Women, gender and protest: contesting oil palm plantation expansion in Sambas district, Indonesia

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Miranda Morgan

School of Environment and Development
Discipline of Geography

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Glossary

ADD	*Alokasi Dana Desa* (Allocation of Village Funds)
Arisan	Rotating credit savings scheme
Bahasa	*Bahasa Indonesia* (Indonesian language)
BLT	*Bantuan Langsung Tunai* (Unconditional Cash Transfer)
BKM/BSM	Scholarships for poor students
BKMT	*Badan Kontak Majelis Taklim* (National Forum for Islamic Study Groups)
BPD	*Badan Permusyawaratan Desa* (Village Government Body)
BPN	*Badan Pertanahan Nasional* (National Land Agency)
BPS	*Badan Pusat Statistik* (Central Bureau of Statistics)
Bupati	Head of district
Demo	Protest
DPR/DPRD	*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat* (House of Representatives)
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FKPM	Communication Forum of Malay Youth
FOE	Friends of the Earth
FPE	Feminist Political Ecology
GAPOKTAN	*Gabungan Kelompok Tani* (Federation of Village Farmer's Groups)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ha	Hectares
Hak	Rights
HGU	*Hak Guna Usaha* (Land Use Permit)
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IL	*Izin Lokasi* (Location License)
IP	*Izin Prinsip* (Initiation Permit)
IUP	*Izin Usaha Perkebunan* (Plantation Business Permit)
Jamkesmas	*Jaminan Kesehatan Masyarakat* (Social Health Insurance)
Jengkol	Dogfruit
Kabupaten	District
Kampung	Rural
kg	Kilogram
Kuasa	Power
Miding	Green edible fern
MST	Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (Landless Workers Movement), Brazil
Musrenbang	*Musyawarah Rencana Pembangunan* (Multi-Stakeholder Consultation Forum for Development Planning)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
Paddy	Unmilled rice
Pakis	Fiddleheads
Petai	Bitter bean

Petani	Farmer
PKH	*Program Keluarga Harapan* (Hopeful Family Program)
PKK	*Pembinaan Kesejateraan Keluarga* (Family Welfare Movement)
PNPM	*Program Nasional Pemberdayaan Masyarakat* (National Program for Community Empowerment)
Posyandu	*Pos Pelayan Terpadu* (Health Centre for mothers and babies)
Provinsi	Province
PT	*Perusahaan Terbatas* (Limited Liability Company)
PT SAM	PT Sentosa Asih Makmur
PT WSP	PT Wilmar Sambas Plantation
Puskesmas	*Pusat Kesehatan Masyarakat* (Community Health Centre)
RASKIN	*Beras untuk Rumah Tangga Miskin* (Rice for Poor Households)
Rebung	Bamboo shoots
Reformasi	Reform era in Indonesia
RI	*Republik Indonesia* (Republic of Indonesia)
Rps	Indonesia Rupiahs
RSPO	Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil
RT	*Rukan Tetangga* (Head of Neighborhood)
Sayang	Fondess, love, pity, regret, disappointment
SKT	*Surat Keterangan Tanah* (Land Information Letters)
SPKS	*Serikat Petani Kelapa Sawit* (Union of Oil Palm Farmers)
STSD	*Serikat Tani Serumpun Damai* (Peaceful Farmer's Union)
TKI	*Tenaga Kerja Indonesia* (Indonesian foreign workers)
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
US$	United States Dollar
WFP	United Nations World Food Programme

**Indonesian language in italics*

Abstract

Women, gender and protest:
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The rapid expansion of oil palm plantations throughout Indonesia has resulted in a range of environmental and social consequences, including dispossessing rural people of their land. But these people are not accepting the infringements passively. As oil palm plantations have expanded and spread, so have instances of oil palm-related protest and resistance. In almost all accounts of oil palm, however, women and gender relations are overlooked. This thesis examines the role of women and gender relations in oil palm expansion and resistance in Indonesia today.

Using a combination of secondary literature (specifically, the fields of agrarian political economy, feminist political ecology and contentious politics) and primary data, this thesis provides both a new case study and a new way - through the lens of gender - of understanding oil palm expansion and resistance in Indonesia. At the heart of this research study are the voices, opinions and experiences of 42 women who participated in one protest against dispossession in Sambas district, Indonesia. Emphasizing the role of these women in their households, communities and in this protest, as well as the gender relations that shape and are shaped by the women's participation at all of these levels, this study offers new analysis of who is impacted by oil palm expansion, who resists it and in what ways.

The Sambas case study demonstrates how gender relations shape all stages and facets of a protest, from women's decisions to participate in protest (by informing their motivations and political opportunities) to women's protest activities and how women experience protest outcomes. It also reveals how at all stages of mobilization, gender relations are not fixed. Rather, gender relations themselves may also be shaped by and through women's participation in protest. This study has far-reaching implications not only for the future of oil palm expansion and resistance, but on women's participation in protest, in politics in general and on gender relations.

Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university of other institute of learning.

Copyright Statement

Acknowledgments

I am listed as the only author of this thesis (and I take sole responsibility for any errors or omissions), but this research project was truly a collective effort.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction: Protest in Sambas

On June 24 2008, up to 7,000 people participated in a protest unprecedented in the small capital of Sambas district in the province of West Kalimantan, Indonesia (see location of Sambas district in figure 1.1)[1]. They demanded that the Bupati (head of the district) withdraw plantation permits to their land which he had earlier granted to two companies. One of these companies, PT SAM, had started to make advances to establish an oil palm plantation on a 16,000 hectare concession[2]. Smallholders from across three affected sub-districts united to fight against their imminent dispossession. When the Bupati finally met with protesters, he announced that he was withdrawing PT SAM's permit to the land[3].

Among the smallholders present that day were a significant number of otherwise apolitical women who, for the first time, turned to protest to defend their land. This could be due to the gendered dimensions of land dispossession, which threaten to disproportionately impact women in Sambas. Or because of the local political opportunity structure which leads these women to engage with protest to express

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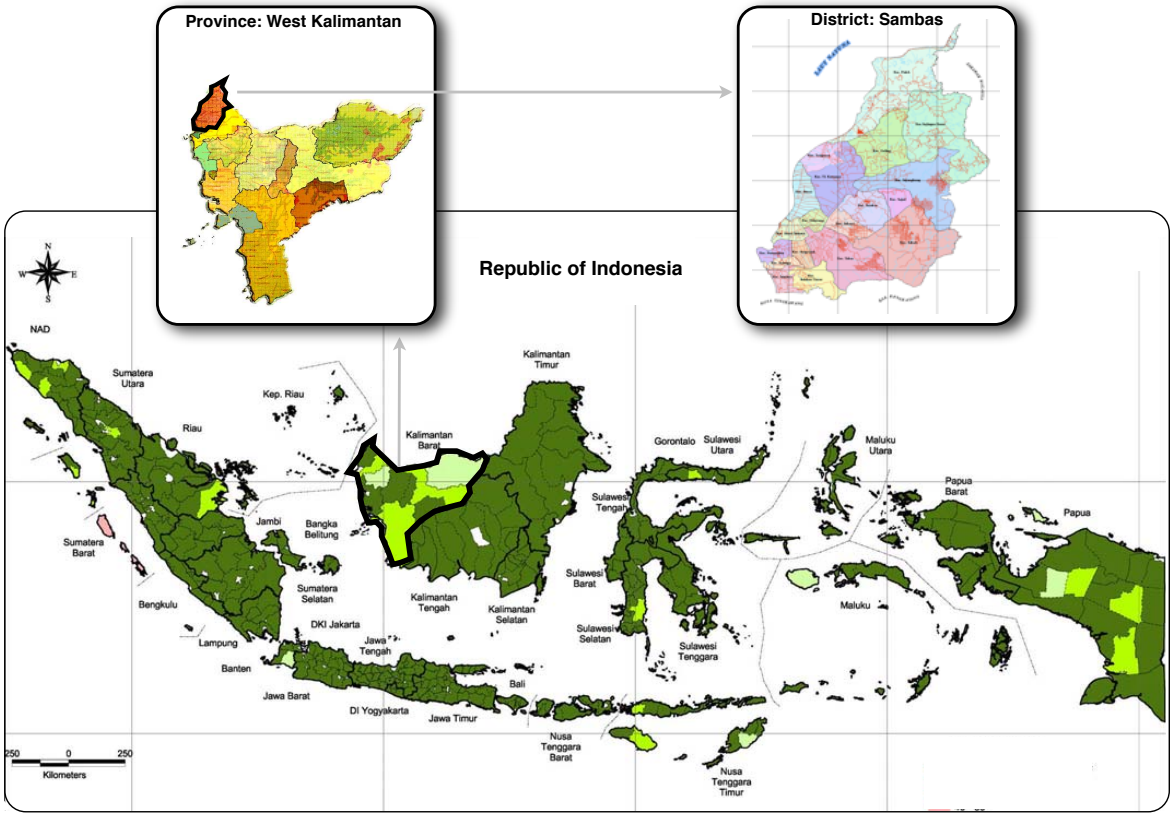
[1] A local journalist estimated 5,000 protesters, while NGO workers and protesters said there were at least 7,000 people (Nova 2008a). For a series of local newspaper articles preceding and following the protest, see Nova 2008b, 2008c, 2008d.

[2] While this thesis focuses almost exclusively on PT SAM and its proposed oil palm plantation, it is important to acknowledge that the Sambas protest was shared with another major protest group, a large group from the sub-district of Jawai demanding that the Bupati withdraw the permit he had given to another private company (PT HTI) to harvest industrial forests.

[3] The Bupati revoked both the Location License and Plantation Business Permit of PT SAM. See agreement signed by the Bupati in Appendix E and F.

their demands. While these factors may distinguish the Sambas protest from other protests in Indonesia, the fact that women participated may not actually be unique at all. However, few other accounts of oil palm-related protest fail to make women visible and to consider how gender shapes mobilization, let alone in what ways.

Figure 1.1: Locating Sambas district in Indonesia



Sources: World Food Programme 2009, BPS Provinsi Kalimantan Barat 2009, BPS Kabupaten Sambas 2009

Women, gender and protest[4]

There is a growing recognition that because oil palm plantations are inserted into socially differentiated landscapes there is an uneven distribution of benefits and consequences across populations (Borras Jr 2009; Dauvergne and Neville 2010). It even serves to accelerate 'peasant' differentiation (Pye 2010). Pye discusses how ongoing class relations means that different classes have diverse (though interconnected) bases for mobilization, from independent peasants defending their land against encroachment, oil palm smallholders struggling around prices, debt and infrastructure and plantation workers contesting wages, working conditions and the right to organise (856). While this acknowledges the differential impacts and possibilities for mobilization due to ongoing class relations, differentiation along other lines such as gender is almost entirely absent in the literature.

Some of the literature nods to the possibility that in oil palm expansion unequal gender relations result in disproportionate consequences for women (see Hertomo 2009 in Colchester 2011; Marti 2008). Only Julia and White (2011) provide a dedicated analysis of the gender disaggregated impacts of oil palm expansion. Their work unveils the multiple gendered impacts of an established oil palm plantation in a Dayak community in West Kalimantan. However, it is less helpful in understanding the gendered dimensions of resistance. Julia and White only briefly

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[4] Throughout the thesis I will refer to both 'women' and 'gender', acknowleding the terms as related though not interchangeable. Cornwall (2007) describes how, in practice, 'gender' has often been conflated with 'women'. The motivation behind first using 'gender' (in development) was to move the debate on equality beyond 'women' to engage with the socially-constituted *relations* of power that sustain inequality and injustice. Thus, at the root of it, 'gender' cannot be conflated with women, nor with men. This thesis emphasizes 'gender' to draw attention to "the ways in which social, political and historical processes produce particular gender identities and relations" (72). The thesis also refers to 'women' because of all the relations that 'gender' interrogates I am specifically interested in the relations around 'women'. Though focusing on women, I do so heeding Nightingale's (2006) warning of the danger of emphasizing women, even at times allowing 'gender' to be synonomous with 'women', and thus falling back into essentialist understandings of women which mask a variety of processes by which gender is produced (169). While 'women' *and* 'gender' are my central analytical focus, I am aware that gender intersects with a number of relations of power, such as caste, race, culture and ethnicity. Following Sundberg (2004), I follow a stream of feminism that acknowledges intersectionality, that is, "how gender intersects with other systems of power to produce multi-faceted, complex, and potentially contradictory identities" (46). Also see Beckwith 2000, 434). Finally, I invoke 'gender' not as a static concept or reality, but one that is contestable and always in the process of being re-defined. 'Gender' is dynamic and so cannot be defined in a transhistorical or unitary way (Mohanty et al. 1991).

mention the few women involved in protest against the local oil palm company and the overall lack of women in the local oil palm farmers union, but do not examine this further. In other case studies of oil palm resistance, the presence of women is mentioned but the nature of their involvement has been largely left unexplored (Colchester 2011; Collins 2007; Gerber 2011; Right to Food and Nutrition Watch Consortium 2010; Sirait 2009).

