

## **A CHALLENGE FOR A MODEL NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT GUNUNG HALIMUN-SALAK MANAGEMENT PROJECT**

**[Suatu Tantangan untuk Sebuah Model Manajemen Taman Nasional  
Proyek Manajemen Gunung Halimun-Salak]**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The National park system of Indonesia could be the most reliable safeguard to protect one of the richest biological diversity in the world. Unfortunately, however, the reality seems to be far from such an optimistic outlook. Despite the government's continuous efforts, unlawful activities, e.g. illegal logging, mining and encroachment, have shown no sign of cessation.

Gunung Halimun-Salak National Park (GHSNP) Management Project was launched February 2004. This five year project between the Ministry of Forestry Indonesia and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) aims to materialize a model park management in GHSNP and disseminate its useful experiences to other national parks. GHSNP has already been said as one of the well managed national parks in this country. However, the park expansion took place in June 2003 has brought a number of hard issues to the park. Whether can this project overcome such difficulties, and then establish a milestone to reverse the dim trend of national parks in this country? A new challenge has just begun.

### **Gunung Halimun-Salak National Park**

It is quite amazing that the largest primitive forest in Java remains just 50 to 100 km south of the capital of Jakarta. Javan Gibbons, Javan Hark-eagles, leopards and many more rare and endangered species have homed in the forest; and a rich traditional culture has grown with it.

The area has been protected since 1925, and in 1992 it was endowed with national park status, named as Gunung Halimun National park (GHNP). The Biodiversity Conservation Project (BCP, 1995 to 2003) between LIPI, Ministry of Forestry of Indonesia, and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

selected the park as the project site and strengthen its management. A number of researches and conservation activities such as environmental education, ecotourism were conducted under BCP. Besides these, the research station in Cikaniki and the park management head quarter in Kabandungan also were constructed under this scheme.

In June 2003, the Ministry of Forestry declared the expansion of GHNP from 40,000 ha to 113,000 ha, which encompasses Mt. Salak, Mt. Endut and other forest areas around GHNP, and renamed it as Gunung Halimun-Salak National Park. This sudden but decisive step by the minister of MOF actually was to correspond to the idea in the GHNP Management Plan developed by BCP. It was also welcomed by many ecologists and conservationists, because it had been strongly expected to conserve the nearly fragmented forest under one protection scheme. The figure 1 shows the distribution of remaining natural forest (source BAKOSURTANAL 1/25,000 maps) and the new and old park boundary. The expanded area had been managed by Perun Perhutani, a public corporation established by the Ministry of Forestry for production of timber, other forest products and even conservation of forest.

### **Issues with the expanded area**

However, not everybody was happy with this decision. According to the Jakarta Post dated 19 February 2004, some villagers in Sukabumi, Lebak and Bogor claimed to exclude their land from the national park area. Some villagers also insisted that the state-owned timber enterprise Perhutani took over their land in 1976, forcing them to grow pine trees, and now the national park claimed the area. They fear surrendering (their?) lands to the national park.

The figure 2 shows four types of land uses inside GHSNP (source BAKOSURTANAL 1/25,000 maps). It is roughly estimated that there are more than 200 communities inside the area, and some of which include schools, even village offices. Some traditional people may have resided in the area since long before the government' claimed the national forest; however, many of them do not seem to be legally titled residents. To date, they look relatively calm because the national park so far has not shown any direction to them. But if the government takes a hard-line policy, it will not be difficult to imagine a chaotic situation.

