

Local Wisdom of Kendeng Indigenous Law Communities in Maintain Environmental Balance in the Middle of COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract: *The purpose of this research is to identify the local wisdom of the Kendeng indigenous people in maintaining the environmental balance of Sedulur Sikep to preserve the North Kendeng Mountain from the destruction, mining and construction of the cement industry in the Kendeng Utara, Sukolilo, Kayen and Tambakromo Mountains. Data is collected, evaluated, interpreted and synthesized. The results of this study indicate that the environmental wisdom of Sedulur Sikep means harmony of life with Mount Kendeng Utara. Local wisdom is implemented in daily life, including rejecting the construction of the cement industry in North Kendeng Mountain. The success of Sedulur Sikep in preserving the Kendeng Mountains is supported by companies that uphold the wisdom of their environment means living in harmony with the natural surroundings. Moral movements and resistance to their exploitation do without violence and hatred.*

Keywords: Sedulur Sikep; Mother Earth; The balance of nature; Local wisdoms; Social movement

1. Introduction

In Indonesia, each tribe has local wisdom to preserve their environment, including the wisdom to manage water resources. Sumarmi (2015) notes that the Osing people's local wisdom in managing water resources includes knowledge, values, morals and ethics, and norms that are applied in the form of advice, rules and sanctions, as well as words of wisdom as guidelines for them to act and act in protecting, preserving and preserving Mbah Buyut Citi springs. To maintain the flow of water, they protect the trees and plants around the water sumber (belik), both *belik lanang* (male spring) and *belikwadon* (female spring). Osing people inherit values, morals, ethics, and norms as guidelines on how to behave and act in carrying out traditions and instincts to respect the environment for their families, neighbors, relatives and children and grandchildren. Meanwhile Jundiani (2018) notes that local wisdom also exists in Papua, they have a belief in *aroneweaklako tea* (nature is me). Mount Erstberg and Grasberg are believed to be the head of the mother and the land as part of human life. Bengkulu, he has the confidence of *Celako Kumali*, that environmental sustainability, a taboo value in their agricultural system. The Dayak Kenyah tribe, East Kalimantan, has a *tana'ulen* tradition. Forest areas are belonging to indigenous peoples. Therefore, customary rules govern land management. Environmental sustainability comes from their belief, taboo values in their farming systems. They carry out traditional ceremonies, myths, taboos and carefully utilize the forest. They are permitted to exploit it as permitted by the elders. Likewise, the people of Bali and Lombok have *awig-awig*.

This paper aims to analyze the environmental wisdom of *Sedulur Sikep* to preserve North Kendeng Mountain from the destruction of illegal logging, illegal mining and plans to develop the cement industry in the North Kendeng Mountains in Sukolilo, Kayen and Tambakromo. It is a descriptive qualitative research, the data in this study were obtained from observations, in-depth interviews,

discussions, and data reports. The results of this study indicate that the environmental wisdom of *Sedulur Sikep* means harmony of life with North Kendeng Mountain. *Sedulur Sikep* has environmental wisdom that is able to reject the development of the cement industry in Gunung Kendeng Utara. The success of *Sedulur Sikep* in preserving the Kendeng Mountains is supported by companies that uphold the wisdom of their environment means living in harmony with the natural surroundings.

The Samin or *Sedulur Sikep* people are indigenous people or local communities in the Kendeng Sukolilo Mountains, Pati. They hope that the Kendeng Utara Mountains will be preserved and preserved so that they will continue to contribute to the local community, the majority of which work as traditional farmers. *Sedulur Sikep* is concerned about the destruction of the North Kendeng Mountains caused by illegal mining and illegal logging which has a direct impact on local communities such as floods, landslides and other disasters.

Sedulur Sikep understand how to be a good citizen

Until now, the *Sedulur Sikep* community still maintains the idealism of the Samin Teachings in the midst of increasingly massive industrialization, modernization and globalization. As in the beginning of its emergence, *Sedulur Sikep* still consistently fighting for the rights of life of farmers and environmental conservation. One of the struggles undertaken by the *Sedulur Sikep* community today is against the construction of a cement factory in the Kendeng Mountains, Rembang Regency, and Central Java. The rejection of the construction of the cement factory was also known as the *Kendeng Farmer Action*.

