



The Government and community synergy in forest management due to deforestation in Sinjai District: *maşlahah* perspective

Hamka¹, Sabri Samin², Misbahuddin³, & Muhammad Shuhufi⁴

¹Universitas Islam Ahmad Dahlan, Sinjai

^{2,3,4}Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar

Correspondence Email: hamkaadlc@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This article discusses the damage to 7,000 hectares of forest out of a total of 18,000 hectares in Sinjai Regency. This damage has been caused by encroachments from local residents who cut down trees in protected forest areas and replace them with productive crops like cocoa, cloves, and pepper. Over time, forest areas that were cultivated by the community received management permits from local residents through the community forestry permit system established by the government. These permits grant communities the authority to manage forest areas, and utilize forest products while ensuring sustainability by prohibiting the cutting down of trees in the managed forest. The utilization of community-managed forests for community empowerment has followed the initial destruction. The research problem centers around the utilization of forest areas based on the principle of *maşlahah*-based sustainability. The study aims to identify the theory behind the benefits of forest management while adhering to the principles of sustainability. The research methodology involves fieldwork to collect qualitative data. This includes conducting interviews with relevant community members and government officials, making on-site observations in forest areas to gather data on forest productivity, and analyzing documents related to forest management. The research findings highlight the *maşlahah* theory, which aligns with forest management practices carried out by the communities under government permits, ensuring both community prosperity through the development of commodity crops and the long-term sustainability of the forest.

Keywords: Government synergy; forest management; deforestation; *maşlahah*

1. INTRODUCTION

Sinjai Regency has approximately 18,000 hectares of forest land, which is still classified as protected forest, spread across the Districts of West Sinjai, Sinjai Borong, Central Sinjai, South Sinjai, and Tellulimpoe. However, as many as 7,000 hectares have been damaged, leaving only 11,000 hectares intact. This damage was caused by local residents encroaching on protected forest areas, where they cut down trees and replaced them with cash crops such as cocoa, cloves, and pepper, as reported by Ahmad Rasyid, the Head of the Plantation and Forestry Service.¹

Considering the various instances of forest destruction that have occurred globally, nationally, and even at the provincial and district levels, the situation is highly concerning. Ecologists, such as Prof. Dr. Sukron Kamil, have expressed their deep concerns about the urgent need to preserve the environment. The Earth, though relatively young compared to its estimated age of around six billion years, is now fragile and burdened beyond capacity due to human activities, with a global population of approximately six billion people. These activities have led to the degradation of green spaces, pollution of the air, and contamination of water sources. All three of these elements are essential not only for human survival but also for the well-being of all living creatures on Earth. This underscores the importance of ethics, emphasizing the responsibilities and attitudes needed to leave behind a clean and habitable planet. This responsibility is not just for future human generations but also for the coexistence of all living and non-living entities on Earth.²

In light of this explanation, it becomes evident that the urgent preservation of the Earth is essential to mitigate the destruction caused by human actions. The alarming ecological degradation has raised concerns among experts, including scholars of Islamic law who focus on environmental studies.

The intellectual anxiety expressed by the two experts convinced that it is very urgent to protect the earth. Forest is one part of the earth that should be preserved. The phenomenon of deforestation that occurs due to the use of forestry land by the community and the government has encouraged the importance of research on deforestation in Sinjai District from a *maṣlahah* perspective.

Maṣlahah is one method of drawing legal conclusions in Islamic Law. So that this research cannot be separated from the study of Islamic law because the Islamic law is one of the sources of law that lives in Sinjai Regency because the population is predominantly Muslim and makes the tagline "*Panrita Kitta*".³ This is inseparable from the life of the Sinjai

¹ Antara Sulsel, "7000 Ha Hutan Lindung di Sinjai Krisis," (Berita) <https://makassar.antaranews.com/berita/1209/7000-ha-hutan-lindung-di-sinjai-kritis> (28 July 2022).

²Sukron Kamil, *Etika Islam; Kajian Etika Sosial Dan Lingkungan Hidup* (Cet,I, Kencana: Jakarta, 2021), p.214.

