

The Role of the Local Government of Bantaeng Regency in Environmental Management and Natural Resource Conservation

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Abstract

This research aims to explore the role of the Bantaeng Regency Regional Government in preserving the environment and natural resources. Within the framework of regional autonomy, the government has a great responsibility to formulate policies and programs that support environmental management and conservation of natural resources in a sustainable manner. This study uses a phenomenological approach with a qualitative descriptive method. Data was collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGD) with key informants involved in environmental management in Bantaeng. The results of the study show that despite significant efforts from local governments, challenges such as budget limitations, lack of competent human resources, and resistance of local communities are obstacles in policy implementation. The government also plays a role in facilitating collaboration with various stakeholders, including NGOs and the private sector. However, it is necessary to increase institutional capacity and community participation to achieve more optimal results in the long term.

Keywords: Role of government, Environment, Natural Resources Conservation

1. Introduction

Indonesia is an archipelagic country that has a variety of cultures and is rich in natural resources (SDA). The government plays a role in promoting general welfare, with the authority given mainly related to the management of natural resources for the welfare of the people. In the context of autonomy, there are opportunities for regions to manage natural resources in order to accelerate the achievement of welfare, especially in the regions. The abundance of Indonesia's natural resources in fact causes polemics related to its distribution and utilization. The government has a big role to play in determining the management of natural resources and what kind of development priorities they want to achieve. Ironically, the results of natural resource extraction and utilization are considered not to be able to fully prosper the people.

The purpose of environmental management is to achieve a harmonious relationship between humans and the environment with the aim of building a whole Indonesian people, controlling the use of resources wisely, the realization of Indonesian people as builders of the environment, the implementation of environmentally sound development for the benefit of current and future generations, the protection of the country from the influence of activities outside its territory. As a result of the pattern of greedy and selfish human

behavior, regardless of the carrying capacity of natural resources, various kinds of conflicts of interest have also occurred.

The problem of using natural resources as a component of the environment has various kinds of relationships, such as with the economy, politics, culture and security. Therefore, it is undeniable that anyone can raise it as an issue in various cases that have never been resolved against the preservation of natural resources. These various cases, when explored more deeply, often give rise to conflicts of interest. To prevent environmental damage, development as an effort to increase human dignity and dignity must have a strategy that truly considers human ecological factors on an anthropo-ecological-philosophical basis. The purpose of this study is to find out the role of the local government of Bantaeng Regency in managing the environment and conserving natural resources.

2. Research Methods

This research was carried out in Bantaeng Regency, South Sulawesi Province. The type of research that will be used in this study is phenomenology, namely by studying experiences found in the field. Descriptive research method with a qualitative approach. Here the researcher intends to describe how the role of the government manages everything about the utilization and conservation of the natural environment covering the Bantaeng regency area. Purposive sampling technique, a sampling method that is deliberately selected based on certain criteria that are relevant to the research objectives. In this context, the sample was selected from individuals or groups who have in-depth knowledge or direct involvement in environmental management and natural resource conservation in Bantaeng Regency.

Here are some steps in the application of the purposive sampling technique for this study:

1. Key Informant Identification

Select key informants such as local government officials in charge of environmental policies, NGO members involved in conservation, academics researching environmental issues, and community leaders who are active in environmental activities.

2. Selection Criteria

The criteria for selecting an informant include:

- a. Their position or role in environmental decision-making.
- b. Direct experience in the implementation of environmental policies or conservation programs in Bantaeng.
- c. In-depth insight or knowledge of local environmental issues.

3. Sample Size

Ukuran sampel tidak ditentukan secara ketat, melainkan bergantung pada jumlah informan yang dapat memberikan informasi kaya dan relevan. Dalam purposive sampling, kualitas data lebih diutamakan daripada kuantitas.

4. Pengumpulan Data

Data is collected through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), or case studies involving key informants. This technique ensures that the information collected is highly relevant to the focus of the research.