Like Julia and White (2011), this research study emphasizes that the way oil palm is expanding in Indonesia results in disproportionate consequences for women, threatening to exacerbate gender-specific vulnerabilities and inequalities. The implications for rural women (and by extension, households, communities and future generations) are grave, with potential consequences for food security, health, employment, educational prospects and poverty, among others. In light of this finding, a continued failure to explicitly consider the gender-specific impacts of oil palm expansion in both the academic literature and in oil palm policy is inaccurate. And so, gender-blind expansion continues without even the slightest attempt to ameliorate the disproportionate impacts on women.

One of the factors contributing to this oversight is that women are largely excluded or marginalized from the decision-making positions and processes that lead to oil palm development, whether at the state, district, community, even household level. This is not because women are ignorant, ambivalent or apathetic where oil palm expansion is concerned, but that they face gendered barriers to participating in formal politics and the public sphere more generally in Indonesia. However, by looking beyond the formal spaces of decision-making (dominated by mostly male authorities and officials) and public spaces of negotiation or contestation around oil palm (dominated by mostly male grassroots or social movement leaders), it is possible to find examples of women participating in oil palm resistance - even if these women's opinions and experiences have been overlooked and their resistance made invisible. As with oil palm expansion, ignoring the role of women and gender in oil palm resistance is problematic. It allows the status quo - that women do not, cannot or should not participate in the politics around oil palm - to be maintained, when in reality women are already implicated in the surrounding

politics (albeit in certain gendered ways), thus proving their capacity to make demands and desire to influence decision-making. Considering the gender-specific impacts of oil palm expansion, women's voices need to be recognized in the literature and in the actual politics of oil palm resistance.

While this research focuses on the role of women and gender in this one case of protest in Sambas district, the way in which the oil palm industry is expanding and being resisted there cannot be understood in isolation. Rather, these activities are produced by a complex combination of factors, processes and actors at every scale, from the global to the local. In order to situate women, gender and resistance to oil palm in Sambas, the next section will investigate how the political-economic context shapes the way the oil palm sector develops, expands, operates and is being contested in modern-day Indonesia.

Context: Oil palm expansion and resistance in Indonesia

Global demand

Oil palm is "one of the most rapidly expanding equatorial crops in the world" (Rist 2010, 1010). In the last thirty years, the amount of land allocated to oil palm globally has tripled to approximately 14 million hectares of land or ten percent of the world's permanent crop land (Sheil et al. 2009). It is grown commercially in over 43 countries in the world but production is concentrated in Southeast Asia, with Indonesia and Malaysia accounting for roughly 90 percent of the 36 million tonnes of crude palm oil produced globally per annum (Sheil et al. 2009, 5). As of 2008, the majority of oil palm (77 percent) was used for food, which mainly comes from crude palm oil, while most palm kernel oil is used for a variety of non-edible products like detergents, cosmetics, plastics and a range of other industrial and agricultural chemicals (Sheil et al. 2009). Global demand for palm-related products, such as vegetable oil, is high and continues to increase (McCarthy 2010, 844). Apart from growing demand for food export, one of the biggest (and most contentious) drivers of oil palm growth is the expanding biofuel industry (Borras Jr, McMichael and Scoones 2010; Marti 2008). Pye (2010) links targets for renewable

energy in Europe with the ‘frenzy’ of oil palm investment and expansion in other parts of the world, such as Indonesia.

The first oil palm trees were planted in Indonesia in 1848 but the country only began to dominate world trade in 1966. In 2005, Indonesia overtook Malaysia as the world’s largest producer of oil palm. According to McCarthy (2010), “Indonesian policy makers have long identified oil palm as a key vehicle for economic growth” (822). However, the ways in which oil palm has been developed and managed in Indonesia have changed dramatically over the years in response to changes in the wider political-economic context.

Reformasi and oil palm expansion in Indonesia

The most recent changes to the oil palm sector in Indonesia have emerged due to a series of political-economic reforms introduced following the fall of President Suharto and the New Order regime in 1998. This period, known as ‘Reformasi,’ has generally led to the increasing liberalisation of the economy. Hadiz and Robinson (2005) describe how in the midst of the turmoil which brought down Suharto the Indonesian government was ‘forced’ to agree to ‘extensive’ demands for economic reform by the International Monetary Fund, including “more deregulation, dismantling the state owned sector, introducing institutional reforms in banking and public management and, significantly, diluting central state authority” (221). Successive governments have introduced policies that support a “market-oriented political economy of accumulation and growth” (Rock 2003 in McCarthy 2010, 839). That said, full transformation to a liberal market economy in Indonesia has been “ambiguous and uncertain” (ibid). Entrenched power relations have made market reform difficult and dominant interests from the New Order have shown significant ability to consolidate themselves despite attempts at institutional change.

Reformasi seems to have cemented the country’s neoliberal transition in the agrarian sector. Tuong (2009) points out that while the regime remains “essentially capitalist” as it was during the New Order, it is now “arguably more integrated in

the international capitalist system than ever before" (199). Afiff et al. (2005) discuss current land questions in this "era of neoliberal capitalism" (1), while Peluso et al. (2008) talk of changes within an "increasing hegemony of neoliberal policy and practice" (380), where "neoliberal policies had made tremendous headway" (388). In his research on agricultural commodity chains, Danzer (2007) finds that the state's role in manipulating these chains has been significantly reduced since 1998. He states, "the capacity of the state to intervene has been sharply curtailed [and] the vast system of monopolies and rent seeking pockets has collapsed" (2). The increasing liberalisation of the agrarian sector is also reflected in the oil palm sector.

According to McCarthy and Cramb (2009), the recent economic reforms have changed the role of the state from being the 'motor of development' to taking on more of a 'steering role' in oil palm expansion (114). This is because the rise of neoliberalism in Indonesia "coincided with the reduced fiscal, administrative and coercive capacity of the state to support or extend the expansion of estates other than through supporting private sector investment" (121), marking a move in the oil palm sector towards "corporatisation and privatisation of parastatals, public-private partnerships, shifting expenses to the private sector, and harnessing private investment for development goals" (ibid, 114). The role of the private sector has been further enhanced by new decentralisation laws that have transferred much of the responsibility over oil palm expansion to the district level. While this was intended to increase accountability and transparency over government institutions, it has instead provided incentives for locally-entrenched elites to encourage large private investment to their districts (Eilenberg 2009; McCarthy and Cramb 2009; Nordholt and van Klinken 2007; Resosudarmo 2004). As a result, today in Indonesia oil palm development consists of 'massive' expansion on behalf of the private sector facilitated by state agencies and land laws and policies (McCarthy and Cramb 2009, 121).

Private sector expansion tends towards creating large-scale - even industrial-sized - monocrop plantations (Colchester 2011; Li 2011; Wakker 2005). As the World Bank and IFC (2011) explain, "economies of scale in mills and the need to process

fruits soon after harvest require mills to have access to sizable tracts of land that may be mono-cropped" (20). This is not to pretend that large-scale oil palm plantations are new to Indonesia or that smallholders are excluded from these plans. Actually, large-scale plantations have a long history in some parts of Indonesia, though in other parts - particularly at the frontier of oil palm expansion - they present a new and often undesirable pattern of agriculture. Also, plantations and smallholders are far from incompatible. Rather, partnership agreements between smallholders and plantation companies are the 'key mechanism' through which oil palm is introduced to communities today (Pye 2010, 855). The issue, then, is not whether smallholders are part of the private sector-driven plantation system, but the questionable terms under which they are incorporated (McCarthy 2010; Pye 2010; Rist et al. 2010). McCarthy and Cramb (2009) show how the private sector bargains directly with customary landowners and smallholders with minimal state involvement. Whereas previously the state would have been directly involved in establishing and managing plantations, district governments now mostly leave private capital to do it. The lack of "effective oversight" by district governments creates serious problems of accountability and transparency (117).

The recent reforms have also led to Indonesia's increasing integration into the international economy, increasing the country's need to attract and generate foreign capital, trade and export. This, combined with the global demand for oil palm both for food and biofuels, has stimulated the remarkable push for oil palm expansion throughout Indonesia in recent history (McCarthy 2010, 844)[5]. Indonesian production increased from 168,000 tonnes in 1967 to 16.4 million tonnes in 2006 (Sheil et al. 2009, 5), and up to 19.2 million tons in 2008 (Rist et al. 2010, 1010). Over this same period, total cultivation area increased from 105,808 hectares to 6.3 million hectares (Sheil et al. 2009, 5). Between 2000 and 2006, an average of 350,000 new hectares of oil palm were planted each year. Current production mainly comes from Sumatra, but production is "expanding rapidly" to Kalimantan and Papua (Sheil et al. 2010, 5). McCarthy (2010) points to

[5] While McCarthy and Cramb (2009) emphasize the changes due to neoliberalism they are quick to acknowleddge that neoliberal ideas have been taken up unevenly: "state intervention is still involved in the transformation of these frontiers" (114), and "aspects of the market-led approach mix with a continuation or rearticulation of earlier approaches" (121).

Indonesia's commitment to becoming the largest biodiesel producer in the world (823). National policies seek to expand palm oil-based biodiesel production capacity from 600 million litres (2008) to 3 billion litres by 2017 (Rist et al. 2010).

In short, the Reformasi period has led to increased economic liberalisation throughout Indonesia, and particularly in the oil palm sector. This has changed not only who is responsible for oil palm expansion and at what scale, but how expansion proceeds and at what rate. Private companies are now the primary driver of oil palm expansion in Indonesia and they are driving the establishment of large-scale monocrop plantations, facilitated by a state that tends to be involved only to attract and encourage investment (rather than regulate or oversee it). Liberalisation has also increased demand for foreign capital, trade and export, providing extra stimulation to expand oil palm production throughout Indonesia, and quickly.

The rapid and ongoing expansion of oil palm does not indicate that everybody agrees with the expanding oil palm industry. There are a range of environmental and social consequences of oil palm development in Indonesia (Colchester 2011; Colchester et al. 2006; Koh and Wilcove 2008; Li 2011; Marti 2008; McCarthy 2010; McCarthy and Cramb 2009; Milieudefensie et al. 2007; Sheil et al. 2009; Sirait 2009; Rist et al. 2010; Wicke et al. 2011; Wilcove and Koh 2010; World Bank and IFC 2011). But there is relatively little understood about the ways in which people and communities act on these grievances to contest oil palm expansion in Indonesia today (Potter 2008; Pye 2010). The following section will consider how recent political-economic changes have also changed the system of governance in Indonesia and if and how this may empower those populations who wish to resist the force of oil palm expansion today.

Reformasi and oil palm resistance in Indonesia

Though having only so far focused on how the economic reforms of the Reformasi period have empowered the private sector, it must be emphasized that post-Suharto reforms have also included governance reforms. Decentralisation laws in

particular were intended to bring the unit of governance closer to the people, thus promoting citizen empowerment and enhancing accountability and transparency (Ito 2011, Davidson 2009a). However, ten years on, the issue of how democratic decentralisation actually is is widely contested (Dasgupta and Beard 2007; Eilenberg 2009; Hadiz and Robison 2005; Ito 2011; McCarthy, 2004; among others). Particularly when looking at the oil palm sector, it appears that governance reforms tend to favour the interests of large private companies and locally-entrenched elites at the expense of local populations.

While the laws on regional autonomy have allowed local elites to make decisions on oil palm expansion and development that are ostensibly closer to the local environments and people it affects, the local communities themselves are still largely excluded from the decision-making process. As McCarthy (2010) points out, decentralisation reforms have allowed for the formal extension of forms of political accountability, but the lack of social change means that already powerful elite networks are further empowered (844). Critics have found that formal mechanisms provided by the state for increased decision-making power by local communities are either lacking or are not properly adhered to. Marti (2008) observes that in the immediate post-Suharto period rules were introduced to regulate community participation in land acquisition and plantation permitting processes and in plantation management. However, in contrast, legislation that followed tended to limit the ability of communities to object to plantations or meaningfully participate in making decisions. Also, while the permit process was meant to allow community consultation, in reality those consultations rarely take place in an appropriate manner, if at all. Similarly, Komarudin et al. (2008) finds there are “few mechanisms for meaningful input from communities” (1). Komarudin et al. also add that decision-making processes for land use planning are unclear which has led to disputes between local communities and private companies, and between district and central governments.

