

No Mining, Save The Lung Land of Sumba

Info Sheet JATAM

Sumba with total area 10.710 km² is an island which dominated by savanna grassland. That is why since old times known as the farm area (horses, buffaloes, and cows) and became one of the largest meat suppliers in Indonesia. In East Sumba Regency until 2008, total horses population reach amount 28.804 horses. Besides that, this island also called Sandalwood because of the potential of it. But because of over exploitative practice since colonial era until Orde Baru, that potential reduced drastically. Now, practically could not be found Sandalwood forest in big population in this island.

With geographic condition like that, Sumba Island very dependent with several forest area. Especially to meet needs of timber and water resources. This island is greatly benefited by the presence of forest and Wanggameti Mountain. With the altitude reaches 1225 meters, Wanggameti is the highest land point also the only forest that have largest water catchment in Sumba. The area that located in East Sumba Regency is the main support for water need of the majority community and the cattle in that regency. Besides that, this forest is the only contributor of big timber for community in Sumba Island.

And this important area was threatened by changing function become in large scale of mining area. Start from Broken Hill Property (BHP) since 1998 until Hillgrove Resources Limited & PT. Fathi Resources, the new one. Can imagine, if this area was change become gold mining in big scale. Surely that water resources, food, and energy for Sumba community could be threatened. Unfortunately government that supposed to be a community protector rather becomes a broker of the company.

Sumba & Laiwangi & Wanggameti

Literally Wanggameti means dead of Beringin. But in the meaning of Sumba ancestor, Wanggameti meant "drive out the death" or reinforcements. That meaning certainly not only for making this up. But since ancient times, Wanggameti became a supporting place to meet the needs of daily communities needs start from the need of food, clothing, and house.

Some of food needs such as Cassava Forest (Ubi Hutan), Vegetables, and drinking water. For the need of clothing, local community often used cotton trees for making Sumba typical clothing. Furthermore, needs of woods can be easily obtained in Wanggameti. In conclusion, implied that "Driven Death" with fulfillment of their live needs.

As evidence of human relation and nature Wanggameti that harmonious was appear in many of ancient tomb which has several motifs such as horse, buffalo, men and women. This ancient tomb is a symbol and social status of the family that left. So that place becomes a sacred area for the community who adhere to the local custom, which in certain moments would be visited either in the context of ceremonies/custom ritual even pilgrimages.

Harmonization between communities with forest not only in filling the daily need, also the community believes that forest as a pride because they believed as a place for the ancestor. Because of that, they have special land for gardening and traditional rituals.

Until now Wanggameti area have tradition organization namely Anda li Luku Pala Forum (FALP) that obligate to maintain local knowledge of nature local management for around Wanggameti.

How important Wanggameti functions, until now local community keep on trying to protect the nature with many ways. One of the ways is customary rituals. For example, to maintain ecological function and repel pests plant, they sacred Kapunduk headwaters (one of big river in Wanggameti). In customary language, Kapunduk Pandajuagaru-Kalaulak Kandangnu meant that place that cannot be touch and cannot take anything from it. Kapunduk river crosses 5 villages, they are Tandulajangga Village, Nangga, Janggamangu, Nggongi, and Praimadita.

Until now, area Wanggameti flow at least has 114 units that support the economic needs and households.

Wanggameti also a major water absorption and headwater from area water flow (DAS) Kambaniru, Luku, Lunga, Luku Kanabu Wai and Melolo. Area water flow of Kambaniru and Area Water Flow of Melolo is area water flow that become water source of irrigation and become source of drink water for west area and Waingapu city area.

National Park Laiwangi - Wanggameti

This area on 1983 by Ministry of Forestry designated as forest nature reserve, jungle tours, conservation forest, and limited production forest. Through the Ministry of Forestry Decree number 576/Kpts-II/1998, the area turned into National Park (TN) Laiwangi-Wanggameti covering area ± 47.014,00 Ha.

