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Environmental Politics: Government Policies and Strategies in Realizing Sustainable Development of Forest Conservation in Brebes Regency

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Cecep Nugroho

**Environmental Politics: Government Policies and
Strategies in Realizing Sustainable Development of Forest
Conservation in Brebes Regency**

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Abstract

In line with the program pioneered by the United Nations, namely the Sustainable Development Goals. In the program there are several important points that cover almost all the problems that are being experienced by most countries in the world. Therefore, that all members of the United Nations must implement it. By using field observation methods by observing forest conditions and literature studies which are also strengthened by problem formulation instruments. What is the policy of the Brebes district government in dealing with forest destruction? The data shows that the Brebes Regency Government has not been fully involved in sustainable development efforts in the environmental sector so there are still problems that must be overcome before other problems occur and are able to realize the general goals set by the central government and the local government. Lack of firmness and maximization of technology as well as the attention of the Brebes Regency Government in the process of implementing sustainable development, especially related to environmental issues, so that there are several points where forest land is deforested which results in several natural disasters occurring uncontrollably

Keywords: Deforestation, SDGs, Policy, Environmental Politics,

1.0 Introduction

The existence of humans as the highest link on earth will always have an impact on the surrounding environment, both good and bad impacts. In this case the environment becomes one of the objects that feel its impact, what is meant by the environment itself is everything that is around humans that affects human life either directly or indirectly. Meanwhile, the living environment is a unitary space with all objects and living things in it, including humans and their behavior which of course will affect the survival of humans and other living things. The environment includes social behavior, ecosystem, and culture. But in reality, environmental substances spread to many objects of scientific study such as pollution, waste disposal, environmental damage due to mining, forest destruction, forest fires and so on. Therefore, it is not surprising that recently environmental issues have become the main topic of national and even international discussion (Nurmadiansyah, 2015).

As stated in the Sustainable Development Goals by the United Nations, where there are 17 points in the goal, where all UN members are required to take part in making it happen, researchers focus on 3 points, namely climate, ecosystems, and environmental sustainability ((SDGs), 2021).

In the awareness of the bad impact of environmental damage, the concept of environmental politics emerged and many scientists gave a definition of environmental politics. According to Herman Hidayat (2008), Environmental politics is similar to the method applied by environmentalists who analyze policies on relevant environmental issues, this is known as progressive contextualization.

2.0 Study Background

The dependent sub-district as one of the largest sub-districts in Brebes Regency also has a fairly large area of non-building land, but most of the land is used for rice fields and only a little for forest land. In addition, the Ketanggungan subdistrict is

also the area most frequently affected by landslides and floods. Some flora and fauna are now increasingly rare due to diminishing habitat, poaching is also one of the causes of extinction. Most of the forest in Brebes Regency, especially in Ketanggungan Sub-district, is teak wood, which is wood that is planted with the aim of being cut down and made into processed materials to be made into a product, while for protected forests it is only in the mountains with strong customs.

In addition, Brebes Regency will become an industrial area that is offered to foreign parties to invest, even now many protected forests are starting to be eroded because they are used for the chicken farming industry which has begun to spread at various points and is also used as land for agriculture. The governor of Central Java emphasized looking for locations with low prices, not locations with the right environment to be used as industrial land (Nugraha, 2022). If this happens and there is no firm follow-up from the Brebes Regency Government, some areas will be replaced with industrial areas or forest areas which will certainly be threatened and affected if not prepared properly.

This research is important because it will involve environmental sustainability which will continue to exist if it is maintained properly, the benefits will be felt in the long term. Researchers will also examine the policies issued by the Brebes district government, regarding the strategy of nature conservation in realizing a life cycle that will last a long time and how its implementation is carried out for smooth realization. This study will also examine the role of society or humans as the highest natural structure in implementing government policies in order to maintain the environmental cycle and avoid lurking disasters. Not only that, researchers will know the condition of the forest and its inhabitants after the policy is implemented in various forest type sectors such as protected forest, limited production forest and permanent production forest.

3.0 Research question

What is the policy of the Brebes district government in dealing with forest destruction?