Instead, even if the government takes a soft-line policy and accepting the current situation, many problems may not be solved. One of the concerns with the communities is population explosion, which will result in huge increase of demands for natural resources, such as fuel wood, as well as lands. According to our survey, local families generally have custom to inherit their cultivating land equally dividing to their children. This means that the lands for sons will become smaller and smaller as one generation passing to another. This eventually may result in new encroachment on the national forest if there is no

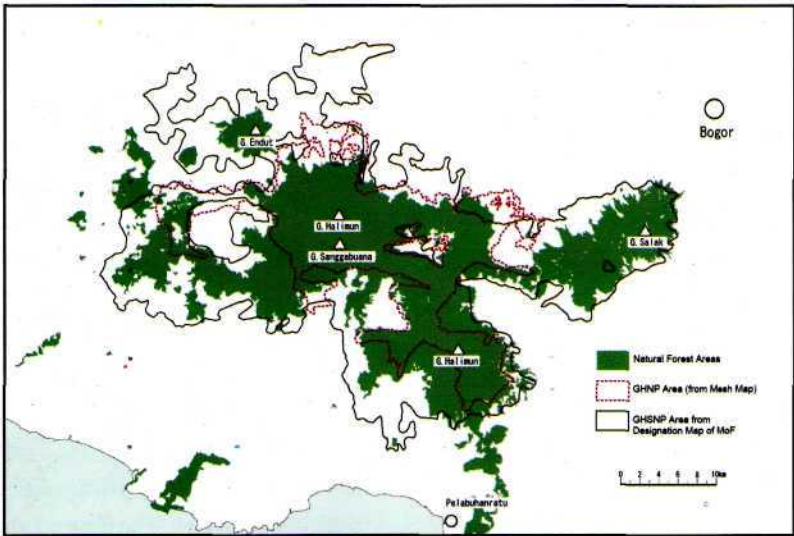


Figure 1. Forest aeast and GHSNP, GHNP Area.

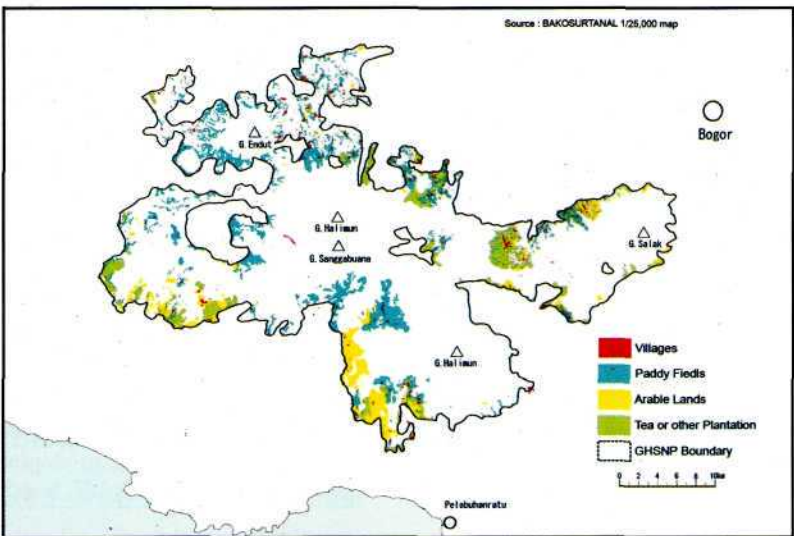


Figure 2. Lands Uses inside the GHSNP Area.



Figure 3. Viewing G. Sanngabuana from Ciptagelar, a traditional village of Kasepuhan. This is now inside GHSNP.



Figure 4. Illegal miners along Madur River in Lebak district

alternative livelihood.

Local adat also may bring some concerns for the national park management. One example is Abah Anom, a major customary leader of Kasepuhan in Sukabumi district. It is well known that he moves their center village by inspiration for him. Currently he lives in Ciptagelar, to which he moved from Ciptarasa at 10 km south in 2001. Before this, they moved their centre from Lingarjati to

Ciptarasa in 1992. This center movement may demand huge amount of timbers and land. He has also got on the national park nerves by constructing the 9 km road between Ciptarasa and Ciptagelar without the park's permission, and inviting four wheel drive car groups from Jakarta running on the road.