National Park Laiwangi-Wanggameti are major habitat for 182 species of birds, 22 species of mammals, 115 species of butterflies, seven kinds of amphibians, and 29 species reptilians. Some of them belong to Sumba endemic fauna that now become rare, such as orange-crested cockatoo (*Cacatua citrinocristata*), Sumba hornbills (*Rhithiceros everretty*), White nest swallow (*Aerodramus fuciphagus*), Walik Rawamanu (*Ptilinopus dohertyi*), various type of flora around 70 species of plants.

After established become National Park in 1998, Wanggameti mountainous became target for mining. In same year BHP Sumba Minerals get KK Generation VI, even later was cut off unilaterally by government in 2008. Then enter Hillgrove Resources & PT. Fathi Resources, also in 2008. In the beginning 2008 government give easiness for cutting off

forest area with establishment of Government Regulation/PP.02 year 2009 about State Income Non Tax on Forest Area Use. Also government and House of Representative established law no. 19 year 2004 about stipulation of Perpu (Government Regulation in Lieu of Law)1 year 2004 about mining in conservation forest. Even more talked about regional autonomy and selection head of region. Because of that national park become meaningless, because the policy and interest defeat the meaning of the national park itself.

Sumba Project, dari BHP ke Hillgrove

In 1998, a mining company from Australia-Broken Hill Property (BHP) got work contract in Wanggameti gold mining. At that time, the community firmly and collectively against mining existence in their area. Because of many protest BHP was not operated again. Then in 2008, for unknown reason, work contract (KK) BHP Sumba Minerals was ended unilaterally by the government (termination)- gather with 110 other mining contracts-wide of concession KK BHP Sumba minerals that time is 160.180 ha which is KK Generation IV. In the same years, local government authorized mining area (KP) to Hillgrove Resources through their partner PT. Fathi Resources, still in the area KK BHP, it's just the wide of concession become 3.313 kilometer square for gold and mineral mining.

A Year after, November 2009, local government change the permit of PT. Fathi Resources for conform with Law No. 4 Year 2009 about Mineral and Coal mining become Mining Business License (IUP) with wide are 10.000ha, which mostly area goes into Laiwangi - Wanggameti National Park.

Hillgrove Resources Limited is one of company from Australia same with BHP that listed as Australian Stock Exchange (ASX) with code HGO. Therefore this gold mining project called Sumba Project. This project 80% owned by Hillgrove and rest 20% by PT. Fathi Resources.

Beside in Sumba also working project in West Papua & Bird Head Project - , in South Australia and Queensland, also build port for copper and gold in Kanmantoo ± 60 Km from Adelaide, Australia.

KP permits covering an area 3.313, located in two different area, namely Masu Project (in area National Park Laiwangi & Wanggameti) in East Sumba and Daro Land Project in West Sumba. In 2009, exploration license was given and worked by Hillgrove include feasibility studies for the Masu project covering 1000 ha.

Legitimation of Law No.4 year 2009 about Mineral and Coal, making the license of the company changes from KP to IUP (Mining Permit) in November 2009. The permit transition is clearly not use under legal base, because since in legislation, on February 2010, implementation rules & Government Regulation (PP) & a derivative of this Law was released and it just 2 Government Regulation from 22 that mandated by the law in February 2010.

By coincidence both Government Regulation (PP) related to the permit transition area of mining namely PP No.22 year 2010 about Mining Area and Government Regulation/PP No.23 year 2010 about implementation activities of Mineral and Mining Enterprises. Meant, IUP number 322/KEP/HK/2009 for 6 years later preceding the establishment of the Government Regulation and it is possible not to follow the right procedural. Exploration Permit was established for 1 years and given to exploration in Masu Project (Pahandanjal Prospect)

Mining Damage Risk Masu Project

Masu Project are mostly located in the region National Park Laiwangi & Wanggameti, National Park area is surrounded by 16 villages that directly or even indirectly have social life relationships, economy, and local politics over the forest. In addition, Laiwangi National Park Area & Wanggameti is forest areas that represent all type of forest in Sumba Island with biodiversity value, especially for areas above 800 meter above sea level.

After obtaining the exploration license, the activity has caused worries and harm to the community. 114 sub-watersheds from five major watersheds flowing from Laiwangi & Wanggameti National Park, now the river - the river start to turbid and sediment deposition quite high. Even in some river, community began to find dead fishes.

