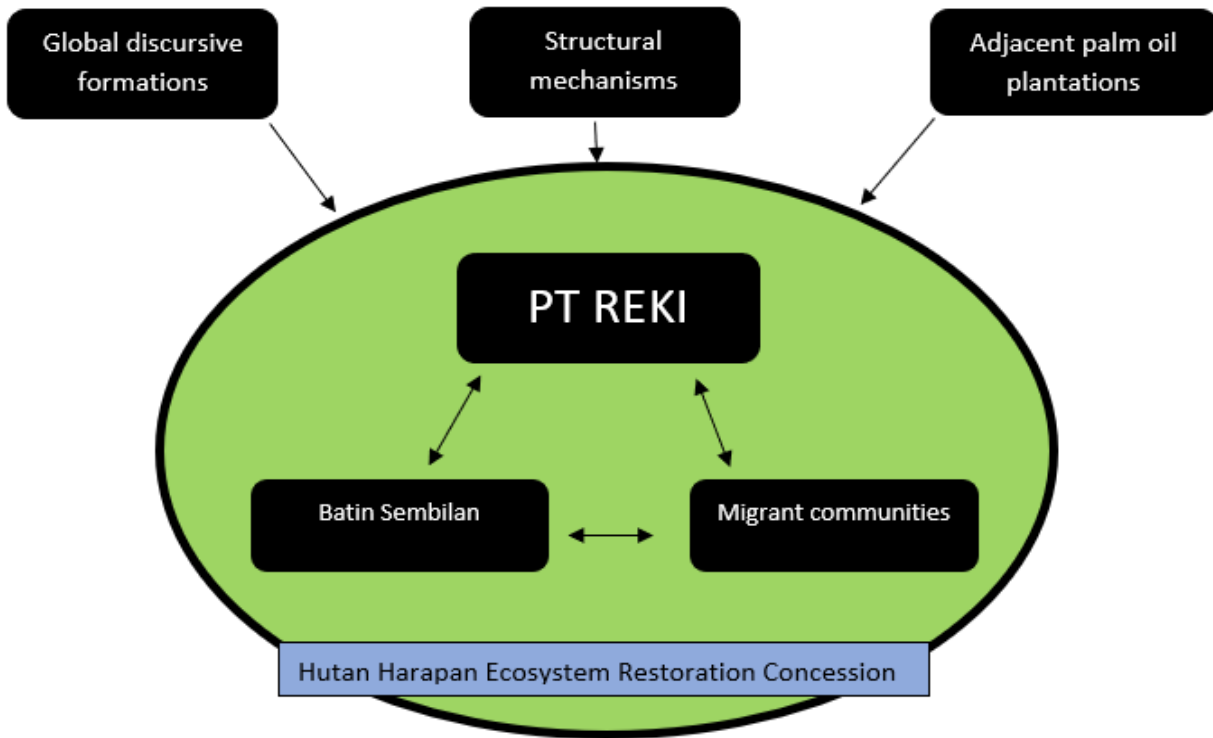


Figure 2: Power relations in the Hutan Harapan Ecosystem Restoration Concession<sup>3</sup>

The figure does not portray the impact of the social practice upon global discursive formations. Consequently, the arrow only points from global discursive formations towards the ecosystem restoration concession and not vice versa. This choice is made because of the analysis' emphasis on this particular physical setting and social practice (Fairclough, 1993, p.226). Accordingly, the clear delineation of external factors and internal actors is made to emphasise the importance of the special case that this analysis is based on. The special case is created by the physical boundary that constitute a separate environment of power relations, discursive formations and social practice. Finally, the adjacent oil palm plantations are included in the figure as it portrays the alternative land use and alternatives for financial income for forest-dependent communities living within the concession area. It should further be noted that deforestation caused by palm oil plantations are impetus to PT REKI's creation and their activities.

<sup>3</sup> Due to the lack of interviews with representatives from what in figure 1 was labelled "local Malayan", the forest-dependent communities in figure 2 remains represented by the "migrant communities" and the Batin Sembilan.



Picture 3: Border area between the concession area and adjacent palm oil plantations (own photograph).

## The internal challenges of Hutan Harapan

In conclusion, the results of the analysis above have shown to be more ambiguous than expected and shown less challenges to forest-dependent people as a result of conservation efforts. Conservation efforts have shown to cause forest-dependent people to find themselves in legal ambiguity in contradictory arrangements of customary versus legal land claims. However, forest-dependent people have also shown ability to capitalise on this ambiguity through social mobilisation and opposition towards benefit sharing.

Global discursive formations have shown to influence and increase PT REKI's attentiveness and consideration towards forest-dependent communities. Further, global discursive formations showed to influence forest-dependent communities' ability to constitute themselves as customary land owners, particularly under the label of indigenous people.

PT REKI's determination of which crops that falls within the "good approach" can affect forest-dependent people to change their land use. On a long-term perspective, the analysis shows that PT REKI continuously will challenge forest-dependent communities' understanding of what forest-based benefits entails. Forest-dependent communities within the concession area is therefore expected to increasingly obtain the principles of "sustainable forest management".

In sum, conservation efforts by PT REKI in Hutan Harapan can challenge forest-dependent people through control of land use but customary land claims, influenced by global discursive formations, can be used by communities to dictate the benefit sharing under landscape agreements. Finally, the access of forest-dependent people to forest-based benefits is maintained and controlled through the concession holder PT REKI.

While the analysis of the internal challenges in the enclosed concession area has given interesting results, there are a number of issues that still require a critical discussion. The following discussion will further enhance the possibility of using the findings in other, perhaps less enclosed settings, but where land pressure conflicts and development agendas are equally present. The final conclusion of this thesis will therefore follow after the discussion.

# Chapter 3: Discussion and conclusions

## Discussion

The first element this discussion will turn to is the implications of the physical setting which this analysis is based on. Although the borders of the concession area are somewhat contested, there exists a delineation of where PT REKI's mandate and outreach is legally legitimate.

Correspondingly, the extensive amount of literature, although with exceptions, that analyses land claims, indigenous rights and deforestation issues often has its offset in less controlled environments. This illustrates the interesting dialectic of *where* agendas of development agencies and the discourses it entails gains ground. Promotion of UN forest discourse by way of national and international development agencies certainly takes place within the concession area, as depicted in the analysis. However, outside the physical border of the concession area the political-economic agenda of palm oil production is well established, due to its high regard at Indonesian national policy level (Hunt, 2010, p.189; Tempo, 2018). In this sense, the two sides of the border depict the extremes of the debate between economic growth versus environmental concern, despite the commodified focus on forests in UN conservation discourse. As such, the border of the concession area can not only be understood as a physical boundary but a depiction of conflicting interests, discourses and agendas, operating on each side of the concession border.

This delineation should not be mistaken for a static perception of place. The physical setting is of crucial relevance *because* of its relation to "outside" actors and formations. Therefore, the case should instead be understood as an instance of areal differentiation that is a relational outcome of conflicting power relations. As such, the concession area is both an enclosed area and an open hybrid sphere and, as we have seen, is exactly the product of conflictual interests. As Doreen Massey argues, the description and delineation of a place is always an intervention into geography and "the (re)telling of the historical constitution of the present" (Massey, 1995, p.190). Following this, it should now be clear that the relational understanding of time and space that this thesis has adopted similarly reflects the understanding of discourses as constitutive of and constituted by the social order.

This leads to the importance of a related aspect of the studied environment. The time-frame or snapshot of discursive impact and internal challenges that this analysis has provided. Although insights on historical and legal changes have been provided, a discursive struggle is an iterative process and its impact upon the social practice is best measured over a longer period of time.