I would suggest that in its efforts to accomplish a particular type of economic reform, that is, facilitating the private sector in the growing oil palm industry, the state sacrifices its goals of political reform, that is, meaningful participation by local

communities in the development and operation of the sector. Where the oil palm sector is concerned then, the political-economic configuration that has emerged appears to prioritize neoliberalism at the expense of democratization. This highlights how Indonesia's economic and political reform goals, though introduced at roughly the same time, may not actually be compatible. When looking at the oil palm sector it seems that one of these policy trends (neoliberalism) gains priority over political reforms intended to allow local communities to make meaningful decisions about how and where oil palm is produced and for whom. The consequence of this specific political-economic configuration is that private capital seems to be far more empowered to make decisions than local communities.

While formal or institutional mechanisms to encourage citizen's involvement in decisions related to the oil palm industry are lacking, more informal ways of influencing decision-making have recently emerged in Indonesia. For all of its problems, Reformasi is generally credited for opening the way for a "dramatic resurgence of agrarian protest across Indonesia" (Lucas and Warren 2003, 87). It must be noted here that while the agrarian movement has exploded since the fall of the New Order, there is a precedent. Indeed through the 1950s and 60's, agrarian organisations like the Indonesian Peasants Front played a vital role in political processes. Even during the worst political suppression of the Suharto era, peasants risked torture, prison and human rights violations to protest despite the "very narrow political space" (Bachriadi 2009, 6). Despite severe political suppression during the Suharto era, the agrarian movement not only managed to re-mobilize but was a key factor in bringing down the New Order (Bachriadi 2009). That being said, the recent political reforms have transformed that narrow political space in a radical way, allowing for the proliferation of agrarian movements and actions.

There has been a surge in the number and variety of agrarian organisations and in the amount and types of contention over a growing number of agrarian issues. Due to Reformasi, agrarian groups "no longer had to work underground" (Peluso et al. 2008, 388). As a result, Danzer (2007) mentions the "proliferation of farmers' and peasants' organisations" (3), and Tuong (2009) the "birth of hundreds of

farmers unions" (181). The rise of these organisations has been accompanied by a range of new contentious actions, such as land occupations, blockades, the destruction of company assets, and street protests, among others (Lucas and Warren 2003, Peluso et al. 2008). Political reforms have provided the agrarian movement with unprecedented opportunities to debate, act on and at times even successfully impact decision-making on issues such as land rights and land reform, natural resources, agricultural taxation and trade policy, among others. The ability of the agrarian social movement to not only act but also to effect change in the Reformasi period is, according to Danzer (2007), evidence of the extent of political reform and, despite skeptics, sufficient reason to "re-evaluate the depth of democratic change in Indonesia" (26). Danzer finds that farmer associations are increasing in effectiveness and becoming drivers of agricultural policy, placing "enormous pressure on policymakers" (1). Also, Lucas and Warren (2003) find that in two of the most publicized popular actions over land and resource rights, there have been some "concrete results" (91), with peasants obtaining titles to land or compensation payments, though it must be said that for the vast majority of protesting farmers success is far from the norm.

The resurgence of informal or non-institutional politics by agrarian movements in general have opened up new ways for populations to express their discontent around oil palm and attempt to resist expansion. These new informal political spaces include the development of farmer's organisations and worker's unions, for example, as well as shorter-term contentious events, like street protests and occupations. Independent peasants, oil palm smallholders, plantations labourers, local NGOs and international advocacy organisations, among others, have been organizing to resist and contest both private companies and local political officials to prevent dispossession, or to demand better tenure arrangements, wages or benefits. Recent reforms have produced a situation which not only encourages oil palm expansion but also tends to shut disgruntled communities out of formal spaces of negotiation, thus often leading them to turn to new informal or non-institutional spaces of politics. Unsurprisingly, the incidence of overt conflict or protest has increased across Indonesia (Afrizal 2007; Casson 2000; Collins 2007; Marti 2008; McCarthy and Cramb 2009; Potter 2008; Pye 2010; Sirait 2009). As of

2008, an Indonesian non-governmental organisation was monitoring over 500 active conflicts between communities and oil palm companies, though the actual number of conflicts is thought to be double that (Marti 2008, 39). Even for people and communities with little to no political let alone protest experience, protest is increasingly seen as the last (or only) means of resisting oil palm expansion. Indonesia's governance reforms do not appear to provide the formal mechanisms for local populations to express contradictory views on oil palm expansion. But there is some evidence that agrarian social movements have been able to take advantage of institutional changes to gain access to decision-making processes. One of these ways is through direct participation in or lobbying the new formal political processes established by the state's decentralisation programme, such as local elections or local budgeting processes. Peluso et al. (2008) demonstrate how some agrarian groups have started to try to form coalitions with sympathetic parliament members in ways that were not possible during the New Order, and how one farmer's group in particular lobbied local governments and district parliaments to set up committees to resolve agrarian conflicts. Tuong (2009) credits decentralisation for providing farmer groups with the ability to influence politics through electing their own leaders to local offices. While there is no evidence of similar institutional openings around oil palm movements specifically, these examples suggest that there are potentially interesting combinations of typically 'informal' or non-institutional actors and organisations with 'formal' or institutional spaces.

Summary

The previous sub-sections have provided a brief introduction to the complex combination of factors, processes, organisations and individuals operating at every scale, from the global to the local, that leads to contested and dynamic configurations of oil palm expansion and resistance in Indonesia today. It is within this context that a number of women in Sambas made the decision to protest for the first time.

Research aims and questions

Having established the significant gaps around women and gender in the oil palm literature, this thesis aims to provide not just another case study with the Sambas protest but a new way - through the lens of gender - of understanding both oil palm expansion *and* resistance in Indonesia. The overarching research question is:

How do gender relations shape women's participation in protest in the context of oil palm plantation expansion in Sambas district, Indonesia?

To inform this main research question, this thesis will attempt to answer the following sub-questions:

a) *Are oil palm plantations expanding in Sambas district and how? (Chapter 4)*

b) *How do social relations produce, and are produced by, the current agrarian landscape in Sambas? (Chapter 5)*

c) *What are the gendered consequences of proposed oil palm plantation development in Sambas and how does this inform protest motivation? (Chapter 6)*

d) *How are political opportunities in Sambas gendered and with what consequence? (Chapter 7)*

e) *How do gender relations condition women's activities at a protest? (Chapter 8)*

f) *How do women and gender shape, and are shaped by, protest outcomes? (Chapter 8)*

Research design

To answer the research questions outlined above, I will use a combination of secondary literature and primary data. By investigating a range of secondary literature (specifically, the fields of agrarian political economy, feminist political ecology and contentious politics), I hope to position this study at the intersection of these various fields, acknowledging the contributions of each field as well as the gaps that warrant the research aims and questions of this study. Having established the analytical tools required to frame this research study, the thesis will go on to explore the primary data, which was obtained first-hand using qualitative research methods (focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, participant observation and secondary sources).

Though secondary literature helps to position this research, at the heart of this research study are the voices, opinions and experiences of 42 women who participated in the Sambas protest in 2008. Emphasizing the role of these women in their households, communities and in the protest as well as the gender relations that shape and are shaped by the women's participation at all of these levels, this study provides new analyses of who is impacted by oil palm expansion, who resists it and in what ways. It also considers the implications this has not only for the future of oil palm expansion and resistance, but on women's participation in protest, politics in general and on gender relations.

Thesis outline

Chapter 2 investigates three bodies of literature relevant to the research topic: agrarian political economy, feminist political ecology and contentious politics. Combined, these fields provide valuable theoretical and empirical insights to frame, position and inform the case study and analysis.

Chapter 3 describes the methodological and procedural considerations of collecting primary data to inform this research. It explains why the case study

method and the specific case were selected, then evaluates the multiple methods employed.

Chapter 4 introduces the case study location - Sambas district - and considers how oil palm expansion is likely to transform the current agrarian landscape across the district. It brings forward the case of the PT SAM plantation, investigating the characteristics of the affected sub-districts and communities and the circumstances that led to the 2008 protest.

Chapter 5 provides a detailed and nuanced account of the lives, livelihoods and environments of the women protesters in Sambas. It shows how prevalent differentiation is within communities and so how oil palm development would produce uneven consequences. The diverse sample of protesters also helps to shatter conventional images of protesters, showing how they may not only be women but further, protesters may be young women, old women, married women, single women, literate or not, educated or not, and rich or poor.

Chapter 6 explores the various motivations leading to the women's participation in the protest, demonstrating the breadth (environmental and social) and going beyond the anticipated material repercussions to consider more intangible matters like rights, control and power. It establishes that oil palm plantation development may result in disproportionate consequences for women, further exacerbating gender inequalities.

Chapter 7 establishes that gendered political opportunities in Sambas shaped women's participation in protest. Women protesters tend to be excluded or marginalized from formal political spaces, leading to their engagement with informal or non-institutional politics. While unique features of protest may diminish typical barriers to participation for women, the informal political sphere is also imbued with gender power relations. Thus, far from seeing political spaces as empowering in and of themselves, this chapter emphasizes the role of actors in opening up new political opportunities in the informal sphere for otherwise apolitical women.

Chapter 8 investigates how the women protesters actually participated in the Sambas protest (the protest dynamics) and considers the real and potential implications this has not just on the stated goals of the protest, but on the future of the protest tactic, on women's political participation and on existing gender relations in Sambas. While protest offered this group of women an unprecedented means of political participation and influence, the way in which they participate in protest tend to reproduce - rather than transform - the gender relations that exclude or marginalize women from formal politics.

Chapter 9 summarizes the contributions of the thesis and considers the broader implications of the research findings.

Chapter 2:
Dynamics of women, gender and protest in contemporary processes of rural dispossession

Introduction

The task of this thesis is to understand and explain how and why women and gender matter in oil palm expansion and resistance in Indonesia today. To begin to grapple with this matter, this chapter will explore the relevant theoretical and empirical contributions derived from the fields of agrarian political economy, feminist political ecology and contentious politics. Though each of these fields provide valuable insights to frame and inform this thesis, each also has gaps. By highlighting and combining relevant contributions from each of these fields, this review aims to provide the analytical tools and framework to explore the case study in Sambas and, as such, start to fill in these gaps in the literature.

Agrarian political economy

The field of agrarian political economy provides a range of tools for understanding how neoliberalism produces oil palm expansion and resistance in Indonesia, and Sambas, today. By ‘agrarian political economy,' I refer to a body of scholarly work that uses a historical materialist approach to understand rural transformation and its intersection with capitalism. One of the most influential scholars in this field, Henry Bernstein, identifies four key questions that summarize the agrarian political economy approach: Who owns what? Who does what? Who gets what? What do

they do with it? (Bernstein 2010). These four questions manage to encompass wide-ranging debates in the field on the social relations of different property regimes, divisions of labour, social divisions and distribution of income, and the social relations of consumption, reproduction and accumulation. Akram-Lodhi and Kay (2010a, 2010b) identify seven different (at times competing) approaches to understanding agrarian change today. Rather than attempt to resolve the competing approaches, they instead valorize the nuance, flexibility and diversity that has emerged in the field of agrarian political economy, and the 'analytical tools and analytical sensitivity' that this variety of approaches provide to understanding rural change.

Contemporary approaches in the field of agrarian political economy attempt to explain neoliberal globalization and, in particular, its impact on restructuring rural life and work across the globe. According to Akram-Lodhi and Kay (2010b), neoliberal agrarian restructuring has produced: the 'dramatic' expansion in agricultural exports (and food imports in some areas); changes in the balance of production for domestic use versus that for exchange; alteration of the land-, labour- and capital-intensity of production; expanded commodification of natural resources, including land, labour-power and genetic resources; concentrated profits; changed cropping patterns; among others. Contemporary rural change of this sort has led to crises with real material consequences for how people reproduce themselves on a daily and generational basis, such as the 2008 global food crisis which exposed the "systemic crisis in the countryside" (Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2010a, 178).

Of the many useful contributions of this body of literature to understanding agrarian change in the Sambas case study are insights related to dispossession.