³Scholars who possess profound expertise and contribute to the field of Islamic literature, see. Hardianto Rahman, et al., *Model Pengembangan Bumi Panrita Kitta Kabupaten Sinjai* (Cet. I; Sinjai: CV. Latiniulu, 2019), p.77.

people who are full of religious life by implementing Islamic values. Islam teaches how to love and protect the environment, as in QS al-Baqarah/2:30 implicitly explains that Allah makes human beings caliphs on earth. The caliph on earth as a human being who does not only think about himself but also thinks about the natural surroundings, whether the natural surroundings are in accordance with his wishes and dreams. For example, how do humans think about repairing things if the environment around them has been damaged, both naturally and by the ignorant hands of humans.⁴

Forests are an integral part of the natural environment, and thus, the responsibility for forest damage lies with humans. This notion is reinforced by the Quranic verse that prohibits causing harm, as stated in QS al-Baqarah/2:11. Furthermore, the reasons for this damage have been elaborated upon in the preceding paragraph in terms of restorative actions. This indicates that environmental conservation has been a concern dating back to ancient times and has even been advocated by the Prophet. Islamic law, with its *maṣlahah* approach, provides a viable framework for addressing issues related to forest damage caused by both the general public and the government. Based on the facts and explanations provided, this research has examined the impact of the principle of benefit in fostering cooperation between the government and society in forest management, particularly in the context of deforestation in Sinjai Regency, from the *maṣlahah* perspective.

2. METHODS

The research conducted is field research employing qualitative data collection methods, situated within the administrative jurisdiction of the Technical Implementation Unit (UPT) of the Tangka Forest Management Unit (KPH) under the Environment and Forestry Service of South Sulawesi Province. This unit is located on Jl. H. Andi Latief, Biringere Village, North Sinjai District, Sinjai Regency. The selection of research sites was based on landscape characteristics, encompassing lowlands, medium plains, and highlands. The Tellulimpoe District represents a lowland landscape due to its proximity to the sea and the presence of a forest farmer group in Kalobba Village. The West Sinjai District is characterized by highlands, particularly Gunung Perak Village, situated at the base of Mount Bawakaraeng, with an altitude of 1,300 meters above the sea level. In contrast, Sinjai Tengah District represents a mid-land landscape, positioned between Tellulimpoe and West Sinjai Districts, and it hosts Forest Farmer groups in Kompang Village and Gantarang.

The research utilized normative theological and sociological approaches. The primary data employed consists of direct data acquired from the field, either through observations or interviews with the informants. The informants or resource persons include KPH Tangka employees, forest extension workers, village heads from areas facing various forestry-related issues, individuals knowledgeable about forestry, and those who have received forest management permits, totaling around 21 groups with a combined

⁴Khaeron, Herman Khaeron, *Islam Manusia Dan Lingkungan Hidup* (Cet. I; Bandung: Nuansa Cendekia, 2014). p. 101.

forest area of approximately 2,618 hectares. The secondary data, serving as supporting information, were obtained from various sources in the literature, including books, printed media, journals, the internet, magazines, online media, social media, and other sources deemed pertinent to the research objectives. Subsequently, the collected data were inventoried, processed, and analyzed.

The data collection techniques encompass direct observation of the social situation, the state of the forest, the condition of the planted flora managed by the forestry, and the tools utilized in forest management. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted, involving Forest Farmers Groups acting as forest managers, two Village Heads representing areas with forest-related issues, two UPT KPH Tangka employees overseeing forests in Sinjai Regency, one extension worker responsible for educating forest management communities, and individuals knowledgeable about forest matters. The purpose of these interviews was to gain insights into forest degradation and utilization in Sinjai Regency, considering both their benefits and scientific aspects. Furthermore, documentation in various forms such as recordings, journals pertaining to research subjects, online media reports on instances of forest destruction or tenure conflicts, field notes, photographs, letters, and recordings, among others, were used as supporting documents. In qualitative research, the researchers themselves serve as instruments, and they were equipped with interview guidelines, office supplies, recording devices, document data, and cameras to facilitate their work.

The data processing technique involves manipulating data to generate information, particularly when the initial dataset lacks conclusive information. In this study, data processing takes the form of description, which provides an overview of the acquired data. The data analysis techniques encompass several steps: firstly, data reduction was performed, identifying various groups of data, including proportional reforestation of forest areas from the *maṣlahah* perspective, the synergy between the government and the community in forest management, and the utilization of forest areas based on the principle of *maslahah*-based sustainability. Secondly, the data presentation is achieved through concise descriptions or narrative forms, facilitating the research's description and making it easier to draw conclusions. This involves presenting the data related to the principle of benefits in forest utilization and benefits for forest management due to deforestation. Thirdly, drawing conclusions and data verification. This step addresses the research problem related to the principle of benefit in utilizing forest areas with the Principle of *Maṣlahah*-Based Sustainability. The data validity is tested through source triangulation, involving the comparison of interview data from different informants and observational data.