#### **Other problems**

Aside from the encroachment, in GHSNP, serious



illegal activities are illegal logging and illegal gold mining. Their scales are not large if looking at each case. Illegal loggers normally cut trees, saw them in the forest and carry the lumber to the access road by shoulder. Illegal miners dig narrow tunnels in a river slope, and then ore gold by using water rotating drums and mercury. However, such accumulative activities have been diminishing the remaining forest at a significant rate. Pondok Injuk and CMdan in Sukabumi district are current hotspots of illegal logging. Ponkor and Lebaksitu in Bogor district and Madur River in Lebak are hotspots of illegal mining. The number of engaging people is not known; may be 500 or more for illegal miners in Just Lebak area in GHSNP. Sometimes forestpolice seize illegal loggers or confiscate logs, but black traders (real actors) are seldom identified as well as caught.

Although the park expansion intended to strengthen the protection of remaining forest, on the contrary, illegal activities seem to be escalating particularly in the expanded area in recent day. They seem to be taking advantage of the absence of governance from Perhutani to the national park. There is a report that the forest corridor between the Halimun Mountains and Mt. Salak will be disconnected in a few years, if an immediate and effective countermeasure is not taken.

Above problems are brought by mainly wrongly intended people, though there may be other problems, like poverty, lack of job opportunities behind it. However, it should not be neglected to see internal problems, which may have create environments to allow such illegal acts by people.

At early stage of this JICA project, we held a couple times of workshop by gathering staff members of GHSNP and Nature Conservation Information Center (NCIC) of PHKA, which is another counterpart institution of this project. The main objectives were to identify problems/ issues that GHSNP are facing. Totally 20 major problems were come up with by the participants. Interestingly 13 out of the 20 are related to internal problems. They are related to the central government, direct organization, individuals. Some of them are as follows:

- Unclear boundary; unclear follow up of the decree of the extended park area
- Internal communication system is not established
- Management system tends to be inflexible and not

yet involving all the staff.

- Ineffective external coordination system.
- Motivation for work varies
- Quantity of GHSNP's human resources is not optimal yet.
- Working facilities are relatively inadequate.
- Inadequate database for the management.
- Budgeting system is imbalanced with the needs of the park management.

Among others, the issue of unclear park boundary may show some basic problems found in national park system in this country. It could be a problem with technique, or could be a problem with system, or a problem with responsibility.

The figure 5 shows two GHNP park area maps, one of which is used by GHNP office, and the other one is made by NCIC. They must be identical; however, they are very different. This does not seem an exception. The new boundary of GHSNP also has certain difference with the map made by Perhutani, the previous land manager. To make the things worse, no body knows which one is correct.

Park boundary issues are under the responsibility of B APLAN, a technical bureau of the Ministry of Forestry for planning forest uses and demarcation of national forests including national parks. It is often heard that the problem with BAPLAN is due to lack of budget and manpower. It could be true, but it may not be the all. As far as we have seen, another problem seems to be more with the system to secure the accuracy. Some staff of the national park and NCIC has known the problem, but it has been seldom for them to take actions to improve it with BAPLAN.

### Project approach

This project takes a "problem oriented approach", but the project may not directly deal with the actual threats, such as illegal logging, illegal mining and encroachment. What measures should this project take? We think that a deep analysis of the problems may suggest some answers. The project has held several workshops and a number of meetings with staff members of GHSNP and NCIC. Sometimes discussions were continued until midnight.