4.0 Methodology

This research framework uses qualitative research methods because it will analyze the government's strategic steps regarding forests, by conducting an analysis that intends to understand or find justification for phenomena such as behavior, perceptions, or other actions by means of descriptions in the form of words in a natural context by utilizing various natural methods (Moleong, 2018). With qualitative research aims to investigate, explain, find, and describe the quality or characteristics of social influence that is impossible to explain using quantitative methods (Sugiyono, 2014).

Sources of data used in this study is secondary data. Secondary data is data that is often used instead of primary data to obtain information that cannot be obtained using primary data (Sugiyono, 2014). Secondary data sources are usually obtained from books, journals, documents or archives, and news information from the web or the internet that are relevant to the topic of research discussion (Miranti et al., 2018).

The object of this research is the policy of overcoming forest damage in Brebes Regency. This study uses a literature study data collection technique, namely a theoretical study of references and scientific literature sourced from various forms of information or news, reports or important notes related to the object of research. With various relevant sources with clear accuracy will produce mutually reinforcing information so that it can determine a conclusion as the final result.

According to Miles and Huberman, techniques in analyzing data include several important points such as data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions or verification (Miles & Huberman, 1992). Reducing data can be said as an activity to

summarize, filter the core things which then the data that has been obtained can be a determinant of the themes and patterns of a study, in this study the authors collect data relevant to the research topic which then the data is filtered again so that it can be analyzed. used to be supporting data in research. Presentation of data can be done with a brief description, framework or chart in which the relationship between categories is intertwined which can then facilitate the understanding of a problem that occurs and can determine the next step. After all the required data is collected and analyzed, then it can be poured in the form of a description of the results in a conclusion and can be useful for the future.

5.0 Results

5.1 Environmental politics

The emergence of the issue of global warming or climate change is certainly a very important discussion to be studied. Many events exacerbate this global warming. This has prompted many experts to express their thoughts in interpreting environmental politics (Political Ecology). As one of the concrete actions put forward by the thinkers, as quoted from the book Political Ecology by Paul Robbins who emphasized that the study of natural resource management is part of political science because decisions in the political realm also have a major impact on nature (Robbins, 2012).

Meanwhile, Blaikie (2000) defines environmental politics as a framework for understanding the interrelated complexities of local, national, global, and ecosystem political economy. On the other hand, Bryant said that environmental politics can be interpreted as an attempt to understand political sources, conditions and become a network of environmental change (Bryant, 1991). Recent understandings of environmental politics tend to look deeply at environmental dynamics and focus on the makeup of human systems. This is of course relevant to the current situation where there is a pessimistic feeling that is

already at a fairly worrying level among the public regarding the effectiveness of the government or state in managing natural resources and biodiversity (Febrianto et al., 2017). People's thinking has now become apathetic towards the products or political processes issued by the government and in the end, people have more confidence in institutions that have nothing to do with the government.

Not only public apathy towards political institutions in dealing with natural resources, depoliticization of natural resource management has now become a topic that has been highlighted and studied by many thinkers. As Raymond Bryant's (1991) view on how to implement a sustainable development policy assumes that the government is serious about implementing it. Where with the strength and power of the government, sustainable development policies must be implemented effectively without significant obstacles.

Behind the natural wealth owned by Indonesia, it turns out to have quite risky challenges and must be answered by the government with real actions. As in the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia which states that natural resources in Indonesia are used for the greatest prosperity of the community in a sustainable and environmentally sound manner. Article 33 paragraph (3) of the 1945 Constitution which reads; "Earth, water and the natural resources contained therein are controlled by the state and ultimately used to be controlled by the state and used as much as possible for the prosperity of the people. While Article 33 paragraph (4) which reads; The national economy is organized based on economic democracy with the principles of togetherness, efficiency, justice, sustainability, environmental insight, independence, and by contributing to the balance of progress and national economic unity (Rosenbaum, 1990).