Following this, the impacts of promoting agroforestry among the forest-dependent communities are best measured when financial and social impacts are visible. Therefore, I will predict a more established preference for agroforestry among the forest-dependent communities if one were to return to Hutan Harapan in six to seven years, when the first planted agroforestry products would have either been harvested or sold (annex 7). According to the analysis, this would also include a more holistic understanding of forest-based benefits. This is, as mentioned, under the condition that PT REKI can uphold the financial income to preserve conservation efforts. Other factors such as political will to continuously pledge to the relevance of ecosystem restoration concessions are of course also incremental to the survival of Hutan Harapan.

This thesis has applied a theoretical understanding of the social practice in Hutan Harapan. Therefore, it is also necessary to point to the critique of the theoretical framework.

In order to fully understand the inherent struggles in Hutan Harapan the analysis has identified several access mechanisms as a mapping to understand the difficult case study. Each of the access mechanisms could have benefited from deeper scrutiny, with further calls for empirical material that digs deeper into the multitude of the aspects access mechanisms involves. Where “A Theory of Access” thus falls short is in the determination of how exactly these access mechanisms operate. Or in other words, how access is negotiated, rather than the identification of present access mechanisms. In a 1997 article, Sara Berry challenged the dialectical categorisation of people’s property access to be either “owners” or “users” which neglect the instances, such as that subject to Berry’s research, where property rights are defined through ongoing processes of negotiation (Berry, 1997, p.1237). As has been touched upon, the determination of benefit sharing in the landscape agreements points to an on-going negotiation over access to forest-based benefits. Other critics have pointed to Ribot and Peluso’s identification of structural mechanisms as important, but not recognizing that rights easily can be determined as structural mechanisms too (Koch, 2008, p.5). This critique should not derail the acknowledgement of the theory’s contribution to this thesis. Instead, it should nuance where the contribution of the theoretical application lies, which is the mapping of internal challenges, access mechanisms and power relations.

## Discursive formation of indigeneity

Throughout this thesis the impact and the relevance of discourse have been a major concern. Following this, a critical discourse analysis can operate on various levels. Due to the attention towards both global discourse and practical efforts the discourse analysis in this thesis has

operated at a meso-level. The implications of this choice require a discussion which can benefit the reader's critical reflections of the conclusions drawn.

The meso-level application of critical discourse analysis has entailed identification of relevant connotations that are incremental for the steering of conservation efforts, while refraining from in-depth nitty-gritty text analysis as well as historical discussions of when the current discursive practice is 'established'. Nevertheless, the latter point is relevant to touch upon and in particular as an acknowledgement of discursive formations' possible implications. To highlight the difficulties and implications of applying critical discourse analysis I will use an example relevant to the case of Hutan Harapan. As the strategic constitution of the Batin Sembilan group as indigenous people has by now been heavily tended to, it is interesting to take a look at this constitution's (assumed) historical origin.

In her research of indigeneity as agency and empowerment, Stephanie Steinebach traces back the origin of the Batin Sembilan to most likely be part of what was earlier categorised by pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial states as "Kubu", "Isolated Tribe" or "Children of the interior" (Steinebach, 2013, p.69). The name "Kubu" was a collective name to refer to non-Muslim hunter-gatherers (Steinebach, 2013, p.70). Steinebach further identifies the historical relevance of written sources, as the Batin Sembilan only have transmitted their stories orally through ancestral claims and stories. The anthropological work of H.O. Forbes (1885) "On the Kubus of Sumatra" showed one of the earliest written acquaintances, of what Steinebach deems the most likely to be the ancestors of the Batin Sembilan (Steinebach, 2013, p.71):

"They cultivate nothing for themselves, but live entirely on the products of the forest - snakes, lizards, grubs, fruits, an occasional deer, pig, or tapir, which a happy effort has rewarded them with (...) They know nothing, of art; they manufacture absolutely nothing. Their knives and the universal spear with which they are armed are purchased from the Malays with whom they trade." (Forbes, 1885, p.122).

An endorsement of the connection made by Steinebach proves very interesting and relevant for a discussion of the discursive formations at hand. Firstly, it portrays the change in acknowledgement of forest-dependent people from historically inferior to instrumental in bringing about the desired change. Similarly, it shows the historical remains of treating forest-dependent people as closer to nature, uncivilized and incapable. Another interesting note is the recurrence of indigenous rights movements in Indonesia in the aftermath of president Suharto's rule. The regimes official position was that Indonesia is a nation with no indigenous people as all Indonesians are equally indigenous

(Steinebach, 2013, p.69). As such, it created an 'interruption' in culturally affiliated groups' ability to constitute themselves as indigenous, which further portrays the awareness of potential political uprising that cultural affirmation can bring.

With the aim of a higher level of abstraction it is similarly appropriate to reflect upon the implications of Western scholarship research in relation to cultural affirmation and the categorization of people as indigenous. Arturo Escobar (1995) points to the difficulty of ascertaining experiences from a Western academic perspective and explains that two extremes must be avoided. One is to uncritically embrace communities as alternatives; the second is to refuse acknowledgement of the crude realities of the world such as capitalist hegemony and the like (Escobar, 1995, p.170). In an attempt to navigate between these two extremes this thesis has taken its offset in an investigation of forest-dependent people rather than indigenous people. However, as a result of the empirical material collected a clear differentiation between the Batin Sembilan and the migrant communities has been made. This is arguably a result of historical discursive formations in the concession area as well as the impact of global discursive formations within development fora. Or if we return to Escobar: "(...) accounts of cultural difference should be taken as instances of discourse and counter discourse" (Escobar, 1995, p.170).

Following this, a pitfall of this analysis has thus been the rather uncritical and homogeneous understanding of indigeneity and behaviour of the two groups constituted as Batin Sembilan and "migrant communities". Such understandings can remove the notion of agency and individual choice which are crucial for the understanding of behaviour (Sen, 1997, pp.745-746). An example from the interviews that emphasises the importance of agency was Nardawo's (the migrant introduced earlier) explanation of how he paid and build a school and a library for his community to secure future education (annex 6).

The reader might notice that than an uncritical categorisation of groups through the lens of a critical discourse analysis can appear somewhat contradictory. However, the critical notion that have guided this thesis instead spans from the critical nature of political ecology as well as the critical awareness of language in which the attempt has been to understand exactly how conscious choice of 'conservation language' influence social practices. As Castells argue, it is easy to agree on the fact that all identities are constructed. The real question is how it is done, by whom, for what (Castells, 1997, p.7) and what the consequences are.



## Global valuation of nature

An inherent and foundational assumption in this thesis is that international conservation discourse would have an impact on everyday practices. This has now been uncovered in the analysis. What still remains to be touched upon are the underlying beliefs that constitute the globally discursive and global political-economic framework of which the case of Hutan Harapan is affected by.

In the simplest form, the control of the concession area is based on global capitalist values of human use of the “natural world” or the “domination of nature” (Harvey, 1996, p.121). However, while forest restoration and protection practices have connotations that may be interpreted as maximising benefits and “domination” there are also notions of “leaving nature to its natural self”, or maximising benefits without harming nature. As such, the case of an ecosystem restoration concession implies a case of realising and reversing the capitalist destruction upon the natural world, which Harvey figured untenable (Harvey, 1996, p.125).

In terms of valuation of nature there exists various approaches, albeit with the prevalence of monetary valuation. As such, aesthetic judgments, romantic reactions, nature tourism and animal rights movements can provide our use of nature with a sense of credibility and respectability, while the main emphasis remains upon monetized projections of nature. According to Harvey, prevailing global affirmation thus becomes to treat nature as a passive set of assets that can be used and valued in commercial terms (Harvey, 1996, p.131). In this regard, the forest practices in Hutan Harapan can be determined as what Escobar critiqued as reversing “threats to biodiversity” rather than combatting underlying causes (Escobar, 1998, p.56). It is in this sense that the identification of nature as a resource, and a return to the idea of the *need* to protect forests that determines that there are “limits” to our use of nature. This brings forward the concepts of “ecoscarcity” or “scarcity in natural resources” and it is in this regard that Harvey criticises the separation of human society from nature. He argues that the focus should lie elsewhere, as the question of limits, in effect, relates to our capacity to change material practices according to human requirements (Harvey, 1996, p.147).