Additionally, the data testing includes the collection of documentation at UPT KPH Tangka and subsequent comparison of this documentation with the interview results from various stakeholders deemed relevant to the research. The following steps were taken: data obtained from interviews were transcribed into interview transcripts, the transcripts from various sources were then transformed into written descriptions, and the validity of the described data was tested by comparing the data from various sources.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Reforestation of Forest Areas in a *Maṣlahah* Perspective

1. Pine Tree Reforestation Controversy

Pine trees were a part of a reforestation and afforestation program in Sinjai Regency, designated as protected forest areas based on the Minister of Agriculture's Decree No. 760/kpts/um/82. The 1980s marked a significant period in Sinjai's forestry sector, characterized by dynamic changes in area boundaries and the introduction of pine tree planting programs to restore forests that were deemed damaged by the government. However, the pine tree reforestation program generated a negative response due to concerns about land claims by the government based on standing pine trees. The community feared that their land, where pine trees were planted, might be classified as forested areas, leading to potential conflicts. This traumatic experience left a lasting impact, causing the community to develop negative perceptions of pine trees.⁵

Some even believed that pine trees contributed to drought during the dry season, in line with residents' experiences in Bonto Salama, West Sinjai District, where it was observed that pine trees consumed significant amounts of water. A study by Yongky Indrajaya and Wuri Handayani in 2018 suggested that pine trees should be planted in areas with annual rainfall exceeding 3,000 mm to prevent groundwater depletion during the dry season due to excessive water consumption by pine trees.⁶

Residents of Bonto Salama Village, Kompang Village, and Gantarang Village noticed a decline in water resources, including springs that had previously remained consistent. This decline was attributed to the presence of pine trees, which impacted water availability. As one village head explained, several springs disappeared after the arrival of pine trees, despite an annual rainfall of no more than 2,000 mm, well below the recommended threshold of 3,000 mm for pine tree planting. Notably, pine trees were found unsuitable for steep slopes ranging from 60 to 90 degrees, as they were associated with landslides. Residents expressed reservations about using pine trees to prevent landslides. Instead, they favored bamboo and sugar palm for reforestation due to ecological considerations, including water absorption and the potential negative effects on spring sustainability.⁷

In addition to having an impact on water, pine trees are also not suitable for land with a slope of 60-90 degrees, as expressed by one of the residents of Saotanre Village, who stated that many of the trees planted with pine had landslides. This means that he doesn't believe in pine trees for blocking landslides in several places in Saotanre Village.

⁵Sulsel Pos, Lagi, Pohon Pinus Hendak Masuk, Warga Terasa Sinjai Sepakat Menolak! 12-March-2021. https://www.sulselpos.id/2021/03/penanaman-pohon-pinus-oleh-dinas.html?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=facebook

⁶ Irhyl R Makkatutu, Pohon Pinus, Tanaman Pionir yang Kontroversial, News. 19 October 2020. <https://klikhijau.com/pohon-pinus-tanaman-pionir-yang-kontroversi/> diakses 24 Mei 2023.

⁷Asikin Asikin Ketua KTH Tiroang, Interview, Sinjai, 11 January 2023.

Furthermore, residents of Kompang Village also added that pine is not the only tree that can be used as a reforestation for a barren forest; Pine trees are not an alternative to preserving forests. If our study here is simply pine, on the contrary, it destroys water sources and has weak defense against landslides. That is why, independently we prioritize bamboo and sugar palm.⁸ Ecological considerations like this are important before carrying out reforestation so that it does not have a negative impact on the environment. This does not mean universally rejecting pine trees, but looking at the contours of the land that are suitable and able to withstand heavy loads so as not to cause new disasters such as landslides. These ecological factors should be carefully considered before embarking on reforestation initiatives to prevent adverse environmental impacts. This does not necessarily mean rejecting pine trees universally but rather selecting appropriate land contours and accounting for ecological factors to ensure that afforestation and reforestation programs align with the principles of environmental benefit and harm avoidance.

2. *Maslahah* of Proportionate Forest Reforestation

Maslahah has two principles, namely bringing goodness/ benefit (جَلْبُ الْمَصَالِحِ) and rejecting badness/ damage (دَرْءُ الْمَفَاسِدِ).⁹ This principle will be used as a reference in carrying out reforestation activities in the forest so that it has an impact on the good of the ecology and on humans, without causing harm. Planting pine as a reforestation of forest areas in Sinjai Regency is not the only alternative, because the facts on the ground bring bad things, namely reducing water discharge and even eliminating springs, and it is not suitable for land with a slope of 60-90 degrees with rocky soil characteristics because it causes landslides. It is undeniable that pine trees do not bring benefits to the people who tap pine resin because it is one of the export commodities in South Sulawesi.