These cases certainly cause anxiety and distrust of the coherence and consistency of regulations that have been made by the Government, namely the 30 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia Article 33 Paragraph 4. Meanwhile, Muhammad Akib (2014) expressed his opinion that the root of

environmental damage in Indonesia is environmental law enforcement that weak. Meanwhile, according to Jimly Asshidiqie, (2006) the causes of environmental damage in Indonesia are: "Although the environment has been stated in the Law (Law Number 32 of 2009 concerning Environmental Protection and Management), but after being linked to Trade, the Industry Law, with the Cooperative Law alone, the Environment Law will definitely lose in practice".

Meanwhile, the United Nations defines deforestation as an event when forest land is cut down or cleared for conversion to other land outside the forestry sector. Deforestation can also be seen when forest quality declines, such as when species diversity and biomass decline due to unsustainable forest use. Another cause of deforestation is forest fires as an environmental disaster, the main cause of forest fires is logging activities that encourage forest fires (WALHI, 2018).

This phenomenon can be understood that forest destruction in Indonesia is caused by forest management policies that do not use sustainable principles, as well as weak law enforcement and the absence of strict sanctions against forest management violators. The problem of factors behind the rampant deforestation in Indonesia is related to forest management or forest exploitation that is wrong which shows the following correlation indicators: (1) Negligence in forest management between direct actors, for example bureaucrats from the Ministry of Forestry in both central and regional agencies, as well as local entrepreneurs and transnational. (2) These individuals do not pay attention to the importance of human nature with the environment, and they also fail to integrate the system of human relations with nature (Sreekanth et al., 2014). Humans must be able to give the right reciprocity to nature so that the sustainability of both parties can be maintained in the long term and both benefit from this symbiosis. Therefore, it can be said that the fundamental difference between human nature and the environment is that the role of society in an environmental system will not be enough just to understand how humans have acted in the past, but about how they planned all preparations for their future (Watts, 2017).

Thus, in order for sustainable forest management to obtain good results, it must be linked to environmental politics, there are two rational reasons. First, environmental politics is an exploration of complex political-economic and environmental processes that emphasize development in the forestry sector. Second, environmental politics is concerned with the perceptions, policies, and practices that have conditioned how forests are seen, used and exploited (Bryant, 1991).

5.2 Policy

The literal understanding of policy cannot be separated from the existence of government and politics, this is because the emergence of a policy is formed by a group of people who have a position or power under the law which of course has the aim of solving a problem. Experienced by society, which binds all citizens indiscriminately including the government. Within the scope of society, policies will certainly have an impact on life, either directly or indirectly.

“Public policy is whatever the government chooses to do or not to do”. According to Dye (2005), if the government chooses to do something, there must be a purpose because public policy is the government's "action". If the government chooses not to do something, it is also a public policy with a purpose. In contrast to Anderson, there are four stages of public policy according to William Dunn (2017), namely as follows 1. Agenda Setting 2. Policy formulation 3. Policy adoption or legitimacy 4. Policy assessment or evaluation.

5.3 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Wise development for society is sustainable development. Sustainable *developmentis* development that aims to improve the quality of life of people

around the world, both from present and future generations, without utilizing the use of natural resources that exceed the carrying capacity and carrying capacity of the earth. This goal can be achieved through four elements of sustainable development goals: (1) Economic growth and equity; (2) Social development; (3) Conservation of natural resources (environmental protection); (4) Good governance. These four elements support each other, creating linked and sustainable development goals ((SDGs), 2021).

In the United Nations (UN) Conference held in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) in June 2012, a sustainable development agenda called the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs) was discussed. The SDGs are a set of goals, targets, and indicators for sustainable development that are universal. The SDGs are a continuation and expansion of the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs) that have been carried out by countries since 2001 until the end of 2015. The SDGs consist of 17 goals and 169 targets, covering various sustainable development issues ((SDGs), 2021).

5.4 Forest Concept

Forest is an area overgrown with trees and other plants. Such areas are found over large areas of the world and serve as carbon dioxide sinks, animal habitats, hydrological current modulators, and soil preservers, and are one of the most important aspects of Earth's biosphere. Forests are life forms that are spread all over the world. We can find forests in tropical and cold climates. In the lowlands and in the mountains, on small islands and on large continents. Forest is a collection of plants and plants, especially trees or other woody plants that occupy a fairly large area.