Escobar has provided a comparable explanation and argued that the struggle over land can reflect more than the struggle for land and living conditions, and in some instances reflect a counteract upon the imposition of commodity production by development programmes on customary ways of living (Escobar, 1995, pp.167-168). He therefore argues that the struggle over representation, as

described above, and the struggle against exploitation of global political economies, are one and the same and must be carried out in conjunction (Escobar, 1995, p.170).

What then becomes interesting is the implications of the different perceptions of forest-based benefits that the analysis has showed us. In contrast to PT REKI the forest-dependent people in particular articulated benefits as monetary which expresses that the commodification of nature can be understood as a result of neoliberal political economy in general rather than as a result of discursive formations within conservation efforts. Moreover, the understanding in Hutan Harapan was that encroachment and deforestation was a simple result of the need for forest-dependent people to acquire food on the table and supply for their basic needs. It is in this regard that the ordering of neoliberal society and the result of this process - "homo oeconomicus" can be relevant in the framework of natural resource management (Escobar, 1995, p.60). However, whether the framework of neoliberal social order operates inside and/or outside the concession area becomes less relevant. Reversal of deforestation and the inclusion of forest-dependent people should, correctly so, not be seen as combatting underlying structural causes, but instead as on-going processes of politically negotiated solutions to environmental degradation. As argued by Noel Castree, to understand place and the inherent social conflicts a kind of situational pragmatism is needed (Castree, 2004, p.163). As the Hutan Harapan case then points towards, the discussion of neoliberal impediment on nature *can* be distinguished from the promotion of conservation practices.

### What is the alternative?

This special case of an enclosed area, in which discourses of development agencies, NGOs and the United Nations are naturalised as ideologies of sustainable forest management has shown to be upheld and promoted by PT REKI. In the hypothetical case that PT REKI are removed from the equation, there would be no social agents of promoting sustainable forest management nor inclusion of forest-dependent people as means of enhancing forest-based benefits. Consequently, until benefits of agroforestry products are capitalised on, and the discursive formation of agroforestry has gained ground among the forest-dependent communities, the discursive process remains unsettled. As such, there lies an inherent risk of external forces, in shape of palm oil plantations, influenced by structural factors such as neoliberal political economy, taking over forestry practices in the area currently managed as an ecosystem restoration concession. Accordingly, if we conclusively return to this thesis' initial purpose to nuance the discussion on conservation efforts it shows that the structural critique of neoliberalism is a too simplistic judgment over conservation efforts' impacts on forest-dependent communities. Therefore, the politically

negotiated outcome of the Hutan Harapan ecosystem restoration concession appears to be the most feasible alternative for forest conservation to a solely neoliberal order of adjacent palm oil production.

## Conclusions

The first conclusion to ascertain from this thesis is that international conservation discourse *can* affect Indonesian forest-dependent communities. When turning to the question of *how* discourse can affect forest-dependent communities the conclusions become more nuanced.

This thesis has through a natural resource lens shown that conservation efforts are greatly influenced by international conservation discourse and that conservation efforts *and* international discourse can affect forest-dependent communities in Indonesia. Just as importantly the analysis has shown that international discourse is reshaped according to the social practice in question.

The analysis has shown that conservation efforts are deeply anchored around the international discourse of forests as a benefit. Critics of neoliberalism have coined this the commodification of nature and argues that it portrays a wider class struggle and capitalist impediment upon nature. Social agents of conservation efforts have shown to spread a holistic perception of forest-based benefits that entails more than monetary value. The analysis has further shown the impacts of discursive struggle concerning forest-dependent people. Acknowledgement of forest-dependent people in global fora has shown to change the approach in conservation practices towards efforts that are more inclusive of local communities. Discursive formations concerning rights of indigenous people have further shown to be useful tools in local communities' customary land claims. These discursive formations have particularly shown to be reshaped according to the social practice in question. While United Nations discourse categorise communities based on livelihood as "forest-dependent" people the articulation in Hutan Harapan have shown to be based on historical and cultural attributes.

Conservation efforts in the physical setting of Hutan Harapan have shown to be entangled in historical disputes over land, contradictory or overlapping property laws and conflicting discourses over property rights. International conservation discourse has shown to increase ambiguity over property rights through the articulation of forests as a "common good" as well as promoting conservation efforts that aims at balancing social, environmental and economic benefits. Ambiguity over property rights is therefore at the core of the problems within Hutan Harapan.

Through promotion of agroforestry practices under landscape agreements conservation agencies can, justified by green agendas, determine the land use of forest-dependent communities that reside in conservation areas. Conservation agencies under the Indonesian modality of ecosystem restoration concessions represent and function as the main authority in the conservation area due to their access to capital, knowledge, authority and labour. However, through customary land claims, fuelled by global consideration of forest-dependent people, local communities have shown to dictate benefit-sharing under landscape agreements.

Finally, this thesis has taken its offset in an empirical analysis of discursive impact of the physical setting of Hutan Harapan. It has shown that the physical border of the concession area creates an enclosed discursive arena of development agencies, NGOs and UN discourse.

While the discussion in the thesis has only peeked at the differentiation of discursive impact outside and inside the concession area the analysis has not uncovered the impact of international conservation discourse for forest-dependent people living outside conservation areas. In Indonesia's large areas of tropical rainforest and with its huge and growing palm oil industry the knowledge of impacts for forest-dependent communities would therefore benefit from additional research. Conclusively, the analysis has portrayed the importance of case-based nuances in relationship to political ecology's rather simplistic critique of neoliberal influence on conservation practices. The limited material has thus pointed to tendencies that would benefit from deeper scrutiny which could further nuance the debates concerning land appropriation and the commodification of nature.

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## Global Objectives on Forests

Delegates of United Nations Member States decided at the sixth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests to set shared global objectives on forests and to agree to work globally and nationally to achieve progress towards their achievement.

### Global Objective 1

Reverse Forest Loss: Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation.

### Global Objective 2

Enhance Forest-Based Benefits: Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people.

### Global Objective 3

Increase Sustainability Managed Forests: Increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests.

### Global Objective 4

Mobilize Financial Resources: Reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management and mobilize significantly-increased new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management.

*I: What are your job title, your function, and your everyday job tasks here in PT REKI?*

I am managing all these activities here in PT REKI. There is a way to differentiate my tasks from Pak Tonny's tasks [President Director]. Pak Tonny's tasks are rather macro orientated – strategy issues and policy issues. But when there are things to be done in the field it is my tasks.

Pak Tonny can be seen as the captain of the ship and I am helping him. And if Pak Tonny is only looking upwards, I am looking downwards and seeing this more in detail and down to earth.

And actually I should have known anything, but since we have so many things to do I was helped by three managers. Yusuf for the ecosystem management, Pak Adam about the forest protection and community, communication and stakeholder engagement, and Pak Agung is supporting staff. So I manage these three guys to reach our goals and allocate our resources.

*I: What are these goals and what are the mission in Hutan Harapan?*

There is three missions in Hutan Harapan. First is to protect and restore the forest. And within that mission we have to make the forest reach an ecosystem balance. So protecting the current conditions. Second mission is managing and protecting the wildlife – we have to make sure that wildlife is here, which means that we have to make sure that the animal has their own home and habitat in healthy conditions. The third mission is that we have to empower the local communities. And these things are actually the role of the government. And officially local business don't have these responsibilities – it should be the role of the government. But now we have to do everything. But besides that the government is still trying to get us to pay tax. Until now our financial situation is just cost, cost, cost and no actual revenue.