Dispossession

Drawing inspiration from Marx, dispossession is most often understood as the separation of agrarian producers from one of the (if not the most) fundamental means of production - land - in order to facilitate 'primitive accumulation' (in Li

2010). In more contemporary literature, Harvey (2003) elaborates on Marx with his concept of ‘accumulation by dispossession,' showing how neoliberalism produces dispossession for the sake of capital accumulation. De Schutter (2011) shows how neoliberal policies have produced dispossession in two ways: first, structural adjustment and increasing liberalisation decimated small rural producers in the 1980s and 90s, then a rush for farmland driven by corporate interests and demands of the international market (including for large-scale plantations) have led to ‘land-grabbing’ in recent years (also see Borras Jr et al. 2010; White and Dasgupta 2010; Zagema 2011). Walker (2008) discusses how neoliberal policies have led to dispossession around the world.

Araghi (2009) also contributes to understandings of processes of dispossession today. Although processes of enclosure are not new, key elements of neoliberalism contribute to the contemporary occurrences of dispossession. These are: the deregulation of land markets; cuts in farming subsidies and price supports; the expanded use of agrarian biotechnologies and the expanded commodification of seeds and seed reproduction; a growing dependence on chemical, biological and hydrocarbon farm inputs; and the promotion of agro-exports and expanded cash crop production (133). Focusing on rural Asia, Li (2010) identifies three main ‘vectors’ of dispossession: by the state or state-supported corporations, by conservation projects, and by small-scale farmers unable to survive and keep their land once exposed to the vagaries of the ‘free market,' which she refers to as an ‘everyday’ form of dispossession (S71-72). Cotula et al. (2008) discuss how government and private companies ignore customary (and often unofficial or legally insecure) tenure systems, taking land away from smallholders to allocate it to agrofuel production (22). Also, White and Dasgupta 2010).

Some argue that processes of dispossession are a positive and necessary step towards economic progress and development. It allows peasants to escape from their poor and difficult agricultural or subsistence-based livelihoods, to enter into full employment in higher-paid sectors, typically in urban settings. While Araghi (2009) would agree that dispossession creates a “massive reserve army of migratory labour,” he challenges the assumption that the new army of labour have

higher-paid, if any, jobs to go to (134). Rather, neoliberal policies have produced 'depeasantization' at the same time as 'deproletarianization' (ibid). Li (2010) also challenges the 'transition narrative' that dispossession leads to a labour reserve. For the newly dispossessed, opportunities for work just are not present. As "their labour is surplus to capital's requirements," she argues, they cannot be "plausibly described as a labour reserve" (66). Li (2011) describes how the neoliberal combination of dispossession and job shortage have grave consequences for the rural poor, as do Borras Jr et al. (2007) who find that losing land is 'strongly' related to poverty and inequality (1. Also Borras Jr and Franco 2010a, 2010b; Walker 2008). Also, Arrighi et al. (2010) find that dispossession is "the source of major developmental handicaps for at least some and possibly many countries of the global South" (410).

In sum, the current neoliberal context is producing land dispossession around the world, with grave consequences for local populations. But rural populations are not accepting these infringements passively. McMichael (2008) discusses how peasant dispossession is a focal point of mobilization (also Harvey 2003; Walker 2008). Gerber (2010, 2011) shows how displacement (especially of smaller peasants) due to plantation expansion across the Global South has been simultaneously accompanied by resistance movements. Finally, Pye (2010) finds that the most 'active' opposition to oil palm plantations come from independent peasants fighting against dispossession (858. Also see Barney 2004).

Rural politics

Despite a dominant focus on how neoliberalism affects rural production and accumulation, agrarian political economy also gives attention to the way rural politics shapes and is shaped by production and accumulation (Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2010b). The study of rural politics unveils the "dynamic tensions that exist between prevailing structures of domination, subordination and surplus appropriation and the capacity of individuals and social classes to express agency in order to transform and transcend these structures" (ibid, 256). In their discussion, Akram-Lodhi and Kay (2009) include covert types of resistance, as

introduced by James Scott (1985), as well as more overt, collective forms of political action (also Turner and Caouette 2009).

Scott's emphasis on everyday forms of resistance has been valuable in conceptualizing agrarian struggles, however Walker (2008) argues that it has also had a negative impact, serving to recast peasants as "relatively disempowered agents whose struggles were mostly defensive adaptations to change" (463). Walker problematizes Scott's formulation by highlighting the global 'resurgence' of overt collective action by grassroots rural movements (463). Similarly, Wolford (2009) finds that the strength and importance of agrarian movements have grown in recent years. As these movements have grown, so has scholarly interest. A growing body of research investigates the conditions of movement formation, their organization, strategies and visions and the way they cross 'traditional' boundaries and scales. It also validates peasant movements by showing that they have the potential to challenge contemporary capitalist models of agriculture (Kroger 2011).

There is not the space to explore every case study of overt rural politics here. The key is to emphasize that the forces of neoliberal production and accumulation are not predetermined, but always in the process of being made and re-made through rural politics. This takes seriously Hart's (2004) suggestion to go beyond the 'impact model' of capitalism, that is, the overly simplistic understanding that, "inexorable forces of global capitalism bear down, albeit unevenly, on passive locals" (91). Though the rural poor are often some of society's weakest political actors, this body of research acknowledges that rural people do exercise political agency, even if only in certain ways, and their actions shape rural social relations today.

There are, however, serious analytical challenges for future research. Wolford (2009) identifies four key challenges to understanding contemporary rural mobilization: re-figuring traditional structural analyses; looking at why mobilization does not happen; accepting contradiction and non-linearity; and recognizing dynamism within movements. This last critique has particular resonance in terms of this thesis. Though the existing literature on rural politics tends to assign

movements with coherence, Wolford points out that actually they are comprised of a “complicated web of activists on the ground” (412). But everyday ‘movement participants’ are scarcely understood (only movement leaders) (also see Wolford 2004). Bernstein (2008) is also critical of how differentiation within rural social movements is treated:

> While differences within and between ‘farming populations’ – differences of North and South, of market conditions, of gender relations, and sometimes even class relations – are acknowledged, this tends to be gestural in the absence of any deeper theorization and more systematic empirical investigation of the conditions in which farming and agriculture are constituted by specific forms and dynamics of the capital-labour relation, and not least how they express, generate, reproduce and shape class differentiation. (2)

Bernstein encourages movements such as La Via Campesina and the Movimiento dos Trabhaldores Rurais Sem Terra in Brazil to consider their own internal class dynamics, consequences and effects (ibid, 8).

Bernstein’s focus on differentiation *within* rural movements and politics speaks to yet another debate within the study of agrarian political economy that is central to understanding the Sambas case study, which I will turn to next.

Differentiation

Scholars and activists invoke the ‘peasant’ as if it were a singular universal. The hardship of peasants may be used to argue the case for de-peasantization (via neoliberal policies) or, on the other side of the spectrum, the resilience of peasants is called upon to prove resistance to neoliberal agrarian restructuring with peasant ‘qualities’ (such as subsistence and small-scale agriculture) and re-peasantization proposed as alternatives. Various rural campaigns, of which international ‘peasant’ movement La Via Campesina is particularly notable, are trying to “re-appropriate the term ‘peasant’ and infuse it with new and positive content ... a celebration of peasants as sophisticated bearers of modern values and political projects” (Edelman 2003, 187).

Contemporary agrarian political economy aims to deconstruct the notion of a generic ‘peasant’ type (Bernstein and Byres 2001). With the rise of neoliberal agrarian restructuring, it has become increasingly clear that the ‘peasantry’ is not one thing. Rather, rural environments today are populated by everything from proto-capitalist farmers and petty commodity producers, to landless labourers and semi-proletariats. The transition to agrarian capitalism has not led to de-peasantization, at least not in any consistent or even way. There has instead been an increase in semi-proletarianisation without full proletarianisation, as well as in processes of de-peasantization, re-peasantization and petty commodity production. How these processes play out in any one place can be attributed to the “contingent and conjunctural complexity that arises out of a historically-embedded process of variable incorporation of rural economics and societies into capitalism operating on a world scale” (Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2010b, 279). Dauvergne and Neville (2010) investigate how the recent rise and spread of biofuel production produces differentiation not only among states but also within rural communities. To understand how and to whom the benefits and consequences of biofuels will accrue, it is vital to identify already existing unevenness within agrarian communities, for example, disaggregating between highly commercialised and predominantly subsistence-level households within a community (also Carr 2008). Shattering the illusion of a unitary ‘peasant’ helps analysis to be not only more representative of the current reality, but more sensitive to how recent changes, such as those proposed with biofuel expansion, may accelerate differentiation (Pye 2010).

It is not only changing class dynamics that produce differentiation in so-called ‘peasant’ societies. Class combines with other axes of social differentiation, for example, gender, race, ethnicity, religion and caste to further ‘fragment’ rural classes (Bernstein 2008, Carr 2008). However, much of agrarian political economy overlooks these other forms of differentiation. Considering the research aims of this thesis, the following section will establish how one of these axes - gender - matters in processes of agrarian change and requires further attention.

Women and gender

Gender has been insufficiently considered within the field of agrarian political economy. Razavi (2009) notes, “political-economists of agrarian change must be faulted for ignoring it [gender relations]” (198) and O’Laughlin (2009) finds that, “historically, gender relations have received short shrift in Marxist discussions of rural property rights” (191). Akram-Lodhi and Kay (2010b) argue that the field’s failure to address the gender dimensions of rural production, accumulation and politics results in flawed accounts of social change in rural settings (268). This is not to undermine the considerable gender-related contributions that have been made though. Bernstein and Byres (2001) discuss the “powerful impact” that feminist analysis has already had, challenging the procedures and content of agrarian political economy and ‘illuminating’ debates on, “household forms, agrarian labour processes, technical change, rural labour markets, patterns of migration and demography ... processes of class differentiation in the countryside and rural politics” (37).

The failure of agrarian political economy to acknowledge gender is not unique. In a recent discussion paper by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the authors note that agriculture research has “lagged” in explicitly addressing gender issues to boost development and address poverty (Meinzen-Dick et al. 2010, 1). They state, “in many instances, the roles women play in farming and production are not formally recognized” (ibid, 2). The paradox is that women have a critical role in agriculture, yet are under-recognized and face greater constraints than men (ibid, 2). Women tend to own fewer assets, especially critical assets like land, earn less than men in terms of rural wages, have fewer opportunities for employment, particularly rewarding employment, and less decision-making power (FAO et al. 2010; IFAD 2010). The lack of emphasis on both gender and women in agrarian change is problematic, not only because it is inaccurate but also because gendered analyses may help to improve material conditions (Quisumbing et al. 2011).

According to O'Laughlin (2009), gender is "clearly implicated" in matters of rural production, accumulation and politics (191). Gender inequalities mean that women are disproportionately impacted by neoliberal restructuring[6]. A recent report by FAO et al. (2010) states: "the costs of economic and financial liberalization are often borne disproportionately by the poor, and particularly by vulnerable women" (2). While neoliberal restructuring has led to some advances for rural women and gender relations, there have also been significant drawbacks. For example, Barrientos et al. (1999) find that agribusiness can present a new opportunity for rural women to earn wages and the "freedom to move beyond the domestic sphere and traditional agriculture" (131). However, they also observe that women have very few meaningful opportunities for advancement and their work is seasonal and insecure, as well as "arduous, repetitive and poorly paid ... [women] have the burden of the double day and extremely long working hours" (132). Pande (2000) and Razavi (2009) also note that liberalisation has had benefits, particularly for certain groups of women, but has disadvantaged "much larger numbers of women" (Razavi 2009, 209).

Gendered consequences of contemporary processes of agrarian change not only impact the women involved, but have wide societal consequences. Gender-specific constraints that limit rural women's capacities to produce affects the food needs of future populations (Meinzen-Dick et al. 2010). It also affects more localized food intake patterns. Gender inequalities at the household level are "highly correlated" with child malnutrition (IFAD 2010, 50). As such, some insist on recognizing and supporting the "differential needs, preferences and constraints of female farmers" (Meinzen-Dick et al. 2010, 6) not only in the interests of justice or the women themselves, but also for the wider societal benefits. Meinzen-Dick et al. argue that an explicit focus on gender in agricultural research will improve agricultural productivity and profitability, increase agricultural sustainability, improve food security and reduce poverty. FAO also emphasize the importance of gender equality for sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction in rural environments (FAO 2010 et al., x).

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[6] For a more detailed analysis of the link between neoliberal policies, agrarian change and gender, see Razavi (2003).

This brief summary shows how integral women and gender are to agriculture and agrarian social relations, despite being largely overlooked. Contemporary neoliberal processes of agrarian change interact with gender power relations to produce and even worsen rural women's constraints and vulnerabilities[7]. I have not had the space to consider all the impacts here, for example the consequences of agrarian change on women's migration or health. Instead I will focus on the dimension most relevant to this thesis and in which women and gender are particularly affected: land and dispossession.