For the *Sedulur Sikep* community, resistance to the cement factory is because the industry has damaged the environment and threatened the sustainability of agriculture which is the main livelihood of the *Sedulur Sikep* community, especially those in the Kendeng Mountains. In each action, the people of *Sedulur Sikep* never used violence; they protested by

singing the song Mother Earth and the worst was hurting themselves by cementing their own feet in front of the Merdeka Palace. For the Sedulur Sikep community in particular (Javanese people in general) the act of self-harm is the peak of anger, because for them if anger is channeled with violence against others is a bad thing, then they prefer to hurt themselves rather than hurt others.

Sedulur Sikep's rejection against the plan for industrialization is not only a formal legal reason, but there are also beliefs as expressed by Aprianto, TC (2013) "*Adam seneng nyandang, doyan mangan, dilakoni tata gauta, gebyah macul sing dumunung weke dewe.*" This means Sedulur Sikep has its own system for making a living. They work hard to provide clothing and food, which must come from something that has clear origins. *Dumunung* represented the concept of belief about purity that they carried out. From this concept the work of cultivating land or farming is clear work for them.

Kendeng Mountains for Sedulur Sikep is not only land, but a system of community and state life. According to Sedulur Sikep the land in which is placed is the mother. There is a meaning of mother in this phrase, a meaning that lives all creatures. So, it has become an obligation for humans to care for and protect the Earth that has provided a source of life and livelihood.

The impact of the exploitation of the Kendeng Mountains is not only limited to the depletion of the number of springs that are the foundation of people's lives, but we will lose the rich biodiversity and damage to nature. This is the seizure of the rights of local communities and the marginalization of the social and cultural order of the community, which has never been counted as economic, ecological, and socio-cultural costs which must be sacrificed for development while ignoring the legal advancement that lives and develops in society. It seems different in the colonial era and the New Order, the resistance of Sedulur Sikep was more active, while previously it had tended to be passive although it remained principled with its non-violent movement. Aprianto, TC (2013) noted the statement of Mbah Tarno, Sedulur Sikep elder who stated that Sedulur Sikep's attitude was not an old-fashioned and unfounded idea. But it must be done in order to appreciate history. So that human civilization in the future does not collapse. For Mbah Tarno there is no prohibition or punishment for maintaining one's own land, including a ban by the state.

The state in the conception of Sedulur Sikep is to serve its people. *Adam ngongak sak jeroning negara*, is meaning that the Sikep person understood deeply about the state. *Sedulur Sikep iku dudu wonge Negara*, Sedulur Sikep is not a government person. Thus Sedulur Sikep cannot become an official in the government and has no ambition to become a government official. That's because, Sedulur Sikep are chosen to be a skipper, the highest position in the state according to Sedulur Sikep's conception is the people who work as farmers. Because they are the ones who support the country.

Nawiyanto and Endrayadi, EC (2019) stated that the movement to protect the Kendeng Mountains and the role of

women is increasing, and anti-cement resistance has gained new features as a women's environmental movement. This environment has two foundations namely the historical roots of the Samin resistance movement during the Dutch colonial era, and the resistance movement by incorporating new arguments developed by showing the close relationship between women and the environment as personification of the environment [earth] as a mother.

The growth of environmental awareness among women in the Kendeng region has been praised by Gunarti. The formation of the Women's Group for Environmental Concern (Simbar Wareh), which was initiated by Gunarti and her colleagues, marked an important stage in raising environmental activist women. This group has provided a place to prepare Kendeng women to become environmental fighters for the environment of the Kendeng Mountains and local agriculture.

In opposing the cement industry, women have acted as field players and lobbyists. Their actions are directed not only at regional and provincial government institutions and figures but also at national level institutions and figures. By bringing their protest to the center of power in Jakarta, it is believed that they will get national media coverage so that the news of their activities can reach a wider audience and generate broader sympathy and public support.