Mining Characteristic that greed with water, start to take victims. Telaga (in local language namely Tamma) Lai Lowang in Wanggameti village that also used by community in other five village namely Nangga village, Karipi village, Katikuwai, Wanggameti, and Tandula Njangga, now have to fell declining water debit drastically because it used for mining exploration needs.

Not only being used for households need and protein - capture fish - Tamma Lai Lowang also became the union of community in customary ritual. Even in 2004, local traditional community did ritual of slaughter 10 pieces animal (cow, chicken, goat, etc) for "taking care" that Tamma. Can imagine if in the future this Tamma became drought and disappear, so not only economic needs and protein became declining, social local culture value will be gone.

Logging or forest clearing even when exploration or exploitation latter could cause disaster. Reminding area Laiwangi & Wanggameti National Park is in highland area. It already happen, in one of exploration point near to Kapunduk River caused landslides that brought mud get in to the river. Other Landslides that will be followed the damaged of supporting trees. Not only that, trees also have function to catch water, will caused water sources decreased and dead. Local community now difficult to access areas that in fact become a place for them to use some type of plants and trees for their daily life or economic. Community also starts to worry about sustainability of cropping farming life. Destruction in aquatic environment, soil, land, air can destroy garden (Maize, Cassava, Sweet potato, cashew, green beans, peanut, clove, pecan and coconut) them that not so far from mining area.

Besides to community, its definitely endemic wildlife and plants that typical of Sumba is in danger. Though Laiwangi-Wanggameti national park is representing all types of forest and the only widest Steppes in Sumba Island, so diverse flora and fauna there are variant will be threatened with extinction.

Community Reject Mining

Refusal from the community of gold mining began in 1998 when BHP had KK. Sharing demonstration action also held. Refusal from the community because many landslides in the area that be mined. It is feared that mining activity would exacerbate the occurrence of landslides. Finally, after passing through several research then there is oral agreements

between community, government, and also researches to cancel plan of mining activity. One of effort to strengthen protection effort for that area, then they established traditional organization namely FALP in 2001.

But the communities were surprised by general re-investigation activities that conducted by PT. Fathi Resources. Suddenly, people were refused. Various attempts were made by the public and some village government to stop the activities. It's nothing, due to companies's exploration companies have been notice by people, and they also make a joint letter of mining refuse. And hundreds of indigenous peoples Wanggameti gather with Care Environment Forum East Sumba since 7 - May 10, 2010 did action refuse mining.

There are 400 Wanggameti Indigenous peoples gather with Coalition Non Government Organization, Peoples Coalition Refuse Mining, Justice Coalition, LP2TRI, Mbaha Eti Foundation, Freedom Peoples Foundation, FALP – convey demands:

1. Urge Regency government to suspend Mining Permit that given to the company.
2. Urge the company to stop mining process that ongoing now.
3. Asked law enforcement side to prosecuting various elements that doing intimidation and scare community to do the refusal.
4. Asked the government immediately to restore area that already damaged because of exploration mining activity.
5. Asked government to established Lainwangi-Wanggameti area as an area where free from minning.

On last day action, 10 May 2010, after 3 days did action and stayed in the yard of Regent office, finally East Sumba Regent, Gidion Mbilijaro, met the community and promised to pay attention on community aspiration.

Intimidation to the Community Reject Mining

Until now, the communities still insist to deny the existence of mining. Then it led to intimidation by government against communities. This fact is happening in the Village Karipi. Village Apparatus intimidate communities to sign a statement that contains communities's position to withdraw or cancel the Mining letter of rejection that they already signed before. They are intimidated by saying that if they do not agree with mining then they will be caught and punished by the Mobile Brigade (Brimob). Many of communities are terrified and forced to sign the letter. Not only there, also there are some people who been asked for some money for administrative expenses amount IDR 10 000 to cancel Mining rejection letter.

Those practices stated that the presence of mining is not feasible for both sustainability of ecological carrying capacity as well as for economic and social life of society. When, the people said "REFUSE MINING, DEAD PRICE", then that pledge worth to continue fighting until there is no longer mining as destroyer "lungs" Land of Sumba.