The phenomenon of greening pine trees has two impacts, namely negative impacts and positive impacts. In the language of *fiqh* rules, it is called benefits and harms. *Fiqh* rules explain that if there is a meeting between benefits and harms, then the evil will be given priority.

دَرْءُ الْمَفَاسِدِ أَوْلَىٰ مِنْ جَلْبِ الْمَصَالِحِ فَإِذَا تَعَارَضَ مَفْسَدَةٌ وَمُصْلِحَةٌ قُدِّمَ دَفْعُ الْمَفْسَدَةِ غَالِبًا

Rejecting damage takes precedence over attracting benefit, and if there is a conflict between *mafsadat* (damage) and *maslahah* (benefit), it takes precedence over rejecting *mafsadat*.¹⁰ These principles can be taken into consideration in establishing law/ Islamic Jurisprudence for forest management, especially reforestation in forest areas. Reforestation using pine trees needs to be reviewed because it can cause *mafsadat*. There are many other alternatives such as nutmeg, sugar palm, coffee and so on which are

⁸Anshar 53, Kepala Desa Kompang/ Pengelola KTH Sipakatau, Interview, Sinjai, 11 January 2023

⁹Misbahuddin, *Ushul Fiqh: Studi Kaidah Lughwiyah Kedudukan Hukum, Prioritas, dan Pengembangannya* (Cet. I; Makassar: Alauddin University Press, 2014), p. 150.

¹⁰Abdul Muadjib, *Kaidah-kaidah Ilmu Fikih* (Cet. X; Jakarta: Radar Jaya Offset, 2016), p. 39.

believed to bring benefits to the community with their fruit or water, which are also suitable for sloping land.

Based on the consideration of the principles related to benefit in instituting Islamic law/ *fiqh* in the greening program in Sinjai Regency which is controversial among the community and the potential benefits and mafsadat that will be generated, it is important to return to the main proposition in reference to Islamic Law/*Fiqh*, namely the Koran. In the case of substantial forest management, the Qur'an warns that a reforestation program must be based on ecological characteristics. As QS; al-Hijr/15:19 which means; "We have spread out the earth, driven mountains into it, and grown everything there according to (its) measure."¹¹

Strictly speaking, this verse emphasizes that the expanse of the earth, the location of the mountains and growing everything based on size can be interpreted as a proportional concept in carrying out a tree planting program in the forest. It is certain that the Sharia established by the God will bring benefits to forest management based on ecological characteristics. Al-Syatibi's view explains that all Sharia laws were established by the God solely for the benefit of humans, even though humans cannot know the benefits as a whole. Sometimes, people are not aware of the benefits produced by the Sharia or sometimes they do not care about these benefits.¹² Therefore, it is important for the greening program to make sharia the main reference to avoid the harm that will be caused.

Before carrying out a reforestation program, it is important to consider the impact or consequences in the future, so that it does not just cancel the obligation to plant trees as explained by Prof. Kadir Gassing that the order to plant trees is an obligation with the consideration of *maqāshid al-syarī'ah*, where reforestation activities can be categorized as one of the efforts to maintain the function of flora as a support for life systems, because without flora, life is unimaginable: then it can be included in category *حفظ النفس* in order to maintain survival and maintain human welfare.¹³

Environmental management is included in the category of *Maṣlahah al-Ḍarūriyyah* as the substance of *maqasidu al-Syari'ah* with the sixth order, namely protecting religion, soul, intellect, family, property, and environment.¹⁴ Therefore, forest management is very urgent to be preserved by planting trees, but it still needs to consider what trees are suitable for the planted area so that the concept of protecting the environment is in line with the concept of proportional environmental management or ecological considerations.

Ecological considerations that were first applied by Porkas Sagala emphasized that soil, microclimate, and plants are very tightly bound that cannot be separated. Therefore,

¹¹ Kementerian Agama RI, *Terjemah Qur'an Kemenag In MS. Word*. 2019

¹²Haddise, Ushul Al-Fiqh "Konsep Maslahat dalam Paradigma Hukum Islam (Cet. I; Tulungagung: Cahaya Abadi, 2010), p.48-50.

¹³Qadir Gassing, *Etika Lingkungan dalam islam* (Cet; I, Aluddin University Press: Makassar, 2011), p. 180.

¹⁴Wahbah al_zuahaili, *Ushul Fiqh al-Islami juz I* (Bairut: Darul Fikr, 1986), p. 1020

they must be managed in one "house" so-called "*kuvio*". *Kuvio* is an area that has the same soil, the same microclimate, and the same plants (type, structure and density).¹⁵ This concept means that what you want to plant in an area or land, regardless of the type of plant, must consider the character of the area, both soil, water, weather, type, structure and density, so that these plants can grow properly without damaging the surrounding ecology.

