

Integrating community maps in spatial planning

Recommendations for policy and practice in Indonesia

The revised spatial planning law of Indonesia requires participation of communities in spatial planning procedures. Such participation should be more than just lip service. To ensure that the interests of local people are truly taken into account we recommend the integration of community maps in spatial planning.

Recommendations

- In line with the Articles 60-66 of the Indonesian Spatial Law (26/2007), district-level spatial planning should facilitate participation by communities with a view to ensuring Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) for land allocations.
- District governments should verify and subsequently formalise community-level maps and produce district maps that clearly demarcate village land boundaries and customary lands.
- District governments should not only issue land allocations to companies, but should also allocate lands for local agricultural activities, classified as 'Rural Areas' (Spatial Law, Article 48 to 59).
- Community maps can be used to identify Strategic Rural Areas in spatial plans.
- District governments should ensure that local communities are fully informed about the consequences of deals with companies.

What is community mapping?

Over the past two decades, in response to unclear land rights and associated conflicts, Indonesian NGOs have assisted hundreds of communities to map their village boundaries through a process of community mapping. This essentially means that villagers create a detailed and accurate cartographic map of their village or customary territory. Together they document the land boundaries and land uses, using simple Global Positioning System (GPS) technology and Geographical Information System (GIS) software. The boundaries between

villages are established in consultation with neighbouring communities, which helps prevent and resolve land-related conflicts among them. The map is based on local people's own concepts and understanding of land use, and the community's history and land claims. Community maps enable local people to communicate their perceptions on land rights and resource management systems with the government and other actors.

Community maps can help improve district-level planning

District governments issue plantation permits to palm oil companies based on district-level spatial plans. These are based on official maps that do not contain information about customary boundaries. As a result, a company may receive a permit for lands that are considered customary lands and which are used productively by local communities. It is then up to the company to open negotiations with the communities and work out a deal, for example by involving local people in a smallholder outgrower scheme. Communities are seldom fully aware of all the consequences of such deals, for example those related to tenure rights (see the textbox below). With a view to protecting the interests of local farmers and reducing the potential for conflicts, district-level spatial plans should account for local land uses, customary land rights and local aspirations. Official maps do not contain that type of information, but community maps do. If the spatial planning agency would integrate community maps in its formal planning procedures, this could be used for detailed spatial planning of the landscape,

ensuring a balanced mix of plantation development, food production and natural areas, and contributing to improvements in rural communities' welfare.

The PLUP project

Between 2010 and 2013, an alliance of Indonesian and Dutch non-governmental organisations and universities and an international research organisation carried out a pilot project aiming to facilitate participatory land-use planning (PLUP) in the district of Sanggau in West-Kalimantan by integrating community maps into the formal spatial planning procedure. For more information about the activities and outcomes of the project see: *Formalising participatory land-use planning – Experiences from Sanggau District, West Kalimantan, Indonesia*. URL: www.bothends.nl/nl/Publicaties

The revised spatial planning law

The revised spatial planning law of 2007 – and the ensuing development of a new Indonesian spatial plan – provides the following two openings to address the land right concerns of communities. Firstly, Articles 60 to 66 state that civil society participation is required during planning, implementation and monitoring. There are however no clear guidelines on how to do this, and most district-level governments continue allocating lands to oil palm companies and other large-scale concessions without true consultation of local communities. Effective participation in land-use planning can be achieved through the integration of community maps in formal procedures.

Secondly, Articles 48 to 59 introduce a new classification under the name of 'Rural Areas'. According to the law, a Rural Area should contribute to (i) rural community economic empowerment, (ii) maintaining the quality of the environment, (iii) natural resource conservation, (iv) cultural heritage. (v) food security, and (vi) maintaining a

balance between rural and urban areas. Rural Areas are allocated to rural communities and can therefore not be leased out to private plantation companies. The areas are to be identified through a process of 'detailed spatial planning' at the district level. To demarcate the Rural Areas, community mapping is the most appropriate tool, as it will ensure that local interests and perceptions are taken into account.

Further reading

- Momberg, F., Atok, K. and Sirait, M. 1996. Drawing on Local Knowledge: A Community Mapping Training Manual. WWF-Indonesia Programme.
- Colchester M., Jiwan N., Andiko, Sirait M.T., Firdaus A.Y., Surambo A. and Pane H. 2006. Promised Land: Palm Oil and Land Acquisition in Indonesia – Implications for Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples. FPP, SW, HUMA, ICRAF-SEA.
- Sirait, M. 2009. Indigenous Peoples and Oil Palm Plantation Expansion in West Kalimantan, Indonesia. Universiteit van Amsterdam and Cordaid Memisa.
- Kusters, K. et al. 2013. Formalising participatory land-use planning – Experiences from Sanggau District, West Kalimantan, Indonesia. Both ENDS. www.bothends.nl/nl/Publicaties

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Film: 'Mapping our future'
(<https://vimeo.com/61715444>)