*I: So with all these costs what are you strategy to become economically sustainable and independent?*

I believe we are now in our second 10 years in which we know what to do – our three missions. I can say that in our first 10 years we were preoccupied with those tasks, and no one thought about that we have to survive on our own and be financially independent. We can not ask the Denmark people to support us for 100 years. It is time for us to stand on our own and be financially independent.

So in our next 10 years what we have to achieve is to keep the train running and invest. That's why we have so many ideas, making feasibility studies. We think that planting rubber will be the backbone of our project, since it is closer to the forest species, which do not harm the forest. All

agricultural products have changing prices so we are not going to rely on one product. So we have to have rubber, wood, sunkai, and another fast growing species, which we can harvest in less than 10 years. And fruits like durian or djenko.

The best thing for us here in Hutan Harapan is that we have fertile land – everything can grow here and it is a good land.

And please remember that we are very close to Singapore and Jakarta, which means our products can reach everywhere. So we can both sell nationally to Java and Jakarta and maybe we can sell to international market via Singapore. Which means we have an advantage.

So I have to make sure that everything in Hutan Harapan is running as it should and that we have to stand on our own feet. But it is not easy. Maybe we need 25 million in investments.

But please don't forget that we are going to stay here for a 100 years. I believe that Hutan Harapan has a good name and the name in itself can sell. For instance the Danish Embassy would like to help us because they share the same vision with us. Because we have the last tropical rainforest in Sumatra. If we lose it then there will be no type of this forest left.

So it is our obligation to the future generation that the animals, the trees, the ecosystems are here. So even if the Danish Embassy is going to stop their support, we can maybe attract Danish companies. Because we are doing it for the planet and not just Indonesia. Maybe there is something valuable in the forest, which we don't know now, but we may know in the future. Maybe it is going to solve our problems with cancer and HIV or anything.

*I: What are the success criteria for PT REKI, looking 25 years ahead?*

To stand on our own feet. I believe in 25 years that we will stand on our own. I believe in the future it will be easier. At the moment we are just discussing "what about next month". But our license will last 100 years, meanwhile we are thinking about what happens next month. I ask everybody: "are we going to survive next month?". I don't know what our board thinks but they should think at a longer term and not about KjW. We are lucky that KjW are supporting when Danish support is ending.

Because we have 217 employees here. Maybe it can be considered a high number, but we have a 100 Ha to protect. Actually it is not enough. Please remember that our local community is way behind. It is going to be more easy if we can talk to people in Java or even Kalimantan. For the people here it is a quantum leap – they are not accustomed to producing agriculture, because they are used to living in the forest. It is their forest but we are also trying to protect the forest.

*I: So in your view who owns the forest?*

Its theirs! Not us! Actually it is not theirs or us – it is ours and belongs to everybody. It belong to the people on this planet. We are sailing an intergalactic spaceship called earth. There is not another spaceship there we can move to “Earth 2”.

*I: What is the best and worst way to tackle the encroachment?*

The presence of encroachment happens, because everybody need something for their lives. We cannot say that prosperity only belongs to a certain group. This is the purpose of this republic to be built and let everyone prosper. So when there is no other way the easiest way for people is to go to the forest. But we can't do that anymore. In Indonesia we have 260 million people! And 70 % of our area is sea. So the problem of encroachment is not only our problem, it is Indonesia's problem. So it is an issue of people how to live their daily life and protect their family. So we should deal with this encroachment problem in a good way. We have 3000 families here.

The Jokowi government is trying to concentrate on building infrastructure, and meanwhile they forget about the people here. We have 15000 people here. It is not easy for us to face the people [encroachers] here, because they are also our countrymen. It is maybe our family. So the MoU is one way to assure them that they also will prosper without having to destroy the forest.

*I: Are there things that could be better with the MoUs?*

Yes, we have to make sure that people understand that protecting the forest is also good for them. Because we cannot expect someone who doesn't love something to protect it[the forest]. The Batin Sembilan will protect it because they consider it their home. So we have to make everyone understand the importance of the forest. It is about information and providing a good alternative for them [encroachers]. So cannot stop them from cutting the trees without thinking about their daily lives. Which to us looks like the government's task and not us, a private company. It is beyond what we can comprehend. But that's the way it is. Somebody has to do it.

*I: How long have you working with PT REKI?*

This is my first year, but I've been around doing forestry since 30 or 40 years ago. I just finished my forestry studies in 1980.

*I: Do you have anything else to say?*

Well I'm going to say to everybody: To me you are not an alien or a foreigner. Because protecting this forest is an obligation of this planet. The forest belongs to the world and it is the place where

we can produce oxygen every day. So without forest we cannot produce oxygen. Oxygen is free, but please remember it is the one thing the forest produce. So to me you or anybody else you are not a foreigner. To me, to them, to you. So even though your programme is ending [Danida support], but I believe your country support will last long, because it is our concern and a matter of your son and your grandson.

Annex 3: Transcript of interview with Head of Stakeholder and Community Engagement in PT REKI

*I: What is your background?*

I used to work for WWF and a nationalpark in Jambi. It was in 1999 where I worked in 3 years. Then I moved to work for KPH, Forest Management Unit, 1 year and 6 months. Also worked for national park management and a big project supported by the World Bank in West Sumatra for 2,5 years. After the project I finished my master's in political science. Then I worked for "Forest Law Enforcement" supported by AU. Then I joined FFI in Lombok as a project manager, and after that I moved to Jakarta to work. After I worked for FFI for 5 years I moved here in November 2016.

*I: So you have a lot of experience in forest management and community engagement?*

Yes. Social Forestry and a little bit of Good Governance.

*I: Where are you living now?*

Yes my wife is in Jambi and I have one son who is studying in Batam. My son is 18 years old and studying in University.

*I: What are your duties and your daily work in PT REKI?*

Under me I have three managers and duties – Community partnership, communication and business. But since three months ago, the management changed structure business is not part of my duties but now the protection part is also under me. That means that half of the staff here is under my provision.

*I: What is Hutan Harapan to you all about?*

I know some of the people in Harapan since 1997, because I have worked with them. I think Hutan Harapan is very interesting for me as it is the first model of its kind in Indonesia. The second thing is that 30 % of forest low-land area are here. The third thing is the many challenges. Some of my colleagues from earlier times told me “please don’t join Harapan” – because there is too many problems here. It would be better for me to just stay at FFI, they said. They said there was too many challenges here. But I volunteered myself for this project. I was interviewed four times by REKI, but it was first on the last one that I decided to join.

*I: So how do you and PT REKI tackle all these challenges?*

We have two ways to handle the problems. The first one, especially for the community engagement inside our area, we ask them: “Please work together with us”. To improve the forest functions. We discuss with the communities what their problems is and what they can and cannot do. But if they don’t want to work with us and they keep on destroying the forest, we will make use of law enforcement. So that are the two ways on the ground.

Regarding the communication we try to do a campaign to involve the stakeholders and for the community to improve education and capacity building. The Batin Sembilan already have the ‘local wisdom’. But sometimes the local wisdom is not enough.

Because many people come from outside and provide the Batin Sembilan with some money.

*I: So you make a MoU with the Batin Sembilan?*

MoU with Batin Sembilang, with migrants and we already signed with two other groups and a Malay group in south Sumatra. And hopefully we sign one more next month.

*I: Is there a different MoU with the Batin Sembilan than with the other groups?*

In principle we don’t want to make different MoUs, but in effect they are a bit different. With the Batin Sembilan we sign an agreement for the area and the landscape. And in the regulation it says that there is 5 Ha for 1 family.

The MoU is made based on the big area. But after we signed it with the Batin Sembilan we engaged in discussion about land-use planning regarding the house, gardens etc. And in which areas they can hunt.

So the Batin Sembilan agreement is based on landscape, but for the migrants our agreement we are talking about how many Ha each family has per household. So for the Batin Sembilan it is more of a general agreement.

