

Promoting Spatial Partnership and Community Perception for the Preservation of Orang Kayo Hitam Grand Forest Park (GFP) in Jambi Province, Indonesia

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Submit: 2023-02-28

Received: 2023-08-18

Accepted: 2023-08-30

Keywords: Spatial partnership; perception; grand forest park; and preservation

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Abstract. The Orang Kayo Hitam Grand Forest Park is located in Jambi Province, Indonesia, and is currently threatened by illegal logging and natural fire forest that has burned 7,984.78 hectares. Therefore, this research aims to improve community perceptions of the conservation function of the Orang Kayo Hitam. This can be achieved by providing conservation books on the Orang Kayo Hitam to the community, creating a demonstration video, and increasing community income through a partnership pattern by planting in utilization zones. The non-parametric statistical difference T-test was used, which involved a survey and training approach on 93 households living near the Grand Forest Park. This method was used to assess changes in the perception of the community after reading books, watching videos, and collaborating on counseling. The results showed that the perception of the community changed significantly after receiving knowledge from books and watching videos about the Grand Forest Park. There was also a shift in public perception regarding the use of the conservation zone at the Grand Forest Park location via collaboration counseling.

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1. Introduction

The Grand Forest Park (GFP) is a forest area with a conservation function. In Indonesia, conservation areas are grouped into two categories, namely (1) nature conservation areas and (2) nature reserve areas. The GFP is categorized as a nature conservation area with ecotourism, research, and education functions (Forest Service, 2020).

In Jambi Province, there is *Orang Kayo Hitam* GFP with an area of 18,140 hectares, located between Muaro Jambi Regency and Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency. The GFP is characterized by a peat swamp forest area and is managed by the Jambi Provincial Forestry Service. The *Orang Kayo Hitam* GFP faces several challenges such as recurrent forest fires in 1997, 2007, 2011, 2014, 2015, and 2019, as well as illegal logging, occupation of the area by the community, and conflicts over boundaries within the community.

In Indonesia, the management of conservation areas experienced a paradigm change in the 1990s, following the adoption of the Integrated Conservation and Development Program (ICDP) by the Director General of Nature Protection and Conservation. The ICDP program was funded by USAID, the World Bank, and several international NGOs that linked conservation programs with the development of alternative economic activities for communities around the area by embracing all stakeholders and accommodating all dimensions of development which are common goals (Wells *et al.* 1998). However, the community was still positioned as the object of

the activity implementation (Soekmadi *et al.*, 2010), leading to continuous deforestation and degradation in conservation areas.

Community interests have been taken into account in the management of the Grand Forest Park under Indonesian government regulation number 28, Year 2011 concerning the Management of Nature Reserves and Conservation Areas. Under these conditions, it can be assumed that by providing knowledge through reading books, watching videos, as well as collaborating, and counseling, there will be a change in the perception of the community. The partnership opportunities are built for the surrounding community to sustain the *Orang Kayo Hitam* GFP by changing the public perception.

The objectives of the research are (1) To determine whether distributing the *Orang Kayo Hitam* GFP conservation book to the community can change their perceptions of the conservation function, (2) To perform a video demonstration of the function of the *Orang Kayo Hitam* GFP in the community on changing the perceptions of the people (3) To analyze whether the promoting spatial partnership pattern approach can increase community income in the utilization block in the *Orang Kayo Hitam* GFP.

2. Methods

The research site is the location of a conservation feature, namely peatland protection, as recognised by the government of the Republic of Indonesia as the site of *Orang Kayo Hitam*