Women, gender and dispossession

According to Razavi (2009), the interconnections between gender power relations and land tenure systems has been a 'major' preoccupation of feminist analyses of agrarian change (211). The majority of these analyses has revolved around land reform processes, or how to go about *gaining* land possession for women (tenure security for the landed and / or land for the landless or land-poor) (Borras Jr et al. 2007; Borras Jr and Franco 2010a; Casolo 2009; Razavi 2003, 2007, 2009; Wolford 2007). But there is almost no analysis dedicated to how *losing* possession - processes of dispossession - impacts on women and gender[8].

O'Laughlin argues that a sole focus on land reform is insufficient at addressing rural women's poverty and disempowerment. This is because women's poverty is produced by larger structural problems of accumulation, class relations and politics. Not only do contemporary approaches to land reform (specifically Market-Led Agrarian Reform) not confront these structural problems, critics argue that they themselves are a product of, and contribute to, the neoliberal processes of commodification and privatization of land that produce and re-produce such poverty and inequality (Wolford 2007). Formal titling may, in fact, "erode the kinds

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[7] While I emphasize the role of gender relations here, I acknowledge that gender does not operate on its own but intersects with multiple forms of power to produce different vulnerabilities between and among groups, including among rural women (Carr 2008).

[8] Borras Jr and Franco (2010a) provide a helpful typology of land policies, distinguishing between 'redistribution' and 'distribution' (which lead to repossession of land) and 'non-(re)distribution' and '(re)concentration' (which involve processes of dispossession).

of informal rights that women have to land through residence and their work," thus contributing to dispossession (O'Laughlin, 209). Razavi (2003) also notes that land reform can be the mechanism used to open up customary systems of land management to foreign commercial interests (4).

While almost all the literature debates the impact of neoliberal land policies on land repossession, this thesis emphasizes that these policies are not the only mechanism contributing to the changing relationship between women, gender and land. There are also gender-specific impacts of land enclosure and dispossession, as touched on by O'Laughlin (above) which are not adequately discussed in this body of literature. Nor have women and gender been a concern of the general research on dispossession introduced earlier. Only very recently have the gender-impacts of contemporary processes of dispossession been acknowledged[9]. Behrman et al. (2011) state: "throughout the literature on the scale and effect of this new wave of large-scale land deals there has been little discussion of the differential effect that land deals will have on rural men and women" (1). The authors argue that a gender perspective is 'critical' because women, due to their pre-existing marginal positions, will almost certainly be differentially (and detrimentally) affected by large-scale land transfers, in terms of household dynamics and roles, income-generation activities and property rights. Considering the key role that women have in improving agricultural productivity and food security, land grabs threaten to reduce the welfare not only of women but of their families and communities (even if there are income gains to men). Thus an attention to gender is "central to poverty reduction" (ibid, 2). In terms of biofuel production, FAO (2008a) has also recently suggested that female farmers may be at a "distinct disadvantage" due to existing disparities (85).

There is some evidence of a consideration for gender in accounts of land dispossession, though often it is a nod to women or gender rather than a dedicated analysis. For example, Gerber and Veuthey (2010) mention how women

[9] While analyses of the gendered impacts of contemporary land transfers due to neoliberalism are almost non-existent, there is a body of literature that has considered the gendered impacts of dispossession and commercialization in colonial times (for example, Chatterjee 2001, Stoler 1989, 1995). Unfortunately, though, Behrman et al. (2011) find this latter literature is 'not reflected' in current debates (1).

are often less likely to sell their land to large-scale industrial plantations than men because they are less likely to become wage labourers and have more responsibility for feeding the family (466). However these gender dynamics are not explored further (Barney 2004; Gerber 2010; Marti 2008; White and Dasgupta 2010). Julia and White (2011) provide a rare account of the gender disaggregated impacts of dispossession leading to an oil palm plantation in Indonesia. They found that with the establishment of the plantation, women's land access and rights were eroded, they were excluded from fixed jobs and tended instead to work casual, dangerous and/or illegal jobs (including a rise in prostitution), and women suffered most from a loss in biodiversity. Sargeson (2008) gives another dedicated analyses of gender and dispossession, examining how China's latest enclosure movement affects women's property rights. Despite one planning researcher predicting that dispossession "offers an historic opportunity to realize rural women's 'fundamental emancipation'" (quoted by Sargeson, 641), Sargeson instead reveals how, "women's rights in a wide range of assets have been eroded" (642). Following dispossession, women tend to be excluded from receiving compensation and constrained in urban economic opportunities, as compared to other household members (661).

Like Julia and White, Sargeson's discussion of the gender-specific impacts of dispossession is very useful to this thesis. But Sargeson provides another key contribution by also emphasizing women's agency and potential to effect change. Despite their disadvantaged positions, she shows how women in China are defending and fighting for entitlements at a variety of scales, from government to household. These actions have allowed some women to "achieve stronger rights to more types of property" (661). More significantly, the cumulative effect of women's actions have contributed to larger changes in gender relations as well as the property institutions embedded in these relations (661). Sargeson's insights on women's agency help to contradict both feminist property theorists, who believe that land or property is a precondition for enhancing women's agency, as well as those who, by emphasizing women's agency in already-gendered property institutions, "accommodate a view of women as passive victims, manipulative supplicants or, at best, clients of already-existing institutions, rather than as

constructive agents of institutional change" (645). Apart from this helpful account by Sargeson, case studies of women and gender in struggles specifically related to contemporary forces of dispossession are non-existent.

Women, gender and rural politics

As established, women and gender are overlooked in research deriving not only from agrarian political economy, but also agrarian literature in general. Within this research, there is an almost exclusive focus on 'impact' - the multiple ways women are disproportionately impacted by existing or changing agrarian relations and processes. Sometimes at the end of a paper or a report, women's exclusion from decision-making processes at all levels is identified as a key contributor to their marginal positions and/or as a target for future research (Behrman et al. 2011; Whitehead and Tsikata in Razavi 2003; Tandon 2009). In most accounts, then, rural women are portrayed as passive victims of changing landscapes rather than political agents shaping those landscapes. While gender-specific obstacles may make it more difficult for women to participate in rural politics, or at least in certain types of political spaces, rural women do engage. There is a small body of literature that attempts to capture this.

Razavi (2003) finds that women are often "visibly present" in social movements and protest related to agrarian change (217). Currently much of the literature on women and rural politics focuses on women's movements and gender-specific issues, though some studies do mention women who participate in mixed-gender protests, whether in supporting their husbands (Walker 2009), directly participating (Afiff et al. 2005; Agarwal 1994; Komarudin et al. 2008; Wright and Wolford 2003) or even leading (Barcellos and Ferreira 2008). For example, Agarwal (1994) and Wright and Wolford (2003) recount women's militancy in various rural conflicts. In West Java, Indonesia, Afiff et al. note how rural women threw rocks and used machetes "just as the men did" (20), but also how they used their positionality to protect the men and hide them from the police. In a separate province in Indonesia, Komarudin et al. showed how rural women stood in front of their community to protest oncoming bulldozers. When standing their ground and

yelling was insufficient, they took off their shirts, embarrassing the policemen and successfully leading to intervention that helped them to protect their houses and land. Even in these accounts, women's activism is briefly mentioned rather than thoroughly explored.

Some case studies discuss the obstacles to women's full participation in mixed-gender resistance. One of the most researched contemporary rural movements is the MST in Brazil. Wright and Wolford (2003) discuss the prevalence of sexism and machismo in the MST, with only a handful of women in leadership positions. Rubin and Sokoloff-Rubin (2009) show how activist women within the MST are forced to consider their domestic responsibilities first: "it's all fine and good if a woman wants to participate, but she'd better leave everything perfectly arranged at home" (452). Both Deere (2003) and Caldeira (2009) find that women's issues and land rights are ignored by the movement, even seen as incompatible to its class-specific aims. As a consequence women join outside women's organizations to fight for equal rights. This emerging body of literature on the MST demonstrates how gender inequalities have consequences for how rural women participate and benefit from grassroots movement. In her review of the literature, Razavi (2003) also highlights how women's involvement in rural politics does not guarantee that gender interests will be furthered (also Agarwal 1994).

That said, some rural or agrarian movements do consider gender in their internal functioning. Take the international peasant group La Via Campesina. Initial research by Desmarais (2003, 2008) pointed to highly unequal participation by women in the movement, resulting in less attention given to the gender dimensions of land tenure. However, recently, the movement has attempted to encourage equal representation among men and women (Martinez-Torres and Rosset 2010) and to give attention to gender-specific concerns and women's rights (Massicotte 2009). Both Massicotte and Barcellos and Ferreira (2008) show how, under the banner of La Via Campesina, rural women in Brazil have taken a particularly active role in direct action, leading and organizing protests that include destroying eucalyptus plantations. Apart from La Via Campesina, FAO et al. (2010) briefly mention the National Union of Plantation and Agricultural Workers in

Uganda which has 15,000 women members. Over time, this union has worked to advance women's rights due to women's 'full' integration in management and decision-making (58). Finally, drawing from a historical example, Agarwal (1994) describes how in the Bodhgaya struggle in India in 1978, women increasingly became involved in the decision-making process of the movement. This led to gender concerns such as domestic violence, female education and others being incorporated into the aims of the movement.

Clearly rural women do participate in politics and the ways in which they do so shape, and are shaped by, gender relations. Yet their political presence, role and influence is often overlooked in the literature, allowing existing conceptions of women as victims of agrarian change - rather than agents - to persist. Conceiving of women as victims rather than actors may continue because it is politically convenient for mainstream (formal) political actors as well as grassroots movements who do not want their positions or visions challenged. Even in the most ostensibly progressive rural movements, women's involvement threaten to present an undesirable questioning of internal gender relations. Apart from political motivations, the lack of appropriate theoretical tools may hinder understandings of women, gender and rural politics. Mainstream literature, in particular, tends to focus on women's lack of participation in rural politics due to their exclusion from formal positions of power or decision-making. While women's invisibility in these spaces is certainly problematic, analyses must go beyond formal politics to investigate other forms of rural politics, in particular informal and non-institutional spaces such as protests and social movements, to grasp the range of ways women may influence political decision-making and shape agrarian landscapes (Hart 1991).

Even within research that takes alternative political spaces seriously, women's participation may be overlooked due to the methodological problem pointed out earlier by Wolford (2009). Wolford critiques rural social movement research for almost exclusively conceptualizing movements via (mostly male) movement leaders, rather than in the experiences of everyday members or 'movement participants'. I argue that doing so may allow for deeper understandings for how

women participate in rural politics, particularly in mixed-gender rural social movements which this thesis focuses on.

Contributions to thesis and gaps

The field of agrarian political economy provides a range of tools for understanding the Sambas case study at the heart of this thesis. In particular, it has shown how neoliberal agrarian restructuring can lead to dispossession, and how this is often accompanied by resistance movements and rural politics. The insights elaborated above help to inform the way this thesis conceptualizes oil palm expansion in Sambas (chapter 4), existing rural social relations in Sambas (chapter 5), the various consequences of oil palm development (chapter 6), and how this leads of oil palm resistance in Sambas (chapters 6-7).

While contributions in the field of agrarian political economy are helpful in explaining how neoliberalism produces class differentiation in rural environments, it is less useful in explaining if and how gender relations produce differential impacts for women, particularly in the face of plantation expansion and dispossession. It also fails to provide thorough analysis of women's participation in rural politics. As such, this review turns to a separate though related body of research on gender and environment, particularly contributions emerging from 'feminist political ecology'[10]. Work in this field addresses the gaps identified above by addressing the gendered dimensions of neoliberal processes such as privatization and commodification, that is, "how gendered power dynamics, and in particular women's everyday lives, are directly and indirectly affected by capitalist productions of nature" (Hawkins and Ojeda 2011, 238). This and other research within the field of FPE thus goes some way to illuminating the complexities of understanding women and gender in the context of socio-natural change in Indonesia.

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[10] Research contributing to the sub-field of 'feminist political ecology' is not always obvious. As Elmhirst (2011a) points out, there is a considerable literature deriving from a range of disciplines which focus on the substantive issues of FPE (such as gendered resource access, property rights and politics, among others) but they rarely carry the FPE label (130). For the sake of this literature review, I will concentrate on FPE contributions as discussed in Hawkins and Ojeda (2011), Moeckli and Braun (2001), Nightingale (2006), and Rocheleau et al. (1996).