The role of women at the forefront of the anti-cement movement was so prominent that this movement was later labeled as Kartini's struggle from Kendeng, like the struggle of a woman named Kartini for the women liberation from the traditional prison. Erdianto, K (03/23/2017) noted Gunretno, refusing mining and cement factory construction in the region in the North Kendeng Mountains is a struggle to defend the country, which means protecting the land and water, for the sake of life. The struggle can also be read as an attempt to regain the authority of self (and community), and all its definitions. Sedulur Sikep Community is not dazzled by the lure of "prosperity and prosperity" from investors. For Sedulur Sikep, prosperity and well-being are not calculated from the material value, such as rank, degree, money, power, but as sane and independent as a farmer. That is, the factors of production that support agriculture, especially water, land and people, must be maintained and cared for. Tracing history, the struggle of the community is always related to the sovereignty of life. Sedulur Sikep has chosen his life as a farmer, so the natural environment must be protected. They always remember the will of Mbah Tarno, the elder of Sedulur Sikep, who said that "*Yen Pulau Jawa kuwi wetenge diodol-odo, ya rusak sak menungsane.*" That is, if the bowels of Java continue to be excreted, then the earth and its people will be damaged.

Resistance without verbal abuse

Another consideration is the greater opportunity to attract the attention of the central government to intervene. In carrying out their actions using the Art of Happening, for example, through the use of theatrical action, especially through so-called self-mortification by covering feet with cement, this action seems to be quite effective in pressuring the central government to intervene in finding solutions. Erdianto, K. (2017). Reported that when they were carrying

out a foot-cast in front of the palace, a farmer Yu Patmi (48 years old) died on Tuesday (3/21/2017) early morning on his way from the Jakarta LBH office to St. Hospital. Carolus, Salemba, Central Jakarta.

Dhewy, A. (2016) reported that all activities in carrying out acts of rejection were always made interesting by creating songs created by Gunritno himself, as well as collaborating with others, for example with Kyai Gufron or Tantri. When the 20 kilometer long march was made a song that could invite people to take part so that they joined together (in groups), because of Sedulur Sikep's minority. In composing the song, Gunritna also received input from relatives who are Muslim so that it includes the sentence *La ilaha illallah Muhammadur Rasulallah*. Thus people become touched and take part in the long march. In the end some joined in walking, others on bicycles brought water and gave drinks to those who walked.

In the further developments, the songs of Sedulur Sikep Ibu Bumi's struggle are famous for the Creed of the Earth and were performed at the Folk Music Festival 2018¹ as well. Musician Resha Stomp introduces the Creed of the Earth into one of his Rap album² albums in News is a weekly program from Marzuki Mohamad³ a.k.a. Kill the DJ, which is present every Friday, addresses issues that are currently hot in the rhythm of rap. This episode is dedicated to Ms. Padmi, Kartini Kendeng, who died after the Semen action in front of the State Palace.

Likewise, when they appealed to PTTUN Surabaya. On this occasion, Gunretno hopes through song:

*kain pinjung mengko werdi panjang punjung /
slamet lan raharjo ibu pertiwi ibu bumi /
saking serakah lan angkara ning manungso /
putih iku pralambang sucining kalbu /
mugi dayanana mring sedaya para hakim /
mutuske adil mring yuna nusantara.
mugo-mugo putusane kanggo keapikane nusantara*

Sedulur Sikep always thinks positively, so even though he is seen by many as unkind, we always think that no one likes to be ugly, everyone wants to be good. When he already has bad behavior, maybe we should also be grateful because good and bad have become the balance.

In the condition that was ignored when Sedulur Sikep opposed the establishment of a Cement Factory in Rembang, Gunretna also composed songs:

*Amung butuh waktu rong tahun lumaku kanggo ngrusak alam /
lemah subur den keduki, sedaya nuruti serakahe kapital /
ora krungu opo nutupi pangrungu pengemnating praja /
sajak ora do peduli, ndulu lan nggulati gelare kahanan /
wis rong tahun, prihatine para ibu ono jroning tenda /
labuh nggrungkepi pertiwi tan kendat anyekapi sandang boga /
siro ibu pertiwi kang setyo tuhu tyas iki percoyo /*

¹https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zN9Hsy49Vys&list=RDzN9Hsy49Vys&start_radio=1

²<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E7aqkQp1JE8>

³<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0d-gpZkQIPk>

ndika kang bakal ngadili polah manungsa kang uwus nyawiyah ndika.