B. Government and Community Synergy in Forest Management

The utilization of forest land for planting was previously not openly permitted for the community, despite their claims of ownership. However, the situation has evolved, with the government now allocating funds for seed assistance, which is seen as beneficial for the community and suitable for forest plantations. In the past, individuals caught planting cocoa in forested areas faced restrictions, but today, the government actively supports seed purchases.¹⁶ Communities engaged in forest activities are no longer required to abandon their plants. Instead, the government purchases seeds for the cultivation of crops like cocoa and nutmeg, which are well-suited to the local ecosystem. A representative from a forest farmer group highlighted the shift, stating, "Nowadays, it is different from the past when around 40 people were detained, including forestry officials who were nearly imprisoned because they were seen as collaborating with the community in unauthorized logging. Now, it is safe".¹⁷

Government and community collaboration in forest management aims to enhance land productivity. Active community involvement in forest activities contributes to forest preservation and indirectly assists the government in its conservation efforts. The Acting Head of the Planning and Utilization of the Forest Section emphasized that "Forest protection is no longer enforced as strictly as before, but communities are beginning to recognize the importance of forest conservation. They are granted rights to manage and benefit from forest products, with clear boundaries that should not be breached".¹⁸

This collaborative effort between the government and the community in forest maintenance has proven effective in educating the public not to encroach on defined boundaries. As a result, the community is gradually realizing the significance of conserving the forest and feels secure in managing land they consider their own. This newfound sense of calm, free from conflicts, fosters cooperation between the community and forestry officials. Support, including coffee grinders and three-wheeled vehicles for transporting pine resin and crops within forest areas, signifies the positive impact of this synergy.¹⁹ This statement represents the people who have been disturbed by the conflict that occurred with the government so that this synergy really encourages the residents in

¹⁵Porkas Sagala, *Mengelola Laban Kebutuhan yang Benar yang Selama Ini Salah* (Cet. III; Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia: Jakarta, 2014), p. 18

¹⁶Burhanuddin 45, Kepala KPH Tangka, Interview, Sinjai, 20 February 2023

¹⁷Asikin Asikin 72, Ketua KTH Tiroang, Interview, Sinjai, 11 January 2023.

¹⁸Syamsuar 40, Plt. Kepala Seksi Perencanaan dan Pemanfaatan Hutan KPH Tangka, Interview, Sinjai, 05 february 2023.

¹⁹Bungkusi 52, Ketua Kelompo Tani Hutan Lestari Interview, Sinjai, 15 June 2023

proximity to forested areas to engage in activities, even though restrictions still apply to logging trees.

Government financial assistance, which is relatively large, is also willing to be disbursed to communities managing social forestry. What the forestry extension officers justify is that every year there is assistance with productive seeds, such as fruit, because if the trees are feared, they will be cut down, distributed in each group and directed to how to plant it.²⁰ Assistance specifically for plants that bear fruit and the fruit can be enjoyed or commodities that can be sold by the community. Awareness of forest protection by the community, because the community feels they own the land they manage so as to protect it from damage to the forest. Community involvement in forest management is a form of implementing Yuliana Sandon's theory "*people centered, participatory, empowering and sustainable*"²¹ which emphasizes that forest management must be community-centred, participatory, beneficial and sustainable. If it is correlated with Islamic Law/Fiqh with a *maslahat* approach, the government as a controller of policies on forest management is a must to provide a beneficial impact on its people. As the rule (مَنْزِلَةُ الْإِمَامِ مِنَ الرَّعِيَّةِ مَنْزِلَةُ الْوَالِيِّ مِنَ الْيَتِيمِ). "The position of the priest towards the people is like the position of a guardian towards orphans".²² The position of orphans in Sharia/ Islamic law is very well maintained and it is even a trait that denies religion if they are rebuked.

The relationship within the forest management community underscores that the government, as the authority in forest management, should delegate authority or cooperate with the community. This collaboration enables the community to derive benefits from the forests they manage, primarily for their basic needs and to sustain their families. Community involvement serves as a manifestation of the government's care for its citizens, akin to guardianship for orphans. Furthermore, the forested areas are considered communal property, entrusted to the people by their ancestors.