Forest based on its function is a forest classification based on its use. This forest can be classified into three types, including:

1. Conservation Forest, is a forest with certain characteristics that have the

main function of preserving the diversity of plants and animals and their ecosystems. Conservation forest consists of three types, namely: nature reserve forest area and nature conservation forest area, hunting park.

2. Protected forest is a forest area that has the main function of protecting life support systems, regulating water systems, preventing flooding, controlling erosion, preventing intrusion. (breakthrough) seawater, and maintain soil fertility.
3. Production forest is a forest area that has the main function of producing forest products (Akib, 2014).

5.5 Forest Conditions in Brebes Regency

As one of the regencies that has an agricultural area, one of the main livelihoods in Brebes Regency is the agricultural sector. The 2017 Labor Force Survey results estimate that around 50% of the workforce in Brebes works in the agriculture, forestry and fishery sectors. Land in Brebes Regency based on the aspect of its designation is divided into non-agricultural (27,605 Ha), rice fields (63,321 Ha), dry land (25,657 Ha), plantations (610 Ha), forests (44,620 Ha) and water bodies (4,484 Ha). Non-agricultural land use is used for open land/vacant land and settlements. Utilization of dry land is used for mixed gardens, shrubs/shrubs, fields/rice fields. Meanwhile, the utilization of water bodies consists of water, ponds/ponds, and lakes.

In the forestry sector, one of them is the Protection Forest in Brebes Regency covering an area of approximately 50,106.76 hectares in 2018 spread over several areas. The condition of the forest in Brebes Regency can also be described in terms of the distribution of land cover forest area within the forest area and outside the forest area. The area of land cover inside the forest area and outside the forest area in Brebes Regency is in 11 sub-districts, namely Banjarharjo, Bantarkawung, Bumiayu, Ketanggungan, Larangan, Losari, Paguyangan, Salem, Sirampog, Songgom and Tonjong sub-districts. The

characteristics of forest areas are permanent forest areas which include Nature Reserve Areas (CA), Protection Forests (HL), Limited Production Forests (HPT), and Permanent Production Forests (HP).

In 2018 the largest forest area was in Bantarkawung District with an area of 11,559.33 Ha, then Salem Regency with a total of 9,458.90 Ha, and several other sub-districts. While the position of Ketanggungan District is in the sixth position with a forest area of 3,957.47. Whereas in 2019 there was a change where the Bantarkawung sub-district decreased to 11,041.47, and the Salem sub-district increased by 10,072.80, for dependent sub-districts it increased to 4,095.90. The number of forests in Brebes Regency was reduced to 49,115.45.

Meanwhile, in 2020 there will be very significant changes. Now Salem District is the sub-district that has the widest forest with an area that remains the same as the previous year, namely 10,072.80. Meanwhile, Bantarkawung Sub-district experienced drastic decline to 7,893.17. On the other hand, the area of forest under dependents remains the same, namely 4,095.90. Of course, the amount of forest itself will also be affected due to the destruction of 43,950.18. To make it clearer, there is a table that will make it easier for readers to analyze the data.

Table. 1 Forest Timber Production by Production Type in Brebes Regency (m3), 2010-2020

Year/ Year	Log	Sawn wood	Plywood
2010	21.607,03	17,99	-
2011	25.025,60	30,35	-
2012	20.500,35	23,91	-
2013	17.308,15	9,11	-
2014	17.697,98	5,89	-
2015	16.544,24	19,25	-
2016	8.979,31	-	-
2017	15.296,88	-	-
2018	21.920,60	-	-
2019	18.571,73	-	-
2020	26.705,72	-	-