*I: Is there stated any benefit sharing in the MoUs?*

For the last 2 agreements under the migrants and the next one – the report on the paper – 15 % of the income will go to PT REKI. But we have explained that it will be used for the tax and for capacity development. But I think it is difficult to get the 15 % from the income, because they want it all.

For the Batin Sembilan we didn't put any benefit sharing in MoU.

Basically will PT REKI create their own agro-forestry as a core business, and then the other commodities that have their own agro-forestry, PT REKI will buy from them. So PT REKI will buy the commodities of the agro-forestry. But on the other side we already have our own agro-forestry areas.

And we try to encourage the communities to plant the same trees like us. Until now this is the good way because we can't get them to give us 15 %. So at the moment the Batin Sembilan gets the agro-forestry and can sell the crops as they like.

*I: Can you see results or prospects for the agro-forestry? Is there enthusiasm about the agro-forestry?*

Let me explain. The first thing about the agreement. The important thing is MoU, because when we signed the agreement it means we give something to the community through the state regulation. Before PT REKI and the government signed the agreement it was illegal. That is the first thing. So before we would come and enforce law. The second thing is that agro-forestry is one way to work together with the oil palms. If we talk about the benefit now, please don't say the money first. We are talking about the future.

I use the collaboration for the community management which means that for the next time it will be a benefit for the forest. The challenge is how to provide the understanding of agro-forestry to the community – this is different to synergize. For the migrants.

For the Batin it is a little bit different because the Batin Sembilan is still getting from the trees and they have no skill to make the agro-forestry. So they are asking us to please plant the agro-forestry.

But the thing is that if rubber price is high they will use the rubber trees but if the price goes down they might become part of the illegal logging. So our challenge is how to convince and show them that agro-forestry will make more money if you do it under the good model.

If you ask how to develop Hutan Harapan: The way is agro-forestry to connect community needs with forestry.



*I: Are you hopeful for Hutan Harapan? Where do you see Hutan Harapan in 25 years?*

When I joined here I was optimistic, but if you ask me about the next 25 years in Hutan Harapan. In my dream – as a minimum we have that our condition for the conservation zone is still good. But if we are talking about the collaboration zone there are now still too many challenges to handle. But if there is no one here to manage the good approach – who will be here? But I hope the conservation zone will still be here with the good trees. I am not a pessimist but in Indonesia land is still part of political issues with many stakeholders, which can make us confused. And at the government level they might not have good understanding of how to manage the forest either. So we need a champion or hero here (laughing). But if you come here just to get a salary – I told my staff- then you might as well resign.

*I: Who does the forest belong to?*

All of us. Not the government, the migrant, the Batin Sembilan – all of us. We are talking about the tiger, the elephant, the water, the landscape.

Annex 4: Transcript of interview with Project Manager in Burung Indonesia

*I: What is your job and function here?*

My job is in Burung in Bogor. The title of my job is programme manager for Hutan Harapan. It is one of the requirements under the financial administration from DANIDA to smoothen the project and deliver the project goals of Danida in Hutan Harapan. But most of my job is to smoothen the coordinations between DANIDA and PT REKI from the Burung office. E.g. the report from PT REKI and coordinate with Burung.

And also there are some other things from Burungs side e.g. stakeholder engagement at the national level. And also ERC working group where we try to promote ERC as a new way to restore the forest.

In the structures I am supposed to direct the project from Burungs side. But the position is not always giving us enough directive solutions to PT REKI. Because sometimes PT REKI is not easy since they were established earlier by different management that have a different view of Burung. So that is probably my difficulties in my job. But until now we are doing okay, since we at least have a need from PT REKI to manage the reporting to the outside world (DANIDA).

My role in this programme is also to find other funding and coordinate with other stakeholders regarding funding.

*I: What are your expectations regarding new funding?*

Well, after the DANIDA funding ends we have an overlap with the German funding. But we can predict that the funding will not come at the right time which might create a gap. And this gap should be funded by the trustfund that we have here. But there is not enough money to fund the gap. So we will try to find it elsewhere to pay the operations and staff. So all the work and what is needed here is funded by DANIDA or KFW. What is funded now is not covering everything. Because if you want and need a technical analysis or business analysis it is not enough. So we try to find smaller grants and projects that can help Hutan Harapan.

*I: So that leads me to Hutan Harapan and economic sustainability. What are your thoughts on that?*

Yes, that is another aspect that we are trying to reach. On the other hand Burung is already looking for new funding. But in order to make everybody understand the situations they should feel it first. I am new in this project, but the issue is that we are not thinking about financial sustainability from the beginning. So I don't know why financial sustainability is not being talked about. My assumption is that it is because we still work in the ways of the old management. So we have been working so much towards doing research and tested so many different cases e.g rubber. We shouldn't do experiments, we should just plant rubber!

*I: So are you saying it is not in the mindset to become financially independent?*

In the previous management it wasn't in their mindsets. They should have it in their mindset from the beginning. We have to pay your own expenses. And the problem is getting bigger and bigger. And our solutions is also getting more diverse.

For example, previously we only did law enforcement and not experiments. But now we think of financial sustainability, and we have to work with the community, we have to protect the forest. It is much more diverse. But we have to set a bar to become financially independent in the next few years. But there are also some aspects that cannot be measured just by financial income, as the lives of the people here and the indigenous people. That's the financial sustainability.

And also we are trying to diversify our products into agro-forestry, which is good so we can protect the biodiversity which is maybe our main aim with the restoration ecosystem. So we can prove that the ERC works. So I think agro-forestry is the way in which we can become financially sustainable.

*I: The agro-forestry is based on the MoUs?*

Yes

*I: How is the benefit sharing in terms of how much revenue goes to PT REKI?*

We already discussed that. There is a regulation regarding social forestry, and we could say that in our livelihood zone they could benefit from it. I mean the MoU should also mention and specify the benefit sharing of the harvest/revenue. At the moment we just have an agreement, but hopefully in the future it can be better. So the community partnership can do a better job. For me, if we still have a hostile community or ignorant community around us – we cannot do anything! Even if we put so much money, it will just dissolve into something useless. To me the best way to protect the forest is by bringing the community together. To have them feel that this is their forest, and that we look after the forest for them. But some people take advantage of the land for their own benefit and sell it to other selfish persons. And they buy the land without thinking about what's next.

*I: So how do you deal with 'everyone thinking about themselves?' What is the best way to tackle that?*

The best way for me to tackle the encroachment is through community partnership. If the people feel that this is their land, and if they feel that we protect their land, maybe they will protect it themselves. For example if one person wants to sell this piece of land in their group but the others don't want to because they think of the forest as a whole. So they will take care of it themselves and find a solution instead of talking with us [REKI], because we are considered outsiders. But you know that if a person is already violating the law then you can choose side and explain that you are on the right side. Because the law is protecting the forest. I think that is how you should deal with the community. So you should inform them that you are actually helping them. But when we deal with the greedy people, they already know that we are trying to help the others. But when you are dealing with persons who are willing to take other people's belongings it is hard, isn't it? But they are perhaps not feeling that they are 'stealing' because they are taking land where no one lives. But the land is for everyone. But what sparked my mind when speaking of the Batin Sembilan, is that they haven't gotten together and discuss the MoU [interview with Batin Sembilan, showed otherwise], we have to play

a role to facilitate their meetings and get their trust. But it is difficult because people have not always treated them well. Because a lot of people maybe don't understand what we are working for here. Maybe most of the PT REKI staff start thinking differently, than just working for their own life and salary. So information to our own staff is important. Not just information but to make them understand the situation.

