Role of Forest in Livelihood strategy in peat land of Central Kalimantan ex-mega rice project area

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Introduction

• Overexploitation of natural resources leading to forest degradation has occurred due to increased human populations and economic pressures.
• Politics also plays an important role, for example, in the conversion of forests to rice fields on peatland in the ex-mega-rice project in Central Kalimantan.
• Forests are important sources of livelihoods for local communities. The degradation of forests as a result of the ex-mega-rice project had considerable impact on local communities.

We carried out a study in Block A (southern part) and Block E (northern part) of the project area in Kapuas district, Central Kalimantan, to assess the role of forests for local communities.
The area represents these villages belong to two sub-districts of the Kapuas District. Mantangai and Timpa sub-districts.

The settlements along the Kapuas River.

Block A contained Desa Mantangai Hulu, Desa Kalumpang, Desa Sei Ahas and Desa Katunjung.

Block E contained Desa Tumbang Muroi, and Dusun Tanjung Kalanis (Kecamatan Mantangai); Desa Petak Puti and Dusun Kanjarau.
Methods and Data collection activities

Focus group discussions (Village/settlements level):
- Interview with farmers, key informant, head the village and others (8 FGD);
  1) 4 FGD in Block A
  2) 4 FGD in Block E

Household Survey and Income Survey, Interview 60 Respondent (Household):
- 30 respondents in Block A
- 30 respondents in Block E

Livelihood options and strategies

Land holding, income and equity
Largest area on management occurred in Block A (10.73 ha), compared with Block E (4.14 ha).

Block A villagers owned 51% of rubber plantation (5.49 ha) and 36% of bush fallow (3.90 ha).

For Block E villagers owned 57% of rubber plantation (3.94 ha) and 36% of bush fallow (2.69 ha).
The average of total income per year per household in Block E area was higher than in Block A area.

Daily income per capita per day farmers in block A (USD 1.1) is lower than in block E (USD 1.3).

It indicates that farmers in block A is less prosperous than the farmers in block E.
In the Block A area, the highest source of income from rubber plantation (31%), Fishing (17%) and Entrepreneurship (13%).

In the Block E area, the highest source of income from Fishing (39%), Gemor (35%) and gold mining (7%).

Agriculture was the major source of income in Block A, while forest extraction was the major source of income in Block E.
This suggests that the income from agriculture, forest extraction, fishing, worker, firewood and other are relatively equally distributed in Block A area, making this income important in reducing poverty and increasing income equity.

On the other hand, income from entrepreneurship and professional leads to unequal income distribution in the mineral area.
In contrast, in the Block E area, income from fishing, tree plantation, firewood, entrepreneurship and worker reduced inequity of income. The coefficient concentration for forest extraction (1.79) showed an increase in the inequity of income in the Block E area, and the share of income was high (44%). This implies the value of area forest extraction in Block E area is high.
Conclusions

- Based on our survey, the average land holding of Block A villagers was larger (10.73 ha) than that of Block E villagers (4.14 ha).

- In Block A, the highest source of income was from rubber (31%), in contrast, fishing (39%) and *gemor* extraction (35.3%) were the major sources of income in Block E, with their total income share being 74.3%.

  This indicated a high dependency on open access to natural resources.

- Forest extraction reduced the inequality of income in Block A but it increased the inequality of income in Block E.