Source: Perum Perhutani KPH Balapulung and West Pekalonga

**Table. 2 Forest Area by District in Brebes Regency
(ha), 2020**

Subdistrict	Decision Year	Forest Area					
		Protected Forest	Reserves and Nature Conservation Areas	Limited Production Forest	Permanent Production Forest	Production Forest	Total Forest Area
Salem	...	710,92	-	8.936,26	425,62	-	10.072,80
Bantarkawung	...	184,98	-	4.355,59	3.352,60	-	7.893,17
Bumiayu	...	-	-	36,00	1.295,09	-	1.331,09
Paguyangan	...	1.465,93	-	2.205,44	285,05	-	3.956,42
Sirampog	...	1.456,07	-	2.164,56	-	-	3.620,63
Tonjong	...	-	-	-	332,14	-	332,14
Larangan	...	-	-	-	5.900,22	-	5.900,22
Ketanggungan	...	1.274,87	-	973,21	1.808,64	-	4.056,72
Banjarharjo	...	1.160,11	-	1.625,62	3.110,67	-	5.896,40
Losari	...	-	-	-	184,51	-	184,51
Tanjung	...	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kersana	...	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bulakamba	...	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wanasari	...	-	-	-	-	-	-
Songgom	...	-	-	-	706,08	-	706,08
Jatibarang	...	-	-	-	-	-	-
Brebes	...	-	-	-	-	-	-
Brebes District	...	6.252,88	-	20 296,68	17.400,62	-	43.950,18

Note: Based on the Decree of the Minister of Forestry Number 359/Menhut/11/2004 dated October 1, 2004 and SK Number 2889/KPTS/I/2013 dated October 21, 2013. Source: *Perum* Perhutani KPH Balapulang and West Pekalongan

Where these conditions are now changing from time to time, the facts on the ground shown by community observations show that there is a change in land, especially agriculture for industrial and residential areas that continue to grow. In addition to agricultural land that has turned into built up in several places, it also shows a change in forest areas into open land. However, the area of the state forest area has remained constant in the last five years. This state forest area includes limited production forest areas, permanent production forests, protected forests, and nature reserves.

5.6 Brebes Regency Environmental Management Policy

5.6.1 Brebes Regent Regulation Number 51 of 2017 concerning Tree Protection

In the Perbup Brebes No. 51 of 2017 it is stated that the purpose of the Perbup is made in Chapter III Article 3 which describes, of course, to conserve forests and create security for the public interest, as well as to realize sustainable development which if not followed up quickly then nature can be damaged in a not long time

To help make it happen, of course, there must be real actions taken by humans as thinking beings who can carry out directed movements. This is stated in Chapter IV Implementation of Tree Protection Part One Article 4 which contains cooperation between the community and the government to be able to carry out the implementation in a directed and structured manner, one of stated in paragraph (3) which reads that the community participates in the implementation of tree protection in the area. which is a protected area. owned or controlled by the community concerned and/or an area owned or controlled by the Regional Government.

The community itself certainly has a role in this implementation which is stated in Part Two of the Role of the Community Article 5:

- a) Tree planting;
- b) Tree maintenance;
- c) Do not engage in activities that can damage or kill trees; or
- d) Reporting to local government officials about the existence of trees that can endanger or threaten the safety of the public interest and/or actions that according to him are against the law that can cause trees to be damaged or die.

On the other hand, licensing on all matters relating to tree protection is also clearly stated in Chapters V Licensing Part One Article 6 which states that every logging activity must first go through a permit from the regent which is then delegated to the Head of the Environment. and Waste Management Services. only 1 (one) felling is allowed within a period of 14 days, so if it is not done, it will expire. However, it is different if the tree belongs to a person/private sector or entity.

Of course, before cutting a tree, there must be a strong reason in advance so that it can be approved by the government as stated in Part Two of the Reasons for Cutting Trees Article 7 which reads as follows:

- a) the presence of trees interfering with the city's utility network;
- b) the presence of trees interferes with or endangers public safety/interest; or
- c) in or around the tree site a building will be erected or will be used for road access purposes by the applicant.

5.6.2 Brebes Regency Regulation Number 5 of 2019 concerning Environmental Protection and Management

The purpose of making this regional regulation is stated in CHAPTER II Principles, Objectives and Scope of Part Two. The purpose of Article 3 is to protect regional areas from all forms of pollution and/or environmental damage, as well as to ensure safety, health, survival of humans and creatures. other life and also to preserve the ecosystem.

This is also an effort to realize sustainable development and is a step to anticipate global issues.