Feminist political ecology

In general, feminist political ecology (FPE) studies how gender "structures access to particular types of knowledge, space, resources and socio-political processes" (Nightingale 2006, 169). This is not to say that the sub-field of FPE can be defined in a unitary or static way. Actually, since it was first labelled as such in 1996 (Rocheleau et al. 1996), shifts in theoretical approaches to gender and the material ways in which gender is being reworked have challenged FPE to engage with new debates (Elmhirst 2011; Nightingale 2006; Sundberg 2004; Hawkins and Ojeda 2011). Elmhirst (2011) refers to 'new' feminist political ecologies, to emphasize the changing sub-field of FPE and to appreciate the "permeable boundaries of an open-ended *feminist* political ecology" [emphasis in original] (131). As such, while this overview focuses mainly on feminist political ecology, I also try to engage with ecofeminist, feminist environmentalist and poststructural feminist approaches, recognizing how they interact and inform each other in complex 'cross-braiding' ways (Moeckli and Braun 2001, 114). When combined, these approaches provide the "theoretical and political flexibility" (ibid, 128) to conceptualize gender-environment relations for the purpose of this thesis.

One central assertion of feminist political ecology is that environments and social relations are historically-materially-geographically *produced* and are thus *contingent*. Feminist political ecology draws this insight from feminist environmentalism, an academic strand pioneered by Bina Agarwal's (1992) investigation of agrarian transition in the Himalayas, which found that a broad set of economic, cultural, political and technological relations produced a historically-specific resource scarcity (of village commons and forest) which had a gendered effect, on women's time, labour, health, social support networks and knowledge. Agarwal's emphasis on historical-material factors countered earlier work by ecofeminists which established women's 'inherent' or 'biological' relationship with the land or nature and argued that both women and nature were linked in their oppression by modern patriarchal society (especially Western science and development policies). For example, Vandana Shiva's (1988) book on the Chipko movement in northern India attempted to prove how women's natural or special

connection to the land provided them with privileged roles in saving their environment from commercial logging. Agarwal criticizes Shiva's romanticization of precolonial India, showing how in doing so Shiva obscured "historical and local forces of power, privilege and property rights that intermingle with outside (Western) interventions in the colonial and postcolonial periods" (as cited in Moeckli and Braun 2001, 119).

Questioning essentialist conceptualizations of women advanced by Shiva and other ecofeminists is a key feature of feminist political ecology[11]. One of the main concerns of using these essentialisms to valorize the role of women is that it could have the opposite effect and prove disempowering. As Moeckli and Braun (2001) state, it "may inadvertently give support to the same biological determinist arguments that have historically been used within patriarchal societies to *justify* women's oppression" (116). Another concern with essentialist perspectives of women is that they do not adequately acknowledge the diversity and differentiation within women. As noted earlier, gender intersects with other systems of power like race to produce a range of different identities. As such, it is impossible to assume, as ecofeminists do, that women everywhere can share any similar attributes at all, let alone "the same kind of sympathies and understandings of environmental change as a consequence of their close connection to nature" (Nightingale 2006, 167). Maybe worse yet is ecofeminist accounts that may acknowledge divisions within women worldwide but encourage essentialist understandings of one broad type of woman. For example, Mohanty (1991) critiques the 'romanticized' image of the Third World woman who has come to be seen as inherently closer to nature than that of the Western Woman (as cited in Moeckli and Braun 2001, 121).

These insights are particularly important to remember when analyzing the agrarian context. As described previously, processes of agrarian change have contributed to differentiation in the countryside. Just as we cannot essentialize 'peasants', neither can we essentialize 'women peasants' or 'Third World women farmers', assuming they have fundamentally shared needs or interests (Carr 2008). In

[11] It must be noted that not all ecofeminists can be accused of such a strong biological or essentialist position. See, for example, the difference between cultural and socialist ecofeminism (Moeckli and Braun 2001, 116).

agrarian environments today, women may be subsistence farmers, semi-proletarians, petty commodity producers, rural labour, or capitalist or proto-capitalists. They may be at the head of a female household or embedded in a male-headed household[12], and may be in a patrilineal or matrilineal society. They may own land, access other people's land or not have any land at all. They associate with varying racial, ethnic or caste identities. These factors and more interact with a range of agrarian histories, policies and legal configurations, for example, to contribute to differentiation among rural women, whether within the so-called Third World or a specific country, or even within a community or a village. These various dimensions must be taken into account when considering the impact of historically-specific processes of agrarian change on women and gender in specific places.

In short, Agarwal and feminist political ecologists have emphasized the historical-material practices that produce women's specific relations to 'nature' and agrarian processes. They have done this largely by contributing empirical case studies that explore the material conditions which produce relations which place extra burden on women. This method differs significantly from ecofeminists who tended to rely more on ideology, demonstrated again by Shiva's work which used ancient religious beliefs and stories to suggest women's link with the environment (Moeckli and Braun 2001, 118; Nightingale 2006, 167). Moeckli and Braun (2001) distinguish ecofeminism's privileging of meaning and ideology from feminist environmentalist and feminist political ecology's focus on material conditions (125). This is a broad characterization of both of these approaches, but it is useful in showing how meaning and materiality have tended to exist separately in analyses of women, gender and nature (and agrarian change). Poststructural feminists critique this tendency, calling instead for a recognition of how meaning and materiality are mutually constituted. Moeckli and Braun (2001) summarize this approach by writers like Donna Haraway:

[12] Razavi (2009) cautions against constructing a binary categorisation of female and male-headed households because of the distinct social processes that contributed to them and needs to be considered (for example, migration, widowhood, divorce, having children outside marriage) (209).

> Material and discursive struggles are always implicated in each other, such that environmental struggles are never simply about 'nature' or about 'meanings', but about how the material world is rendered legible in and through ideas and concepts (and these are themselves constructed within particular historical and material conditions). (125)

The critique of feminist political ecology's overly materialist focus has been acknowledged and taken on board by later versions of feminist political ecology. For example, Nightingale's (2006) study of community forestry in Nepal focuses on "how gender and environment are mutually constituted. This requires an engagement with the relationships between development projects, subjectivities, and (re)productive activities, as well as material transformations of ecosystems" (170. Also see discussion in Hawkins and Ojeda 2011). Providing this kind of analysis is difficult. Critics of poststructuralism argue that despite its calls to acknowledge historical-material conditions as well, it focuses "almost entirely on questions of representation (how meanings are produced)" (Moeckli and Braun 2001, 127). That said, it points out how both ideas and material conditions matter.

Nightingale also considers how, in the process of their co-constitution, both material conditions and ideas can change and be changed. Just as agrarian environments are not static, but constantly being produced, so are gender roles, as well as the very concept of gender. In this analysis, Nightingale takes seriously poststructural conceptions of gender "as a process by which subjectivities are produced and shift over time and space" (165). Nightingale cites earlier work by feminist political ecologists which examine how gender roles and social relations are reconfigured. However, she finds they fall short of examining "not only how gender *roles* change, but also how gender as a socially constructed concept is reinscribed by struggles over resources" (170). Nightingale's contribution is in showing how social relations of power like gender are destabilized and reproduced (in relation to and with material consequences), which must be considered by any study aiming to address gender.

Feminist political ecology also emphasizes how gender-environment relations are not only historically and materially, but also geographically, produced. It provides the tools to consider how space, place and time produce, and are produced by,

gender identities and relations with the environment. Sundberg (2004) emphasizes how identities are "*brought into being* and *enacted* in time and place" [emphasis in original] (44). In his brief review of the contributions of feminist political ecology, Neumann (2005) states: "often gendered rights and responsibilities have a strong spatial dimension, such as the case where women and men are involved in different kinds of productive activities on different kinds of land with different agro-ecological potential" (110). These analyses draw from the work of feminist geographers like Massey (1994), who examines how and why capitalism occurs differently in different places and with what consequences for both space and gender relations (Nightingale 2006, 171). Nightingale further emphasizes the specificity of place in defining identity and gender relations.

Another key feature of feminist political ecology is its consideration of scale, or a recognition and insistence that multiple levels, from the international to the local, household and the body, produce gender-environment relations. Acknowledging scale has long been a defining contribution of political ecology. However, according to a critique by Nightingale (2006), the larger literature on political ecology tends to treat gender as 'primarily relevant' only within households and communities (169). In contrast, feminist political ecology attempts to demonstrate how women's relationship with the environment is important at a "variety of scales" (ibid), and to stress the interconnections between the entire range (Elmhirst 2011a). In earlier FPE-related case studies, Carney (1993) and Schroeder (1997) demonstrate how changes at the international level transform local gender identities and relations, relationships with the environment, and the environments themselves. More recently, Hawkins and Ojeda (2011) write, "*gender matters all the way through*" [emphasis in original] (243), from the scale of the body, household and community through to the region, nation and the globe. Due to the multi-scalar processes at work in gender and environment issues, providing multi-scalar analysis is a necessary and complex undertaking. It requires an understanding of "land tenure systems, legal structures, international NGOs, state agencies, development discourses, and cultural norms and ideologies" (Moeckli and Braun 2001, 123), among other things, and how this "complex nexus of actors and institutions" (ibid) changes, combines, informs and

challenges one another to produce gender-environment relations that are always changing.

A significant theme of the gender and environment literature is a recognition of 'gendered knowledge,' that is, "the ways in which access to scientific and ecological knowledge is structured by gender" (Nightingale 2006, 168). Ecofeminists first stressed the existence and importance of women's special understandings of the environment and, in contrast, the "professionalized, fragmented nature of Western scientific knowledge and methodologies" (Moeckli and Braun 2001, 123). Differing slightly, feminist political ecologists focus on the historical-material-geographical factors that facilitate men's and women's differential knowledge of the environment. While men tend to have more privileged access to 'science' via formal education and training opportunities, women tend to gain knowledge through their experience due to their performance of their roles and responsibilities, produced by changing gender relations (Nightingale 2006, 168). Despite the varying explanations for how women gain environmental knowledge, both ecofeminists and feminist political ecologists valorize women's situated knowledges, which had previously been ignored or not taken seriously, particularly in comparison with 'science.'

Finally, and most appropriately for the aim of this thesis, feminist political ecology looks at the gendered dimensions of activism in processes of environmental change. As I have attempted to demonstrate thus far, within this theoretical approach everything from material environments and bodies to gender roles and meanings of gender themselves are open to struggle and change. This means that to a greater or lesser extent all of these things are in the process of transforming and being transformed. Because power relations are produced and re-produced, no one thing in the complex pattern of factors that is producing gender-environment relations can be said to be fixed, pre-determined or omnipotent. As Moeckli and Braun summarize, "people (men and women) *struggle* over issues of environmental health and economic well-being, as well as over who has the authority to define how this will occur. This is not determined in advance either by ideology or economic conditions" (123). While movements may ostensibly be

about struggles for additional land or the improvement of various other material conditions, movements are also always about struggles over meaning. Moeckli and Braun note how the study of women's collective activism has led to a consideration for "how 'gender' itself is being reconfigured in these struggles" (ibid). While feminist political ecology ostensibly values gendered environmental politics and grassroots activism, few case studies actually present dedicated analysis of the role of women and gender in social movements which would help to inform this thesis.

Campbell's (1996) investigation of women's changing participation in the rubber tappers' movement in Brazil is an exception. Campbell highlights the 'important and varied,' though largely invisible, roles of women in the male-dominated movement. She explores if and how women participate in the *empates* (forest demonstrations) and union activities which comprise the movement, finding that the nature of women's participation has changed over time. In early demonstrations, only 'exceptional' women took part, women who broke the 'traditional' social relations which tended to exclude women from the public sphere. Women began to take more active roles in these demonstrations, going beyond merely increasing numbers to forming a "visible and crucial front line" to defuse the potential for violence (41). In later years, women further shed typical stereotypes of participation by taking on more powerful roles in decision-making, though continued to be employed as "pacific symbols" (ibid). Women's increasingly active and valued role in these demonstrations, however, contrasted with their minimal or passive participation in union meetings. Unions were seen as a social and political space for men, with women's participation 'muted' or reduced to reproducing traditional roles (i.e. supporting their husbands' participation or cooking the food). Over time though, a few dynamic women gained leadership positions and helped to expand women's space in the union, including successfully pushing for a women's secretariat in the union structure. Despite advances for women in certain spaces, Campbell maintains the significant challenges to women's participation:

> While some women have been able to strengthen their roles to a certain degree, most have remained, literally, in the kitchen during the union meetings. Many women have gone to the front at the *empates* when asked, but went back to the kitchen during the negotiations following these dramatic confrontations. (46)

She also discusses how victories in the public sphere were not always accompanied by victories in the domestic sphere, and how husbands controlled their wives' participation, sometimes resulting in violence.