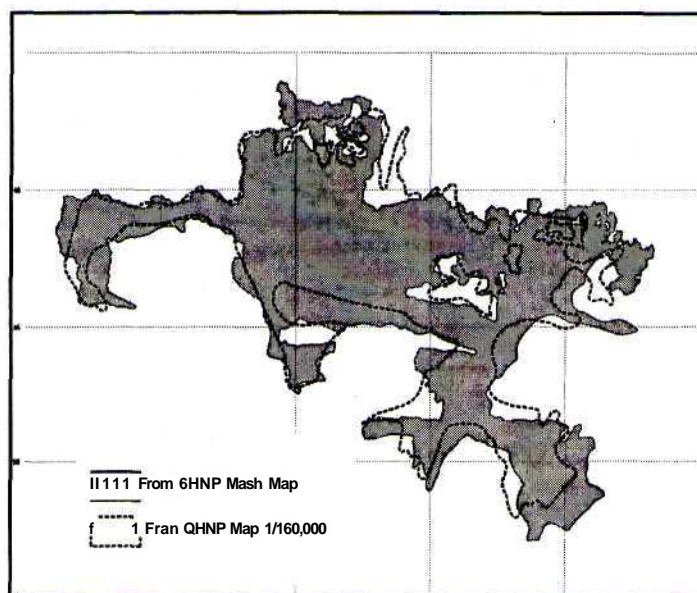


Figure 5. Problem with Old Boundary (GHSNP Area).

There might be a criticism for why the project did not include any stakeholders in the planning process. This will be correct. But, we prioritized the park staff member as the project implementers; because we believe that it is necessary to create sense of ownership among them for the activities. Of course this project does not intend to exclude stakeholders, but intend to create a greater collaboration with stakeholders, local people, scientists, local government, national governments, medias and even the general public.

The followings are the activities which this project is going to tackle. We think that they are an integrated program to address external as well as internal issues of the park management.

1. To develop GHSNP management plan.
2. To create advisory committee for the management of GHSNP.
3. To develop database for supporting the park management (GIS and non spatial DB).
4. To develop appropriate methods to identify the park boundary in the field.
5. To carry out researches and monitoring on endangered species in Cikaniki area, Halimun - Salak corridor and other strategic locations in and around GHSNP.
6. To establish Endangered Species Monitoring Protection Unit by involving local people.
7. To strengthen the community support to the endangered species conservation.
8. To enhance research programs and activities in GHSNP.
9. To restore or rehabilitate degraded areas in GHSNP with involvement of local communities
10. To carry out joint observation activities with local people for monitoring situations as well as reducing illegal activities, and establish good communication networks between local communities and GHSNP.
11. To improve livelihood activities at communities in/around GHSNP.
12. To promote ecotourism of GHSNP.
13. To promote environmental education for local people in and around GHSNP.
14. To improve information services and promotion of GHSNP.
15. To raise GHSNP officer's basic knowledge and skills on national park management.
16. To transfer useful knowledge, skills, techniques and methodologies on national park management obtained through BCP and this project to other national parks in Indonesia.

Looking at these, we ourselves also recognize that this is a very tough challenge. For pursuing these, the project takes two strategies. One of which is to learn from previous and current experiences in other national parks in Indonesia and other countries. In Indonesia itself, many interesting projects have been taking place in protected areas in cooperation with donor communities and NGOs. For example, In Lore Lindu National Park in Sulawesi, local communities have made agreements with the national park management authority to use natural resources. The other of which will be to establish a wide collaboration with many sectors. Although national parks are under the direct jurisdiction of the Ministry of Forestry, they are not independent from the surrounding societies. It may not be exaggeration to say that good collaboration or coordination is the most important key for a successful park management.

The issue with local communities inside the national park is a highly sensitive and political matter. It may be beyond the project scope; however, this

project needs to make a significant effort to lead wise and rational decisions by the government. Because it is a core issue that GHSNP and many other national parks have, and without addressing it, no successful park management can be seen. For enabling this, the project tries to reveal/show the "reality" including future predictions as much as possible in front of the stakeholders as well as decision makers. We believe that a wise decision will be born from intensive discussions based on the "reality".

### Conclusion

This project recognizes that one of the most important assets which BCP has left is human resources and networks with scientists, NGOs. "Scientific park management" was an ideology of BCP, for which this project also should seek. What we should do now will be meeting with those people. We appreciate a greater collaboration with those organizations, individuals, and anyone who are interested in GHSNP.