In order to realize the implementation of the use of nature so that it can be sustainable with the realization of sustainability as stated in Chapter V Control Part One Article 7 which contains control of environmental pollution and/or damage carried out in the context of preserving environmental functions, which includes prevention, control, and recovery in which the regional government is responsible for its implementation and the person in charge of businesses and or activities in accordance with their respective interests, roles and responsibilities.

While the second part of CHAPTER V contains Article 8 Prevention, where the instruments for preventing pollution or environmental damage consist of:

- a) KLHS (Strategic Environmental Studies)
- b) Spatial;
- c) Environmental quality standards;
- d) Standard criteria for environmental damage;
- e) Documents;
- f) Licensing;
- g) Economic instruments;
- h) Based laws and regulations;
- i) Budgeting;
- j) Environmental risk analysis; and
- k) An environmental audit.

In addition to prevention, of course, that environmental sustainability can last for a long period of time, then of course there is maintenance as stipulated in CHAPTER VI Maintenance of Article 39 which contains the following:

- 1) Caring for the environment is carried out through the following efforts:
 - a. Conservation of natural resources;
 - b. Preservation of the function of the atmosphere.
- 2) Conservation of natural resources as referred to in paragraph (1) letter a includes the following activities:
 - a. Protection of natural resources;
 - b. Preservation of natural resources; and
 - c. Sustainable use of natural resources.
- 3) The preservation of the function of the atmosphere as referred to in paragraph (1) letter b includes:
 - a. Climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts;
 - b. Efforts to protect the ozone layer;
 - c. Tree protection. Comment [H37]: Article 55 of Law no. 32 of 2009
Comment [H38]: Article 57 of Law no. 32 of 2009 (4)
- 4) The preservation of the function of the atmosphere through the protection of trees as referred to in paragraph (3) letter b, shall be further regulated by a Regent Regulation.

6.0 Discussion

As a district that has a very wide area and also has vacant land that even exceeds the land that is already inhabited, this will certainly invite investors to build new businesses in the Brebes area which of course can produce good fruit and can even damage the environment in Brebes Regency.

When viewed from statistical data related to land in Brebes Regency, every year it continues to change, whether it's a drastic change or the same every year. As stated in the regulation above, which is related to forest conservation in Brebes Regency at this time. The purpose of making this Regional Regulation is stated in CHAPTER II Principles, Objectives, and Scope of Part Two. The purpose of Article 3 is to protect regional areas from all forms of pollution and/or

environmental damage, as well as to ensure safety, health and human survival. and other living things and to preserve the ecosystem. This is also an effort to realize sustainable development and is a step to anticipate global issues.

Efforts to implement sustainable development carried out by the Brebes district government are still lacking. This is because it appears that the efforts or policies carried out by the Brebes Regency Government are only limited to restrictions without any program efforts that are actually aimed at Sustainable Development which will be felt very important in the next few years. Especially because Brebes Regency is a very strategic location for investment because the area has a lot of vacant land or plantation land.

This will also pose a threat to farmers who make up the majority of workers in Brebes Regency, as well as various natural disasters such as floods or landslides, and forest fires which are still a serious problem. Therefore, the government must think of a solution that can cover all the problems that are being experienced so that it can survive in the long term and can be felt in a sustainable manner. There are also many cases of forest destruction that occurred in Brebes Regency due to illegal logging which is the main cause of all natural disasters and loss of flora and fauna habitat.

7.0 Conclusion

The steps and efforts of the Brebes Regency Government in implementing the implementation of sustainable development can be said that there is no absolute movement related to the SDGs for the points of Climate, Sustainability and Ecosystems, of course, that is one point that cannot be underestimated. This is because it involves the sustainability of various parties such as humans, nature, animals, and also sustainability in the future. The policies issued by the Brebes Regency Government are only limited to regulating how to prevent land or environmental damage.

With the majority of people's work in Brebes Regency coming from nature, of course it will have a big impact on their work. The government should take this as a lesson, because the actions taken will produce both good and bad results for the future of Brebes Regency. Investors are needed to be able to develop Brebes district, but government must also prioritize the environment and the indigenous people of Brebes district, the majority of whom depend on their daily lives from the nature.

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