*I: What about the spread of information to the 'outside world'?*

Yes, information to other stakeholders is one of the success criteria for this ecosystem restoration. You know that PT REKI is the first of its kind – maybe in the world. Is the first permit that uses the name of ecosystem restoration, because previously there is no permit to be used as a restoration ecosystem. But Burung have started the discussions with the ministry of forestry in 2004. Because at that time there needed to be a change in the way it was dealt with. By giving an alternative to the management of the forest. Because before it also served as a logging company that used “selective cutting”. But even with selective cutting you are cutting trees that could be bigger. So it is also destructive. And currently there are less and less logging companies, because of this. But there are more and more pulp paper company because the demand is high. I think there is getting fewer and fewer because of the pressure from the palm oil, which is destroying the logging companies and the pulp paper companies.

*I: With all these challenges, what are then the main success criteria for Hutan Harapan? Can you make a best and worst-case scenario?*

In the best-case scenario my ideal is that the community will have an agreement with us. Let me rephrase: When the agro-forestry can sustain the community and the forest can recover and be restored as we intended. And also, that PT REKI can financially sustain themselves. But the worst-case scenario is that the agreement with the community is failed and the encroachment cannot be stopped. And the community are getting more and distressed with PT REKI and the forest is gone. But in my view if we are doing at least what we are trying to do now is that we can deal with some part of the community and give examples to the rest of the communities. Maybe we cannot reach all communities, but we might be able to give an example and be successful. I think there are already good examples of what we can achieve in terms of community engagement and financial sustainability. Both in terms of rubber plantation and agro-forestry. But by putting all the alternatives together we can survive. That's my perspective.

*I: Can you explain why Burung, an ornithologist organization is interested in Harapan?*

You know, Harapan hold two key biodiversity areas, in two patches of forest. And Birdlife International is the first organization so set the area as a key biodiversity area, which should be protected in order to save the whole biodiversity and not just birds. Yes, birds are used as an indicator, but it could be also to save others. There are animals that have larger area and cannot be saved by saving these two patches of forest. The tiger needs a larger territory than what we have in Harapan. So that is why Burung is interested in Harapan, since they hold two key biodiversity areas in Sumatra. In a larger concept they also hold one of the last remaining low-land rainforest ecosystems in Sumatra. Which has already been destructed, but still hold many key species. That's the reason why Birdlife or Burung Indonesia put hope into Hutan Harapan. We except there is still hope in protecting these key biodiversity areas.

*I: Can you explain the differences in the dialogue and the accomplishments in the collaboration zones with and those without MoUs? Both the approach and the success*

Previously we have seen the community as something we should manage. Which means that we have seen them as an object and not seen them as a subject. But later on, we have begun to see them as a subject that try to get their lives going. And we try to protect the forest. So how we merge our interests in a mutual relationship is why we have the MoU. Previously we would put people in jail because they are destroying a patch of Hutan Harapan. So we tried to manage and control them. But I don't think this works. Because PT REKI still got a lot of encroachers. And now we have to deal with it, while the distrust is already there. And some people said to me that: "10 years ago I came here and had expectations to PT REKI. But when I see now they are still reluctant to work with PT REKI" – "now I cannot see smiles".

This means that there are still a lot of things to fix and repair. But people are still not always trusting us because we have done those things. But currently I believe we are doing the job very good or at least good enough. For example how you deal with the community – I still see people who are angry here in the camp.

Solving this problem we need to have the community with you. Before I worked as a station manager in Cisu in Mantawai islands in 2004-2009. There we only dealt with a village and 4000 hectare and now we deal with 100000 hectare [in Hutan Harapan]. At that place I worked and lived with the local communities. So you still see a gap, which is getting smaller. People see what you are doing and your results, and maybe they start believing that protecting the forest is good. For ecotourism and everything.

When I worked in Cisu where they hunt the monkeys, the monkeys always ran when they saw us. But after three years they become back, and the area is like a sink for the monkeys. And people outside of my team said that you must be doing something bad in that area and taking some benefit from us – the suspicion is many because they don't know. But after a while they saw that maybe I should not hunt the monkeys – when they actually come and see what we do, they are no longer suspicious. So for me it is also about engagement with the local community. But it is so difficult. That was just a small area and here it as a huge area.

But there are huge possibilities here for ecotourism and other things. So it is about giving an alternative for the people. Whether it is Batin Sembilan or the migrants we should give them options to live and be careful with our approach. It's hard to do.

*I: What did you do in between 2009 and now?*

In 2009 I went to school and after that I worked for ICCTF, also funded by DANIDA. My impressions when I came here the first time was that I never thought it was so big an area with so many staff. It is a big operation. But now the idea of setting up field offices I think it is a good idea. My office in Cisu was like that. You have to make a farm and other things.

*I: Are the field offices there for reaching out?*

Yes, for me the best thing [optimal] about the field offices is that it should be equipped with community people, economic people, agricultural people, because people come to you with many cases. They can ask for medicine or operate. So they also need 'general' community outreach. The people in the field offices should also be taught to tackle different situations.

*I: Are they taught that now?*

No, sadly. The people assigned to field offices are not those with the best qualities. But people like Pak Adam [Head of Stakeholder and Community Engagement] are already thinking of things like that and the need of that.

Our president director pak Tonni think that people should have a benefit from living in a field.

*I: Are you also from here?*

I am from Jakarta; my parents and grandparents were from Jakarta.

Annex 5: Transcript of interview with Manager of Environmental Research Department in Hutan Harapan

*I: Can you explain a little about what you do here and your employment with PT REKI?*

I have worked with PT REKI since April 2010, so seven years. I work as the manager of research and development. My main base for the office is here and sometimes i go to the Jambi office.

*I: What did you do before?*

I worked as the project coordinator for tiger research and coordinated research projects in West Sumatra and also in Jambi province.

But before PT REKI was created I worked as a research assistant in the Zoological Society of London – which was my first job. We covered the north area of the PT REKI area. So I am quite known in this area since 2003.

*I: Are you originally from the area, or where are you from?*

I come from West Sumatra, but the first conservation work I experienced was in this area [Harapan], that's when I found out what I wanted to work with.

*I: Can you tell in your own words, what is Hutan Harapan all about?*

Hutan Harapan has a very good mission, and for me, to be honest – I come here, I enjoy my work and it is my passion since I found out that I like the wildlife. And Harapan provide the habitat for the wildlife. And you can see the neighbours with the oil palms where the wildlife can't go, so suddenly it is Harapan who can support this [the wildlife]. So the wildlife can survive in Harapan. So what I like about Harapan is that it can provide a habitat for the wildlife. Especially for the Tigers. When I joined this project and wasn't able to see any tiger footprints I would probably have left this project. The tigers are the reason I stay here, and that is my mission. You have the idol animal you like.

*I: How many tigers are there now? And is it going in the right direction with the numbers?*

According to the camera traps, since 2009 and until 2015 we identified 29 individual tigers but we unfortunately we haven't been monitoring as much as we did before. However, CPH Zoo has provided us with 15 camera traps which we deployed in the west side, and at the moment we also have the programme for elephant monitoring of the wildlife. So we can both use the cameras for elephant and tiger monitoring.

We also got an indication in 2012, that there is breeding of tigers taking place in Harapan. And recently we found a footprint to the north of Harapan. We would also like to put camera traps to the north but they are currently allocated to the west. The thing is that in the north it is also near to the encroachment, so we also need to consider this potential conflict.

*I: What is the best way to tackle this conflict?*

We need to inform the people and the encroachers. But the thing is that we have done the collaboration work with the immigrants, but they need to be made aware that the tigers are also being protected by the government and not just us [REKI]. And if they do harm to the tiger it should be reported.

*I: So the right approach is to provide information?*

Yes giving information and awareness and conservation education. That's what we need. The next step is that we need to inform the immigrants.

*I: What about using force to keep the encroachers out?*

The encroachers can go anywhere, but what we need is to show what happens if you cross that borderline. Then you get something, a punishment. That is what happened with the burning of the two hurts.

*I: So what are the success criteria for dealing with all these challenges?*

From my point of view, it is that the forest can still stay here and the wildlife can live on. And also the programme for – its like an example [ERC].It can be a model for how wildlife can survive within a human dominated landscape – that wildlife can live harmoniously. And we also establish the corridor for them [encroachers] to learn. So that is one way to provide for the future.