Communities residing near forests would face challenges in achieving prosperity if the authorities did not provide opportunities for cooperation in forest management. In fact, the absence of such cooperation could be perceived as a form of oppression against the community. The limited space for managing plantation land necessitates granting permission, trust, and the provision of management tools as a means of collaboration, guidance, and protection for the community in managing forest areas. This approach aligns with the principle of benefiting from resources as long as it does not conflict with Islamic law, particularly by causing harm.

Cutting down and destroying flora and fauna, even during times of conflict, should be avoided as much as possible, especially fruit-bearing trees, as they provide significant benefits to humans and other living creatures. When examining regulations and forest management practices, it becomes evident that they are not contradictory. Government

²⁰Eka Mardiyani 40, Penyuluh Kehutanan, Interview, Sinjai, 25 January 2023.

²¹Cristine Wulandari, *Pentingnya Peran Serta Masyarakat Dalam Pengelolaan Kawasan Konservasi* (Cet. I; Yogyakarta: Plantaxia, 2016), p. 97.

²²Azziz Muhammad Azzam, *Qawaidul Fiqhiyah* (Kairo, Darul Hadis, t.th), p. 261.

regulations strictly prohibit tree felling in forested areas, instead encouraging the planting of trees and the harvesting of fruits or seeds from these areas. The legitimacy of the community's presence in forested regions is based on the principles of sustainable use, taking into account ecological factors and the long-term viability of the forests.

C. Utilization of Forest Areas with *Maṣlahah*-Based Sustainability Principles

The regulations outlined in the LHK Ministerial Regulation on Social Forestry underscore that forest utilization, for both protection and production forests that have been approved for social forestry, can take various forms such as agroforestry, livestock, and wana mina patterns, all in alignment with the forest's function and type of space. The proportion of forest utilization should match the conditions and type of forest managed by the community. This illustrates the central government's current focus on forest management, which takes into account the land characteristics of each social forestry approval area. It ensures that the forest area being managed is suitable for specific practices like agroforestry, livestock, or other forms of forest management, with priority given to planting certain types of plants in the permit area, such as permanent timber plants, depending on the closed or open area.

President Joko Widodo's statement emphasizes adherence to protection regulations, specifically allocating 50% of the area for woody plants and the remaining portion for productive land suitable for crops like corn, coffee, agarwood, and others.²³ This underscores the importance of compliance with legal requirements in forest management. An essential aspect is the mechanism for planting trees in the forest, with a specific focus on the 50% requirement for woody or large-trunked trees and those with smaller trunks appropriate for closed areas. The Head of UPT KPH Tangka highlights that cutting down trees without proper replanting is not permitted. For instance, nutmeg and coffee can be planted under larger trees, contributing to the state's Non-Tax State Revenue (PNBP) through forest management results. This ensures community involvement in safeguarding the area.²⁴

The forest management mechanism, as described by the head of the Tangka FMU, primarily benefits the community by enabling sustainable forest management and discouraging the logging of prohibited trees. Compliance with sustainability standards benefits both the managing community and society as a whole, ensuring a better future for the next generation. Crops that have been in forest areas for an extended period can be harvested without significant restrictions, contributing to the community's income. However, certain trees like clove trees should not be planted unless they are already present to avoid damage to other trees.²⁵ Many crops except oil palm, which are mainly coffee, pepper and cocoa.²⁶

²³Romi Stiawan, "Presiden Jokowi: Perhutanan Sosial Untuk Kesejahteraan Masyarakat Indonesia"

²⁴Burhanuddin 45, Kepala KPH Tangka, Interview, Sinjai, 20 February 2023.

²⁵ Asikin Asikin 72, Ketua KTH Tiroang, Interview, Sinjai, 11 January 2023.

²⁶ A. Jufri 64, Ketua KTH Toribi, Interview, Sinjai, 20 January 2023.

Effective community involvement in forest monitoring and maintenance, guided by the principle of empowerment, is essential. KPH Tangka should prioritize the community as the frontline in reforestation efforts, offering seeds that can benefit them. The principle of "sustainable forests for a prosperous community" should guide forest management programs, adjusting them to suit each area for shared prosperity. Forest conservation, recommended by the Minister of Environment and Forestry's regulation, is vital to protect forests from damage.

Forest conservation is one of the forest management recommendations recommended by Minister of Environment and Forestry No. 9 of 2021 concerning Social Forestry Management. Describes that forest utilization is an activity to utilize the area, utilize environmental services, utilize timber and non-timber forest products, collect timber and non-timber forest products, and process and market forest products in an optimal and fair manner for the welfare of society while maintaining their sustainability.²⁷ Forest utilization that prioritizes sustainability is an important note in this regulation. Forest conservation is a very urgent thing to do in order to protect forests from damage.