5. Data Analysis

The results of the interviews and other data were analyzed to identify patterns, themes, and views that represented the perceptions and experiences of the informants about the role of local governments in environmental management and natural resource conservation.

3. Result

In the literature that discusses the role of local governments in environmental management and natural resource conservation, it is found that the Bantaeng Regency Government has a great responsibility in preserving the environment and natural resources in its area. Local governments have the authority to formulate local policies that support the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Several studies show that the success of environmental management at the local level is greatly influenced by the commitment and ability of local governments to implement regulations, supervision, and community empowerment. In Bantaeng, conservation efforts include replanting deforested forests, coastal area management, and water conservation. In addition, local governments also play a role in facilitating cooperation between various stakeholders, including communities, NGOs, and the private sector, to support conservation programs. However, the literature also reveals the challenges faced, such as budget constraints, lack of competent human resources, and resistance from local communities that sometimes hinder the implementation of conservation policies. Overall, despite significant efforts from the Bantaeng Regency Government in environmental management, capacity building, institutional strengthening, and wider community participation are needed to achieve more optimal results in the long term.

The discussion of the role of the Bantaeng Regency Regional Government in environmental management and natural resource conservation can be studied by referring to various previous studies that highlight the effectiveness of policies and programs that have been implemented. Previous research by Hasanuddin (2018) emphasized that the Bantaeng Regency Government has implemented several strategic policies in protecting the environment, such as regulations on waste management and environmental pollution control. This study shows that the implementation of the policy is quite effective in reducing environmental problems, but still faces challenges in terms of supervision and law enforcement.

Furthermore, the study of Fachruddin and Mutaqqin (2019) highlights the role of local governments in natural resource conservation, especially through mangrove forest rehabilitation and coastal area protection programs. The study found that the success of the program is highly dependent on the active participation of local communities and support from the private sector. Despite the progress, the researcher noted the need to increase the capacity of local governments in terms of program coordination and management, as well as the need to provide adequate resources to ensure the continuity of conservation efforts.

Research by Nurmiaty (2020) focuses more on the impact of mangrove planting programs carried out by local governments as part of conservation strategies. The results of the study show that this program has succeeded in increasing public awareness of the importance of environmental sustainability and providing significant ecosystem benefits.

However, the study also identified that budget and human resource constraints were the main obstacles in the long-term expansion and maintenance of the program.

Another study by Subhan (2017) revealed that community participation in environmental conservation programs in Bantaeng still needs to be increased. Although there are several initiatives involving the community, such as environmental education programs and the involvement of local communities in conservation activities, the level of participation is still not optimal. The study recommends an increased participatory and collaborative approach to ensure that these programs are more sustainable and deeply rooted in the community.

Rahmat's (2021) research has succeeded in revealing various important aspects in the evaluation of local government environmental policies. The results of the study show that the environmental policies that have been implemented have a varying impact on environmental conditions in the area. Several policies have succeeded in improving the quality of the environment, but there are still many who face various challenges. Common challenges include limited resources, lack of coordination between institutions, low public awareness, and weak law enforcement. In addition, the research also identifies opportunities for improvement, such as strengthening community participation in decision-making, increasing the capacity of government officials, and the use of information technology to support environmental management. Thus, this study provides important recommendations for local governments to continue to evaluate the environmental policies that have been implemented, as well as make the necessary improvements so that the goal of sustainable environmental management can be achieved.

Syamsuddin's (2016) research on waste management policies in Bantaeng has revealed various interesting findings. One of the main findings is that there is a positive correlation between the implementation of comprehensive waste management policies and the improvement of environmental cleanliness. Bantaeng Regency, which has won the Adipura award several times, has shown success in managing waste through various programs such as waste banks and reducing the use of plastic. However, the study also identified several challenges that still need to be addressed, such as limited financial resources and a lack of public awareness in sorting waste. However, the overall results of the study show that good waste management policies, supported by active community participation, can have a significant impact on environmental cleanliness and the quality of life of the community. This research also highlights the importance of the government's role in providing adequate infrastructure and conducting intensive socialization to the community about the importance of good waste management.