But there is still a long, long way and it is hard for us to protect the forest. It is not easy. Because humans are different – you can find some people concerned with the environment and you can find some people ignoring it and you can find people that are greedy with land. So one approach we are doing the agro-forestry is that you with a small piece of land you can increase the productivity of the small land. You don't need a big land. We found a few cases where the immigrants have more than 10 Ha planting oil palm. So we do need the forest which is the mission of PT REKI and how we can also support the people and protect the wildlife. So it is a hard balance, but we try the best that we can. But sometimes we get the bad message for what we are doing.

For example, people take the land and cut the trees. And they don't know that they are trespassing in the protected area. It's very complicated because people demand the land but I think the agro-forestry is a good approach to change the mind-set of the people.

*I: Can you see results that mind-sets are changing?*

Not yet since the programme is just started, and we are still implementing it. But the idea is good since you can use a small piece of land you can increase the productivity and plant right forest-type vegetation and support us with the restoration as well.

*I: What will Harapan look like in 25 years?*

I really hope that we with our approach and the problem on the east side can become a forest again, with the agro-forestry approach. And I hope there is no political agenda behind it. If there is no political agenda behind it is my dream that the forest can live on.

*I: What is the worst- and best-case scenario?*

The worst: The forest is gone. And we lose. But we cannot lose. I think we have to keep fighting – because this is the only things that are left. And compared to other forests I think that the Harapan area is better. It is not only Harapan that have the problem with the encroachers. But the important thing is how we approach and work together with the people.

But I work here because the species that are here make me work here. I am frustrated with the encroachers, because I have seen this area since 2003. And I have seen the SPI area and did the survey.

*I: So you have met with the encroachers?*

Yes. And they are threatening me when we did the survey. We also met them when we were about to set up the camera traps – and they came to us and intimidated us. And I said, “who are you?” And they answered: “We came to cut down the trees, and we have been paid for it”. They had heard that there was cheap land in Harapan.

It is frustrating because we battle with the people [who] need the land for their stomach [basic needs]. So conservation work can be very full of dilemmas because one part is the wildlife and the other part is the people.

They didn't know that the land belonged to us and they paid 500.000 rupiah to get a piece of land. There is many people from Java and North Sumatra coming in. ”

*I: Can you understand the point of view of the encroachers?*

They want to survive and have a better life. That's why they go to the cheap land. They live a really, really simple life in terms of their huts and the way the cook. They do anything to survive. That's why it is a bit of a dilemma, because you are sad when you find that the trees are cut down but you can understand the people.

But I hope that we can provide a better solution for people and wildlife to live together. But as I have been here since 2003 I can see the difference and big changes in the area.

(Elva goes on to tell a story about how encroachers she reported to the forest police are holding her against it when they met her at a later time).

*I: Do you have anything else you would like to share?*

To be honest I really want this project to be a success, but this is the first project of its kind [the concession]. Especially I have a emotionally touch with this area because of the wildlife and the tigers. We cannot work and achieve this if we are on our own, so we need to work together. We need the people around us to understand it. That is my big dream for this project.

Annex 6: Transcript of interview with Nardawo, a migrant living in the concession area

*I: What is your family background, where are you from, where are you living in Hutan Harapan and how did you get there, what are you working with?*

My family is from Java, but my parents came here [Harapan]. My parents came here in 1972 and I have been living here since then. I have one son and one daughter. I live in the collaboration zone. I know this forest since 1984, before PT REKI was created. Before PT REKI was here, I worked for a logging company. Currently I am a farmer.

*I: How much land do you have?*

I requested permission to cultivate the land in 2004. There is 3755 Ha for 500 families, which is divided between us.

Before the permit to cultivate the land came through, I was arrested and put before the court on the allegation that I used the forest without a permit. I requested the permit from the Government for the 3755 Ha, but I already used the land before we got the permit, so I was arrested.

*I: Can you describe the agreement you have with PT REKI?*

The agreement is between the group that has the land [3755 Ha], PT REKI and the Government. It is a direct agreement and without an NGO as mediator.

Regarding the MoU the drafting process was revised as many as seven times. The process of the MoU was already started in 2008 or 2010. I started to save up for the permit in 2012 and finally I we got it in 2016.

*I: Why were there all the revisions?*

Because of the change in the Government.

*I: Do you think the MoU could be better for you?*

The basics of the agreement is good, but it could also be more specific in terms of the details. But the basics are good since it involves two conflicting groups and the government.

*I: What is PT REKI to you?*

I know that PT REKI is trying to restore the forest, but PT REKI should acknowledge the people who were already living inside the forest and cultivate the land inside the forest – both those who are near, around and inside it.

*I: Does this mean that PT REKI's mission of protecting the forest is conflicting with your ability to live your life?*

I know the rules. But, I was here before PT REKI exists. I agree with the agreement, but I know that I, under the law, can cultivate the palm oil for one cycle. After one cycle, I will change the land into other crops, which is under the agreement – rubber, durian.

*I: To you what is Hutan Harapan all about?*

In order to solve all the problems PT REKI need to attract donors. All four parties, the government, the local community, PT REKI and the donors should go together to solve the problems. Without the support from the donors we cannot save the forest.

*I: So you don't think PT REKI can be financially independent?*

According to me, PT REKI already have a resource which is what is planted. PT REKI can give all the crops they want and get the 15 % revenue that is already agreed – this is a good deal for PT REKI.

But PT REKI should, under the agreement, also provide infrastructure for the farmers and sellers. The responsibility is already given to PT REKI.

*I: What does the degradation of the forest mean to you?*

I am not destroying the forest. Without anyone telling us we are already planting agro-forestry. But for the moment, since it is the most profitable is the palm oil that is what I am planting because of my stomach [since I need food on the table].

*I: What are your future plans in the area?*

For me I don't have a desire to change the way of life. The most important thing for me is the education of my son and daughter. Regardless, if you are indigenous people or migrants, education will prevent people from destroying the forest more and more. That's why that i build a school and a library for my own money for my area. I want to educate the children in my area so they can get better lives, and better understanding of the nature. Because otherwise the forest will be destroyed more and more.

*I: Do you think in 25 years that the forest still will be here?*

Yes, if the agreements that we have are uphold. We have already divided the land between us [we are doing our part]. If it is done correctly then I am convinced that the forest will be okay. Under the conditions that the agreements are done correctly, I am optimistic.

*I: Who does Hutan Harapan belong to?*

It belongs to all of us. It's not just PT REKI, the community, or government – it belongs to all of us!

Annex 7: Transcript of interview with Aini, a leader from the indigenous group Batin Sembilan

*I: Where are you from? Are you from this area? Do you have a family and children?*

Yes, I come from this area and I am part of the group called Batin Sembilan. I have three children and only one wife. My parents were also from this area. My parents previously lived in here [the forest] but are now living in [name of city or area]. At least 5 km from here, outside the PT REKI here.

*I: Before you started cultivating this area, what did you do?*

I have been working here for a long time, helping my parents and planting rubber. But as part of the Batin Sembilan group in the forest here I also have a piece of land which I got from the palm oil company. I also used to work for that company (Asiatic), as a “day-labour”.

*I: Why did you stop working for that company?*

If I just worked as a day-labour I would not have any land, or rubber, or anything that would be profitable in the future. I would not have any ownership, but my daily salary.

*I: What is Hutan Harapan under PT REKI management all about?*

For me PT REKI's mission to rehabilitate the forest is a good thing, because I and the Batin Sembilan are dependent on the forest. So we can collect everything that can be harvested from the forest. It is profitable for us.

*I: What are the biggest challenges for the preservation of the forest?*

The migrant encroachers are the biggest challenge.