Facts on the ground prove that efforts to preserve forests are still on track spearheaded by the government through communities that have received management permits. As stated by one of the forest managers that the director of forestry recommended planting 20 trees around trees that had been cut down and reported to the forestry department.²⁸ The conservation effort recommended by the government to plant around 20 trees in areas where the trees have been damaged really educates the public regarding the importance of preserving forests.

Running a community forest conservation program is very important as the vanguard because they are the ones who know the situation and conditions in the forest, but the government continues to support it through seed assistance, as stated by KPH Tangka employees, as follows:

"Actually, the community is at the forefront in carrying out reforestation and maintenance with government support through seed assistance. Determining the point that is considered damaged can be done via satellite or the forestry field team will go directly to the forest area, including the forest rangers. In addition, the government is educating communities around the forest to protect forests and repair those that have been damaged".²⁹

Seed assistance given to the forest managers will not be effective if it is not accompanied by assistance so that sustainable forestry programs run according to recommendations from the central government. Article 1 paragraph 30 explains that Assistance is an activity carried out for communities/ groups in the Social Forestry

²⁷Salinan Permen Lingkunagn Hidup dan Kehutanan No 9 tahun 2021 Tentang Pengelolaan Perhutanan Sosial, Article 1, verse 12.

²⁸Asikin Asikin 72, Ketua KTH Tiroang, Interview, Sinjai, 11 January 2023.

²⁹Syamsuar 40, Plt. Kepala Seksi Perencanaan dan Pemanfaatn Hutan KPH Tangka, Interview, Sinjai, 05 februari 2023.

Management Agreement for sustainable forest management and increasing community welfare. The assistance provided by the government to forest management groups/communities is to educate them so that the plants provided are truly suitable for their designation, namely closing vacant land.

The plant assistance program is for covering vacant land, namely plants that can be enjoyed by the community itself as an effort to empower the community and preserve the forest. To achieve prosperity, it is important to provide assistance to the community to make the best use of forest areas by filling in plants that can be used as commodities, both for their seeds and sap, or which can be used as food for their fruits. Furthermore, forest product commodities such as coffee, cacao and nutmeg have promising economic values for the welfare of society, but that does not mean that timber or shady trees must be destroyed and replaced with coffee plants, but how to maintain both so that they can grow together.

The conservation program carried out by the government through community cooperation does not work alone, but is carried out collectively by both community groups and social forestry business groups. Community groups that are members of the Forest Farmers Group (KTH) can jointly develop sustainable and prosperous forestry. Apart from that, cooperation with the Social Forestry Business Group (KUPS) as referred to in Article 143 Social Forestry Business Cooperation as referred to in Article 142 letter a is carried out based on the principles of: a. KUPS as the main actor in the business, not just as an object; and b. equity, fairness, agreement, mutual benefit, local specific, trust, transparency, participation and sustainability.³⁰

Social Forestry Business Groups and Community Forestry Groups in carrying out their work must pay attention to and uphold the principles of equality, fairness, agreement, mutual benefit, local specific, trust, transparency, participation and sustainability.

Collaboration between the community and the government in forest management is important to fulfill the principle that benefits the community because they are direct managers in the field. As workers in the field, it is very possible to know the condition of the spots where seeds will be planted. Communities as holders of Community Forest permits will fulfill their obligations to carry out forest management in accordance with the principles of sustainable forest management as stated in article 95 paragraph 1.³¹ Preserving forests is an issue that is widely discussed in Islamic Law/Fiqh through contemporary fiqh experts. One of the approaches used as the concept of instituting law is *maslahat*. Forest conservation is something that is urgent in terms of benefits because it can bring goodness to humans and other creatures and can save forest areas that have started to become deforested and damaged. One expert on environmental jurisprudence emphasizes the obligation to plant trees for reforestation with *maqāshid al-Syarī'ah* considerations because deforestation is an effort to maintain and maintain the function

³⁰Salinan Permen Lingkunagn Hidup dan Kehutanan No 9 tahun 2021 Tentang Pengelolaan Perhutanan Sosial

³¹Salinan Permen Lingkunagn Hidup dan Kehutanan No 9 tahun 2021 Tentang Pengelolaan Perhutanan Sosial

of flora as a support for life systems, without living flora it is unimaginable so that it can be included as a category of protecting the soul in the framework of maintain survival and maintain human welfare.

Protecting the soul is one of the five foundations of *Maṣlaḥah al-Ḍarūriyyah* in *maqasidu al-Syari'ah* (safeguarding religion, soul, intellect, family and property which Prof. Qadir Gassing later added to be six, namely protecting the environment.³² The inclusion of environmental aspects in the main benefit or the highest level in maintaining its realization.