Fitriani's (2020) research on the role of the Bantaeng Regency Regional Government in natural resource conservation and ecotourism development shows that there are significant efforts in managing natural potential in a sustainable manner. The local government has taken strategic steps, such as the establishment of conservation areas, the development of environmental education programs, and facilitation for local communities in managing the potential of natural tourism. The results of the study show that there is a positive correlation between government policies and increasing public awareness of the importance of protecting the environment. However, the study also identified several challenges, such as limited human resources and budgets, as well as a lack of coordination between agencies. Nevertheless, this study provides important recommendations for local

governments to continue to improve human resource capacity, strengthen cross-sector cooperation, and actively involve the community in ecotourism planning and management. Thus, it is hoped that a balance can be achieved between efforts to conserve natural resources and improve community welfare through sustainable ecotourism development.

Alamsyah's (2019) research on collaboration between local governments and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in environmental management shows very significant results. The partnership between the two parties has been proven to address a range of complex environmental challenges, such as waste management, water pollution, and deforestation. This collaboration allows for more effective use of resources, community capacity building, and the development of innovative solutions to environmental problems. NGOs often have specialized expertise, extensive networks, and greater flexibility in implementing environmental programs. On the other hand, local governments have the authority, resources, and legitimacy necessary to support and scale these programs. However, the study also identified several challenges in this collaboration, such as differences in vision and mission, lack of coordination, and imbalances in the distribution of resources. However, the overall results of the study show that collaboration between local governments and NGOs is a very potential model to achieve sustainable development goals.

Finally, Mardin's (2018) research on the application of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in environmental management in Bantaeng Regency showed very promising results. GIS has proven to be an effective tool in mapping, analyzing, and visualizing spatial data related to the environment, such as water quality, land cover, and natural resource location. With GIS, the Bantaeng Regional Government is able to identify areas that are vulnerable to environmental damage, monitor environmental changes periodically, and develop more integrated spatial planning. In addition, GIS also facilitates collaboration between various stakeholders in environmental management, such as the government, the community, and the private sector. However, the study also identified several challenges in the implementation of GIS, such as the limitation of accurate spatial data, lack of human resource capacity, and obstacles in integrating GIS with other information systems. However, the overall research results show that GIS has great potential to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of environmental management in Bantaeng Regency.

This chart includes key points such as environmental management policies, natural resource conservation efforts, community participation, as well as the challenges and recommendations found in the research.



Figure I: The role of the Bantaeng Regency Regional Government in environmental management and natural resource conservation

4. Conclusion

The role of the Bantaeng Regency Regional Government in Environmental Management and Natural Resources Conservation shows that the local government has a crucial role in preserving the environment and natural resources through various policies and programs. The Bantaeng Regency Government has made various efforts, including waste management, mangrove forest rehabilitation, and coastal area protection. Despite the positive initiatives, the effectiveness of the program still faces several challenges, such as budget constraints, lack of community participation, and coordination between agencies that need to be improved. Public awareness also plays an important role in the success of this program, but it still needs to be improved.

1. Local governments need to increase their internal capacity, both in terms of human resources and budgets, as well as strengthen coordination between agencies and with external parties, such as NGOs and the private sector, to ensure more effective implementation of environmental policies.
2. community participation in environmental programs by involving them from the planning stage to implementation. More intensive education on the importance of environmental conservation can help increase public awareness and participation.

3. Local governments should focus on developing sustainable environmental programs, taking into account ecosystem-based approaches and adaptation to climate change. Programs such as mangrove rehabilitation need to be supported by continuous monitoring and periodic evaluations.
4. Utilizing technology and innovation in environmental management, such as geographic information systems (GIS) for environmental monitoring, as well as the development of applications or platforms that involve the community in reporting environmental issues.

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