It only takes two years to destroy nature
Fertile soil is dredged, all spoil investor's greed
Do not hear or close the ears O officials
Presumably do not care, do not see the current situation,
It's been two years that you are concerned in the tent
Defending the motherland who does not stop giving food
and clothing
Motherland who is always sincere,
You will judge the human behavior that has hurt you

2. Pandemy and Natural Harmony

The indigenous people of Samin believe that the pandemic has emerged as a natural reaction to what humans have done, as a sign that the earth has begun judging. They stated that the corona outbreak confused all circles and caused difficulties in getting food. From the statement of that attitude, it was proven from the beginning that the Samin community believed that the pandemic was related to food. If this pandemic continues, it is certain that the grassroots will have difficulty meeting their food needs. For this reason, the Samin community urges all parties to maintain the balance of nature.

On April 21, 2020, the Samin community expressed a stance that emphasized the need to stop the destruction of nature. Supposedly, the process of building a cement factory near their village was stopped. This outbreak came, as part of the process of rearranging the universe. In principle, Sedulur Sikep and the Kendeng Mountain Concerned Community Network want the COVID-19 outbreak to stop all operations and exploitation by the cement factory and comply with the rules regarding current conditions. They take action by keeping their distance and wearing masks. The action was part of the umpteenth time resistance of Kendeng women over extractive industry operations in their area. Cement factories are considered to threaten the water resources, ecosystems and livelihoods of farmers.

During the pandemic, Kendeng farmers were not very worried about food sufficiency, there was a food supply. They remain in the fields, harvesting when they enter the harvest. They are actually worried about the people who live in the city they consider as sedulur (siblings). Farmers' food problems are not restless. They also must be considered by the government, so they can prosper. Despite the pandemic, Kendeng farmers' activities are still as usual. Go to the fields or fields, care for and harvest agricultural products. Unlike those who live and have to work in the city. Decrease in income, food shortages, even going home is afraid to transmit the disease.

The Kendeng Mountains Concerned Community Network (JMPPK) says that the Kendeng ecosystem is threatened by the destruction of the Kendeng Mountains becoming more open. In the midst of the Corona crisis, the Kendeng Mountains Community Care Network reminded all parties to reduce the risk of even the slightest catastrophic epidemic of human greed for nature. In the midst of the Corona crisis, JMPPK reminded all parties to reduce the risk of the

slightest catastrophic epidemic of human greed for nature. In Rembang and Pati, Kendeng limestone mining continues. Large-scale restrictions should be on exploitation efforts that destroy the ecosystems and native habitats of wild animals such as bats that have the potential to transmit the virus to humans. The trick is to stop the destruction of nature in the Kendeng Mountains and close the cement factory in Rembang.

Ten women stood at the entrance to the cement factory conveyer in Rembang owned by PT Semen Indonesia. Four men accompanied them. A number of limestone hauling trucks are passing by. The women wear *caping*, wear masks. Some of them raised posters and carried the Red and White flags. They protested the cement factory which was still operating, even though all the residents were asked to stay at home in the context of the Large-Scale Social Restriction (PSBB) regulation issued by the Ministry of Health (Ministry of Health) in the context of the Acceleration of Handling COVID-19 so that it could be immediately implemented in various regions.

The action was part of the umpteenth time resistance of Kendeng women over extractive industry operations in their area. Cement factories are considered to threaten the source of water, ecosystems and livelihoods of farmers. In the current situation, the government is thought to be food for the people. So it is not a cement factory that is being driven on. The cement factory should stop.

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Bats in Rembang are insectivorous species, which play a role in controlling plantations and agricultural pest populations. Insectivorous bats are known to have a cruising range of up to 10 kilometers. In addition, it is certain that the Watu Putih karst also has pollinating bats. Although they have not been found in the caves in the Watu Putih Karst, their presence is evident from the population of the petai trees in the Gunem District in the Watu Putih karst. Gunem became the largest petai producer in Rembang. Petai is a commodity that depends on the presence of pollinating bats. The study team also mentioned, bat roaming areas included in the utilization zone for industrial purposes. This condition can result in changes in roaming patterns, bats also migrate to other areas.

In addition, the insect population will be disrupted by its distribution patterns due to the existence of exploration projects. This also affects the bat's roaming pattern as an insect eater.

Bats in residential areas play a role in controlling insects that have the potential to become sources of disease, for example, mosquitoes. They chose to save the environment from damage to cement and other mining factories. Therefore, the Kendeng customary community continues to articulate damage caused by the cement factory in Rembang and the mining in Pati. They feel the mother earth has given food, can drink, can breathe with fresh air.

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