This detailed account of women rubber tappers' struggles to not only defend their forest from police and ranchers, but also to fight for their place within the movement, provides several insights that help frame this thesis. Among others, she encourages consideration for: the multiple obstacles to movement participation for women; the different ways in which women participate; the outcomes for the movement as well as women's future participation; the gender relations that produce and are produced by movement participation; and finally, who challenges these relations to open or close down women's participation and how[13].

Contributions to thesis and gaps

In this section I have attempted to show how research emerging from the loosely defined field of feminist political ecology offers important ways to frame and understand the complex relationship between women, gender and struggle in the context of oil palm expansion in Indonesia. While the focus has largely been on feminist political ecology, I have also incorporated ecofeminist, feminist environmentalist and poststructural feminist approaches to provide a set of analytical tools with which to analyze the Sambas case study. The insights elaborated above help to inform the way this thesis makes sense of gendered agrarian landscapes in Sambas (chapter 5), the gendered consequences of oil palm expansion in Sambas (chapter 6), how gender relations produce different

[13] Campbell provides an interesting comparison of the different tactics employed by different generations of women to increase consideration for women and gender within the movement, with older women tending to open doors by acting like men and younger women mobilizing from their current positions as women to address specific women's issues (46-47).

forms of participation in public and/or political spaces (chapter 7), the role of actors in opening up or closing down participation (chapter 7), and how women and gender shape and are shaped by environmental struggles (chapter 8).

The contributions reviewed in this section are critical to understanding the changing lives and environments in Sambas today. However, as discussed above, it provides insufficient studies and frameworks for understanding the role of women and gender in social movements (with the exception of Campbell 1996)[14]. As with agrarian political economy, feminist political ecology does not quite go far enough in excavating the dynamics of women and gender in protest. To address this gap, I turn to the study of contentious politics, in particular more recent contributions on women, gender and contentious politics, as it offers conceptual tools to shed light on the research aims of this thesis. By acknowledging women's participation in protest and investigating how gender relations shape, and are shaped by, women's participation at every stage of protest, this field will help to further illuminate the experiences of women, gender and protest in Sambas.

Contentious politics

The field of contentious politics attempts to synthesize research on social movements and collective action deriving from increasingly 'insular' disciplines such as sociology, history, political science and economics (and more recently, geography[15]) (McAdam et al. 1996). Contentious politics encompasses the range of actions employed to contest for social change, which includes (to varying extents): some type of non-institutional form(s)[16]; interactions with the state; and a recognition of conflicting interests. As McAdam et al. (1996) explain, "not all politics entails contention. Contention begins when people collectively make

[14] Campbell is not the only contribution in FPE to investigate the gendered dynamics of environmental struggles (see Asher 2007 for example) but provides the only case directly related to the research aims elaborated in Chapter 1.

[15] The discipline of geography is relatively new to the study of contentious politics, with Miller (2000, 2001) first introducing geograhical concerns to existing understandings of social movements. Up to that point, social movement literature tended to conceive of social movements "as developing on the head of a pin" (Nicholls 2007, 610).

[16] Watts (2000) emphasizes consideration for a politics outside formal democratic structures, understanding that "politics can assume a panopoly of forms in numerous arenas" (208).

claims on other people, claims which if realized would affect those others' interests" (17). In their attempt to map contentious politics, McAdam et al. include claims that, "run from humble supplications to brutal attacks, passing through petitions, chanted demands, and revolutionary manifestos" (17). This thesis is primarily concerned with the dynamics of protest (particularly demonstrations), though a wide range of contentious manifestations will be discussed in this review.

Women, gender and contentious politics

West and Blumberg (1990) note a stark absence of women in almost all academic works on social protest: "interested readers are hard-pressed to find the *mention* of women, let alone comparative analysis of men and women's roles, attitudes and feelings as social protestors" (7). A few years on, Taylor and Whittier (1998, 1999) again highlight how mainstream research on social movements has largely neglected questions of gender.

This is not because protests are free of women or of gender concerns. Women have had a long history with extra-parliamentary politics: "women have played important and visible roles in the great social revolutions ... in Third World liberation and revolutionary movements ... and in all manner of social movements" (Moghadam 2010, 280. Also Rowbotham 2001). In terms of gender, Einwohner et al. (2000) insist that social movements are gendered on all levels - individual, interactional and structural:

> Gender is more than simply a characteristic of individual movement participants. Instead, movements, their activities, and the arenas in which they operate are all gendered ... Elements of culturally specific ideas about gender shape and are reflected in all social movements, including those movements that are not explicitly about reinforcing or challenging gender arrangements. (694)

Yet, the role of gender has been obscured, in both social movement processes and social movement theory (Taylor 1998).

Taylor (1999) blames the "gender-neutral discourse that characterizes prevailing theories of social movements" (9). West and Blumberg (1990) also find that that gender-neutral terms (i.e. 'demonstrators,' 'dissidents,' 'leaders') mask who is

involved and how. The danger, they believe, is it “implicitly reinforces dominant notions that men are playing these roles ... men are assumed to be leaders and organizers in the public sphere, while women who enter it are viewed as their supporters” (7). Similarly, McAdam (1992) discusses the pitfalls of not taking gender seriously. He states, “we have almost totally ignored gender’s impact. In doing so we have perpetuated a fiction: that recruitment to, participation in, and the consequences of activism are somehow experienced the same by all participants. Clearly this is false” (1234). Drawing attention to gender is thus, “necessary for a thorough and accurate explanation of collective action” (Taylor 1999, 9)[17].

Despite its long absence from mainstream social movement theory, there is an existing body of research on gender. Einwohner et al. (2000), Taylor (1998) and Taylor and Whittier (1998, 1999) discuss the various contributions that have been made on gender in regards to the mobilization patterns, leadership, strategies, ideologies, collective identities and the outcomes of social movements, as well as the role of gender in the various frameworks used to explain social movements (such as, opportunity structures, mobilization structures and framing processes). Contributions by scholars on gender and social movements have been key to challenging dominant understandings and representations of not only social movements, but of politics in general. As Beckwith (2005) states, “one of the most important contributions of the study of women and politics has been to question conventional, institution-focused, state-centric definitions of politics, and to extend the boundaries of what has been considered ‘political’” (128).

The following review attempts to highlight studies within this sub-field that contribute specifically to the role of women and gender in *mixed-gender* protests, in-keeping with the research aims and case study of this thesis. Mixed-gender protests are an under-researched area as the literature tends to be dominated by research on ‘women’s movements’, or movements where women mobilize according to their gendered identity, and which have ‘gender-direct’ aims, such as

[17] It has also served to counteract mainstream gender research which focuses only on the impact of gender relations, neglecting investigations into the “countervailing processes of resistance, challenge, conflict, and change" (Thorne 1995 in Taylor 1999, 9).

women's suffrage or anti-abortion (see distinctions in Beckwith 2000, 2001, 2007). While the role of gender may be 'less obvious', according to Einwohner et al. (2000), they are "nonetheless important" (680). Shriver et al. (2003) identify why gender needs to be explored in movements other than women's movements. They believe that gender-specific research solely about women's movements are "inevitably limited in their generalizability because the grievances are typically viewed as especially endemic to women. A broadened understanding requires systematic analyses of women's involvement in sex-integrated social movements not mobilized on specifically women's grievances" (640). Women and gender are important considerations in all social movements, even and especially for those movements not explicitly related to either. Even in movements that try to be 'gender-inclusive,' Taylor (1999) finds that, "the mobilization, leadership patterns, strategies, ideologies, and even the outcomes of social movements are gendered" (8).

As gender relations shape and condition every stage of protest, this literature review will attempt to understand the role of women and gender in each stage, from the emergence to the dynamics and eventually the outcomes of protest. This structure will inform the organization of the thesis, which goes from investigating protest emergence in Sambas (specifically the motivations and political opportunity that led to women protesting) to exploring the dynamics and the outcomes of the Sambas protest for women and gender relations.

Emergence

Meyer and Reyes (2010) emphasize the role of perception in shaping the threats and opportunities that lead to protest emergence, finding that people are more likely to protest when they are (a) presented with a threat that they believe requires action (protest motivation) and (b) faced with expanding or constricting political opportunities that lead them to view protest as a feasible 'potentially effective' option (Klandermans 2003; Meyer 2004). This section on 'emergence' looks at how gender relations shape the motivations and political opportunities for women in protest.

Motivation

It is generally accepted in the literature that protests start with some kind of injustice or grievance which protesters believe can be changed through protest. Instrumentality, thus, is one of the main motives to protest. But, according to Klandermans (2003), it is not the only motivation. People may also participate in order to belong to a valued group (for identity purposes) or to express their views. Motives of all types have a gendered dimension, which may shape women's decisions to join protests.

In her landmark study on women's mobilization during the Sandanista revolution in Nicaragua, Molyneux (1984) distinguishes between 'practical' gender interests and 'strategic' gender interests that motivate women to protest. 'Practical' gender interests, she argues, "arise from the concrete conditions of women's positioning ... by virtue of their place within the sexual division of labour as those primarily responsible for their household's daily welfare, women have a special interest in domestic provision and public welfare" (63). Women mobilize in response to threats to their livelihoods and in the interests of their family. Whereas 'practical' gender interests do not address the prevailing forms of gender subordination, 'strategic' gender interests acknowledge and directly challenge women's subordination. Related objectives may include abolishing the sexual division of labour, removing institutional forms of discrimination and adopting measure against male violence (62).

Ferree and Mueller (2003) argue that Molyneux's distinction between pragmatic and strategic gender interests is problematic as it establishes a hierarchy between these interests. It thus suggests a single direction of change, disallowing strategic gender movements to start to mobilize around pragmatic interests. Rather than distinguish between non-feminist and feminist goals, they stress that all women's movements, no matter how they start, have some "actual or potential relation to feminism, whether this is currently a primary goal for them or not" (579). They believe it would be more helpful to look at where and how feminist goals play a role in mobilization and to see 'women's interests' as an ongoing object of

definitional struggle rather than strictly ‘pragmatic’ or ‘strategic.' As noted earlier, though this review does not focus on feminist movements or ‘strategic gender interests’ as such, both Molyneux and Ferree and Mueller’s contributions help to recognize how gender relations infuse all movements, regardless of whether its initial motivations are labelled as ‘pragmatic’ or ‘strategic.' Even for protests and movements that appear to only focus on practical interests the motivation of women to participate in these movements is almost always due in some part to their gendered roles in society, such as ‘mothers,' ‘wives,’ ‘daughters,’ and so on. Because of their perceived location in the domestic or private sphere, certain issues are seen to have a closer affinity to women. Thus, identity shapes protest motivation but who constructs identity and with what purpose?

The way that women frame or are framed in a movement and the way they perceive of themselves or are perceived by the society condition why people mobilize, how and with what consequence. Einwohner et al. (2000) discuss how gender can be a kind of ‘cultural resource’ that actors mobilize to further their goals. They state, “gender can be used by social movement participants who wish to construct their image in a certain light, frame an issue in a particular way, or claim legitimacy as actors in a given arena” (680). For example, Beckwith (1996) discusses how a women’s group indirectly involved in the fight against mine closure gained legitimacy in a man’s movement by using their positions as miners’ wives and mothers to legitimize concerns about their families, class and communities. Their position as wives and mothers also protected them in action against certain kinds of reprisals. This shows us how the framing of traditional gendered motivations and roles such as motherhood may be empowering in certain circumstances. The aim of defending and protecting children appears to be a powerful motivator for women in particular to turn to contentious politics. A lot of research focuses on the way women use their responsibilities as mothers to inform their protest aims and to provide legitimacy to their claims on society (Ferree and Mueller 2003). As Corcoran-Nantes (1993) explains, in settings where women’s

status comes from their reproductive role, utilizing this image can strengthen and legitimate their political involvement (140)[18].

However, there can also be consequences to employing a gendered role like motherhood to legitimate protest motivations. Einwohner et al. (2000) state, “while images and identities associated with femininity may help a movement in the short run because they resonate with widespread cultural beliefs, they may prove problematic in the long run because of the association of politics and political power with masculinity” (681). Playing on motherhood may achieve some success but it also endorses conventions that portray the public world of work and politics as masculine and for men, and the private world of home and family as feminine and for women, with long-term ramifications.