*I: Have you had any encounters with the encroachers?*

I have encounters with them all the time, but we don't have discussions. But we cannot do anything about it, because they are many and we are only few. And they have resources, money and connections. So it is hard to go against it.

*I: So what is the best way to deal with them?*

For me the best way is the law enforcement of the government. Without the government intervention it is quite impossible to deal with this. Because the encroachers are numbering up to tens of thousands of migrants.

*I: Can you then not deal with it through community engagement?*

Yes, it is possible.

*I: Can you explain the agreement that you have with PT REKI and the value of it?*

Previously, since 2000 you can still open land in areas like this, when it was under the logging company. But since the license was permitted by PT REKI we are not allowed to do this kind of things or to open gardens like this. Because we have strict law at that time. Luckily, now the forest has changed. With the MoU we are allowed to open a patch of forest – which for me is good.

*I: Do you think the agreement (MoU) could be better for you?*

It could be better. For the Batin Sembilan it is about landscape. For us we are allowed to use 399 Ha of forest. But it is not specified under the agreement how much that each family has. So what is each family able to do? I would like for the agreement to state which family gets what.

*I: Do you know how many Batin Sembilan families are here? Do you know all of them?*

55. Yes I know them.

*I: Do you discuss the agreement with the other Batin Sembilan families?*

We have already had a meeting with all the 55 families. It seemed that we all agreed that the MoU is good for us. So we will not have a dispute.

All the 399 Ha will now be protected and not used for palm oil.

*I: Did the meeting take place when the agreement was made?*

Before the MoU there was no discussions between us. But the discussion within the community was made after we were certain that we would have the 399 Ha of land. The discussion was about deciding which families get what of the 399 Ha. So every time we 'open' new land it will be made under the agreements from the meeting.

*I: When did you start benefitting from the agroforestry planted up here?*

6-7 years, for the earliest crops planted.

*I: Can you explain how you otherwise earn your living besides the agroforestry?*

I still work for the palm oil land and for the migrants. Part of my community still looking for the resin.

*I: Would you prefer to just have one of the jobs? And why?*

I will prefer working with the migrants. Because we get paid each day. But if we allow them to encroach we will not have any more forest left.

*I: Are the migrants you work for encroachers?*

I don't know, but at least not here. But maybe in other areas of Hutan Harapan.

*I: What is the success criteria for Harapan to you?*

For me the key for success is the MoU. Because after the MoUs there is little encroachment. Before the MoU we had a lot of encroachers who could open land anywhere they want.

*I: Where did the first Batin Sembilan come from?*

I don't know much about the history, but they have been since long time ago. Even since the Japanese occupation

*I: How will Hutan Harapan look in 25 years?*

In 25 years if there is no law enforcement, there will be more migrants. If the migrant group have a MoU with PT REKI there will be no more encroaching.

*I: Who does Hutan Harapan belong to?*

It belongs to the community and the Batin Sembilan.

Annex 8: Transcript of interview with a policeman (O) and a delegate from the army (S)

*I: What is your job title and I understand you are hired by PT REKI?*

S: I am employed with the army with Korani, which is the smallest unit. I have to manage the people, the geography, the demography and everything related to the area covered by this small unit. I am the village "coach" (laugh).

This unit in the army is focusing on forest fires. In Jambi province the leader and responsible unit for the forest fire is on the province level of the army.

We combine a forest fire task force from the police, the army, PT REKI.

*I: How long have you been working here and where are you from in Indonesia?*

S: I have been working here for seven months. Before that I was working with "Kostrad", special army unit. The army is organized so that everyone from the special force "Kostrad" is after a certain age distributed to a certain unit. I am from Lampung in southern Sumatra and my family is also from Lampung.

*I: What is your job and function here at PT REKI?*

O: I am also from Lampung. I am part of the police force in this territory. The police is coming from the smallest office of police which is currently located to this area (BAJUBA office). And I was appointed by the district office to come here two months ago to participate in the task force for fighting forest fires.



The government has ordered this task force and given the task force and PT REKI a mandate to manage forest fires in mutual cooperation. Luckily, we have had a lot of rain this year and every day we go to the area to survey for forest fires. And if we get information about a hotspot we go to check up on it. And after we check it we report it back to the unit.

Another job we have to do is to protect PT REKI from encroachment and helping to patrol around the area and generally act as security.

*I: Do you consider it easy or difficult police/army work?*

O: For me it is good for me to be here because it is a change from the daily tasks in the police since in the police we change staff every two months. It is more comfortable here, but not easy. The job is more varied in the office than in here. But here I can be more focused on just protecting the forest.

S: It is also good with a change in the daily tasks for me. So I am glad to be here. My job in the army is also to coach the village and giving advice on how to protect the forest.

*I: Do you have a lot of engagement/encounters with locals outside of PT REKI? How do you deal with encroachers?*

S: There is no violence in our work. It is discussions that we have to enlighten to the people to do a better job to protect the forest.

O: We should also protect, because sometimes people are violating the law.

*I: How are the encroachers acting towards you? Do you feel like you have the encroachers' trust?*

S: Almost all of the encroachers know that what they are doing is a mistake [illegal]. So for me, most of them trust me.

O: Most of the encroachers are scared when they meet me.

S and O: So most of the encroachers will try to avoid meeting us.

*I: Can you understand the encroachers' perspective?*

S: Almost every time they say that it is because of their basic needs [stomach]. It is a matter of food and hunger.

*I: So what do you tell them then?*

O: Well if they violate the law I have to uphold it. For whatever the reasons the encroachers give, they should not encroach here.

*I: What is Hutan Harapan all about?*

S: Everyone should know, whatever the status are that they should protect the forest at all costs.

O: I am very glad that PT REKI exist here to protect the Hutan Harapan, and therefore I am happy to work with here.

*I: Who does the forest belong to?*

O: For me the forest belongs to us all. It doesn't mean that we can use it for what we want. We should protect it for the better of the future.

S: For me this forest belongs to Indonesia. That does mean that everyone has the right to protect it.

*I: What will Hutan Harapan look like in 25 years?*

S: I hope that Hutan Harapan still exists in the future, but if I see the conditions now I am a bit pessimistic. I hope that PT REKI still exists to protect this forest.

O: PT REKI and Hutan Harapan can be better in the future. So you can find the solutions for every situation. I expect that we together will do our best to protect the forest.

S: Thank you for the Danish support to Hutan Harapan. I expect and hope that the donations will keep on in the future, so we can protect the forest.

Annex 9: Coding of interviews and formed categories

Code number	Code label	Number of appearances	New categories formed by initial codes
11	Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)	18	Memorandum of Understanding
20	"You should inform them that you are actually helping them"	10	Providing information
1	The mission and purpose of Hutan Harapan	9	PT REKI's mission, accomplishments and challenges in Hutan Harapan
10	"The right approach"	9	Benefits of forest land
12	Provision of information to local communities	9	Encroachment
14	Law enforcement	9	Batin Sembilan
27	"It's better than nothing"	9	Historical implications
7	Financial assets/benefits in the forest land	8	
13	Prospects and challenges for Hutan Harapan	8	
15	Differentiation of Batin Sembilan from other people	8	
25	Encroachers and encounters with encroachers	8	
3	Financial Independence	7	
4	Donor Money	7	
8	Local communities lack of information	7	
22	Historical consequences	7	
17	Connecting community needs with forestry	6	
26	Ownership of land	6	
6	Global outreach	5	
9	They are encroaching because they are poor (stomach)	5	
16	Agro-forestry	4	
18	Indonesian Government	4	
19	Protection of biodiversity	4	
28	State regulation	4	
2	PT REKI's (potential) provision other government duties than conservation	3	
5	Changing prices on rubber	3	
21	Harapan as exemplification	3	
23	Providing an alternative to encroachment	3	
29	Community engagement	3	
30	Lacking capabilities of PT REKI staff	3	
24	Neighbouring palm oil plantations	2	