One of the realizations of protecting the environment is preserving forests by planting trees. The benefit of planting trees is the mandate of the Sharia which is exemplified in the hadith:

لَا يَغْرُسُ مُسْلِمٌ غَرْسًا، وَلَا يَزْرَعُ زَرْعًا، فَيَأْكُلُ مِنْهُ إِنْسَانٌ، وَلَا دَابَّةٌ، وَلَا شَيْءٌ، إِلَّا كَانَتْ لَهُ صَدَقَةً»³³

It means:

“It is not a Muslim who plants a tree but what humans and animals eat from that tree as charity for him and that person's property is not deducted unless it becomes charity for him”.³⁴

This hadith explains that a person who has planted a tree and the tree bears fruit and then it is enjoyed by other people or other animals will become alms for him. The emphasis of this hadith is the importance of planting trees for every human being and for Muslims in particular because this right is one of the efforts to preserve the environment. The reward that will be obtained after planting a tree is in the form of alms which means reward in Islam. Apart from that, it can also bring benefits to the environment and humans themselves.

Islamic Sharia teaches behavior that brings benefit to the general public and personal benefit. As in the case of tree planting, personal benefit is the reward of alms but the general benefit is for the environment, humans and living things. Public benefit is a form of consideration of benefit in assessing an object to determine Islamic law/fiqh. in the case of tree planting as a form of effort to preserve the environment for the benefit of the people so that the community preservation program proclaimed by the government is in line with the benefit.

Communities as the front line in managing forests, it is important to heed the mandate of the Shari'a or orders to preserve the forest, while making use of the harvests from the forest both for their daily needs and for commodity needs. Planting trees in community-managed forests is a form of embodiment of maintaining primary benefit,

³²Qadir Gassing, *Fiqh Lingkungan "Telaah Kritis tentang Penerapan Hukum Ta'klifi dalam Pengelolaan Lingkungan Hidup"* (Cet; I, Aluddin University Press: Makassar, 2005), p.166.

³³Maktabah Syamilah, Shahih Muslim, No hadis 1552, Juz. 3, p. 1188

³⁴Qadir Gassing, *Etika Lingkungan dalam islam*, p. 178.

namely protecting the environment, because the environment is healthy, it has an impact on human health in general, which ultimately implements benefit. Therefore, tree planting carried out by the community with government permission is in line with the principles of primary benefit and general benefit.

The *maslahah* view of the management and utilization of forests in Sinjai district which is run by the community with permission from the government, is a form of forest preservation and protection from ecological damage in line with the primary benefit and general benefit. The pattern of guarding and preserving the forest by planting trees that can be used for the daily needs of the community or for commodities, is evidence of a community empowerment program. Utilization that is implemented by the community should be based on the principle of proportional management which takes into account ecological characteristics to bring good and reject bad for both the ecology and for humans. So that it can be used as a basis for developing community-based jurisprudence of forest management with utilization, preservation and participatory patterns in achieving the principle of sustainable forest for a prosperous society.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the reforestation of forest areas in Sinjai Regency presents a complex set of challenges and opportunities. The controversy surrounding pine tree reforestation highlights the need for a balanced approach that considers both ecological and community perspectives. The negative impacts of pine tree planting, including potential water scarcity and landslides, underscore the importance of ecological considerations in reforestation efforts. The concept of "*Maslahah*", which involves promoting benefit and preventing harm, provides valuable guidance for forest management. It emphasizes the need to prioritize ecological sustainability and community welfare. Pine trees may not always be the best choice, and alternatives like nutmeg, sugar palm, and coffee should be considered based on ecological suitability.

The synergy between the government and the community in forest management is crucial. It allows for sustainable practices that benefit both parties and the environment. Government support, including seed assistance and educational efforts, empowers communities to protect and manage forests effectively. The principle of "sustainable forest for a prosperous community" should guide forest management programs, emphasizing the importance of ecological factors and long-term viability. Forest conservation, as recommended by government regulations, is essential to safeguarding forests from damage and promoting their sustainable use.

Incorporating Islamic principles, such as "*Maslahah*," into forest management adds an ethical dimension, highlighting the moral responsibility to protect the environment and ensure community welfare. By adopting a proportional and ecological approach to reforestation, it is possible to achieve the goals of sustainable forest management and a prosperous society.

Acknowledgment

Praise be to the God Almighty for His grace so that this article can be completed on time. On this occasion, the researchers would like to express their deepest gratitude and highest appreciation to all those who have helped and supported the preparation and completion of this article.

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