The mobilization of ‘motherhood’ can be empowering or not depending on who mobilizes it and how. Rachel Silvey’s (2003) comparison of two villages with varying levels of women’s participation in labour protest in West Java, Indonesia shows how varying ideals of motherhood may make protest participation more acceptable, even encouraged, in one context and discouraged in another. She finds that in one village, women valued a vision of motherhood that was committed to the stability of their community and so discouraged interruptions to factory work. A woman in this community is quoted as saying, “mothers have to be well-mannered. We can’t be causing all kinds of disturbances the way they do in Jakarta” (quoted in Silvey, 353). In another village, however, ideals of motherhood included mothers fighting for higher wages to properly feed and clothe their children, and thus facilitated participation in strike activity. In this way using ‘motherhood’ as a way to mobilize women in protest can either facilitate participation or the opposite, depending on the context. Also, Belausteguigoitia (2000) critique of the Zapatista movement in Mexico shows that of 34 demands directed none included structural changes to the socio-political and judicial systems in order to incorporate indigenous women and recognize their vulnerability. Women's demands were reduced to things that supported their

[18] For case studies of mobilizing motherhood to legitimize protest motivation and dynamics, see Bosco 2006; Hensman 1996; Miraftab 2006; Sutton 2007; among others).

traditional role as mothers, while desires to confront traditions like forced marriage were ignored. In this case the invoking of motherhood (and its associated aims) were more explicitly put on the women participating in the movement than reclaimed or reworked in any way by the women themselves.

The examples above both reinforce and challenge what it means to be a 'mother' and in what ways 'mothers' negotiate between practical and strategic interests or motivations. The ways in which identity (especially gender) is mobilized can unfortunately only be mentioned here briefly. Scholars also consider the tension between various social identities and collective action, such as women in antifeminist movements (Crowley 2009), if and how identity politics may strengthen women's movements (Weldon 2006), and more generally on movements and the intersection of gender, race, class and / or religious identity (Krauss 1993, Fonow 1998, Kirmani 2009).

The gendering of protest motivation can also be seen in the literature that highlights the role of women in only certain types of movements. West and Blumberg (1990) state:

> Peace and environmental concerns are issues that have historically attracted women into protest ... Their power and their resources have emerged from the contradictions between their prescribed role as nurturers and as passive actors within patriarchal regimes that destroy what they are bound to protect. (205)

Here, I emphasize the word 'prescribed,' acknowledging Molyneux's insight that a woman's protest motivation is, at least in part, informed by gender relations (and its intersection with other forms of power). Motivation is thus a historically and culturally produced phenomenon, and not an outcome of some natural affinity of womankind to the environment or for peace. For example, in Al-Ali (2004) analysis of women's movements in the Middle East she finds that movements in this region tend to focus on issues related to modernization and development, such as rights to education, work and political participation, whereas more overtly feminist concerns, such as women's reproductive rights and violence against women, are still quite sensitive and thus less prominent. Contextualized accounts of protest motivations help to demonstrate that the type of movements that women choose

or are seen to be affiliated with are historically and culturally specific, not natural or universal.

Political opportunity

Having motivation to protest is not sufficient. Scholars generally acknowledge that grievances are ubiquitous, so the key question is why contentious politics develop in some places and not others. In general, 'political opportunity' refers to "the world outside a social movement, and ... how that context influences the politics within a movement and the interaction of a movement with the world around it" (Meyer and Reyes 2010, 220). It comprises the structural and cultural conditions at all scales[19] that facilitate or impede social movements, such as the openness of authorities and institutions, though scholars debate which elements matter most and how. As such, "both promises and threats can invigorate social movements" (Meyer and Reyes 2010). Scholars maintain that political opportunity structures not only influence social movements but are changed because of them[20].

In her overview, Zemlinskaya (2010) lists three ways that political opportunities are gendered: they may advantage or disadvantage the mobilization of men and women depending on legal, political and cultural contexts; they may be favorable or unfavorable for 'gendered' issues, such as anti-abortion; and they may preclude or facilitate the advancement of non-gender issues for movements associated with a particular gender identity (632). While initially most concerned with political institutional structures from 'above,' the 'cultural turn' in social sciences in the 1980s emphasized the importance of historically-produced political *and* cultural

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[19] See Rothman and Oliver (1999) for more on 'nested opportunity structures', and Smith (2003) for more on how local opportunity structures are embedded in national structures, which are embedded in international ones. Related to gender, Abdulhadi (1998) considers how developments beyond the confines of a single state shape political opportunity.

[20] See Koopmans (2007) for an overview of how waves of contention affect the political opportunity structure.

contexts that shape political opportunity (Beckwith 2001; Kuumba 2002)[21]. McCammon et al. (2001) find the term 'political opportunity structure' even too narrow, and offer the simpler term 'opportunity structure' as a more inclusive umbrella to accommodate for opportunity structures beyond those stemming from solely formal political dynamics and interests. Beyond 'polity or state-centered' theories, they point out the role that society-centered approaches have on political-decision making, such as feminist, class and racial theories of the state. Their case study of the suffragette movement in the U.S. examines how women's success in gaining the vote was due not only to new dynamics in formal politics but also to changing gender relations and beliefs about the role of women in wider society. Both the political opportunity structure *and* gendered opportunity structure (which they differentiate but also recognize as interacting) combined to produce success for the movement.

Beckwith (2001) also demonstrates how political opportunity structure is not just a static external context that determines if a movement will occur and how it will look, but that political opportunity structures are dynamic and can themselves be changed by movements. Abdulhadi (1998) encourages social movement theorists to expand 'political opportunity' to account for the "ways in which gender relations and dynamics shape and influence the structure of political opportunity and how the political context, in turn, shapes and influences gender relations and dynamics" (670). Weldon (2006) goes on to support this concept of interaction between movements and the institutions they seek to influence, and the dynamic relationship of how they shape one another.

Finally, a protest event is produced not only by the dynamics between structural factors or conditions, but also by individual actors. As Silvey (2003) states, "the social constraints and opportunities shaping the spaces of women's activism are produced, importantly, not only through structural processes, but also by women

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[21] Women's movement scholars have been key contributors to the "development of discourse, language, and culture as conceptual tools for understanding political movements" (Beckwith 2001, 380), now commonly known as 'cultural framing'. In her own research on a women's group fighting against mine closure (a group that was comprised mostly of women married to miners), Beckwith (1996) looks at the noninstutional factors, culture, discourse and collective identity that were key to a group indirectly located in a movement establishing their standing and legitmacy as a movement.

themselves in relation to their neighbours, other women, and the gender ideologies to which they subscribe" (356).

Relationship between formal and informal, public and private

As mentioned, scholars debate what conditions facilitate or impede the emergence of movements or people's decision to participate in them. For example, an open institutional context may allow or facilitate protest just as an apparent closing of institutional access may lead people to extra-institutional mobilization (Perreault 2008). Some research demonstrates how women's exclusion from formal politics can actually be productive in terms of informal or grassroots mobilization. For example, in a rural village in Malaysia Hart (1991) found that women actually had a greater capacity to organize collectively and overtly challenge large landowners because of their marginal relationship to official politics whereas poor men were far more deferential due to their location in subservient political patronage relations with local party bosses. Ferree and Mueller (2003) also argue that because women are excluded or disadvantaged on 'men's' terrain (spaces of formal or institutional politics), they are more likely to organize outside of this. Taylor and Van Dyke (2003) note that people participate in movements because they lack access to political institutions or find it more difficult to participate in more 'conventional' means of influence. As a demonstration is a relatively low risk and low effort action in terms of time and energy (McAdam 1986, as cited in Taylor and Van Dyke 2003), it may offer a more feasible means of political action than formal politics. Women's oft exclusion from formal politics, then, may produce their participation in protest.

While the above suggests that certain women have no or little option to make their demands heard outside of the formal political arena, there are other cases where women may have access to formal politics but choose non-institutional means instead. Nettles (2007), for example, discusses how a group of women in Guyana had the choice to join the formal political realm but instead start mobilizing outside of it because they believed it was a better path to represent a full range of their political interests. In a slightly different example, Taft (2006) explores the negative

perceptions of the formal political realm by one subset of women (teenage girls in the U.S.), and how they view their engagement (which is indeed political) as being outside 'politics' (that is, formal politics).

The cases discussed above depend on an analytical separation of formal / state-centered and informal / contentious / non-institutional political spaces. While helpful in explaining the relationship between formal and informal politics, actually this separation is false. As Hassim (1999) argues, "formal and informal spaces are not self-contained sites of politics but porous, each shaping the other" (in Miraftab 2006, 205). Miraftab builds on this insight by pointing out how a movement or campaign (in her case, the Anti-Eviction Campaign in Capetown, South Africa) does not only exist solely in the formal sphere, the informal sphere or in either 'invented' or 'invited' spaces[22]. She points out that these spaces are not mutually exclusive but overlapping, and grassroots actors move between them as required. She states:

> [Activists] do not rule out using formal channels to claim citizenship rights or to take advantage of invited citizenship spaces when it furthers their cause. Within the arena of informal politics, sometimes they devote their energy to a survival mechanism to cope with hardship; at other times they turn to strategies of resistance to challenge the structural basis of that hardship. (208)

Recognizing how formal and informal politics inform and shape one another is key to conceptualizing the factors that facilitate or impede the mobilization of women in any one context.

This insight into the false separation between formal and informal politics also helps to shed light on the public/private dichotomy that commonly crops up in the women, gender and contentious politics literature. Much research has looked at how women's gendered location in the private sphere legitimizes their action on certain types of issues, which they then cross into the male and masculine-dominated public world to fight for (see Safa 1990; Stall and Stoecker 1998). Koch (2006) complicates this reliance on the division between public and private

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[22] By 'invited' spaces Miraftab refers to state or donor sanctioned coping strategies, whereas 'invented spaces' are "grassroots actions .. characterized by defiance that *resists* the status quo" (195).

spheres stating, “the road to empowerment is much more complicated than shifting from private to public ... the notion of women belonging to the private moving into the public in fact aids in reinforcing a notion of the public man and the apolitical private woman” (59). Pardo (1998) also criticizes what she sees as a false dichotomy between public and private, finding that women cross between the private and public and in doing so expose their integral connection, rather than separation.

Geographers have also provided important contributions that use space to problematize the public/private divide. Staeheli (1996) opens up the “possibility of taking private actions into public spaces and of taking public actions in private spaces” (601), thus showing how women are not confined to either a space (local) or certain matters (i.e. domestic). Jepson (2005) also takes seriously the idea of space in her case study of Mexican American farm workers’ unionization experience. She finds that gender divisions in the movement resulted in public space becoming a ‘masculine performance’ and women’s spaces being seen as apolitical. However, the ‘domesticated’ space of the farm worker center eventually revitalized the farm worker movement and became a space that challenged the masculinist practices of the farm worker movement and the class structure of South Texas society. As such, Jepson calls for an incorporation of differential spaces into labor geography, as it forces people to include and examine the contradictions in labor organizing and to pay more attention to other spaces for mobilization. These and other contributions (for example, Anderson and Jacobs 1999, Wright 2005) show how the act of traversing between private and public challenges the real or perceived private / public divide, pointing out how the allocation of certain people or topics to only one sphere is problematic in both real and conceptual terms.

Obstacles to participation

While this review emphasizes the role of women and gender in protest, it must be noted that this phenomenon is interesting in so far as it tends to be the exception. In some contexts participation in contentious politics may appear an easier or

more effective avenue for making political demands than formal politics but actually doing so is not easy. No matter how powerful the motivation or how relevant to a woman's specific positionality, there are strong countervailing pressures against women's participation. Agarwal (2000) notes that having a stake in an issue is not a "sufficient condition" for catalyzing action as there can be a disjunction between women's interests and their ability to act on them (300)[23].

Beckwith (1996) explains how participation in politics is especially difficult for women because of the assumption that women are external to politics, while Zemlinskaya (2010) considers how traditional gender norms prevent women from taking part, especially in mixed-gender movements. Their family, for one, can present challenges to women's participation. In her study of low-income urban households in La Paz, Bolivia, Koch (2006) finds that women are unable to move from private to public life due the centrality of the conjugal couple which isolates women in the home and marital life. Similarly Dolhinow's (2006) study in New Mexico notes that women who emerge as leaders in movement tend to be single or in 'unusually' egalitarian relationships (in Téllez 2008), indicating that women's role in traditional relationships present an obstacle to their political participation.

Dynamics

Despite significant obstacles to participation, women do manage to mobilize and participate in movements. Having established the gendered dimensions of protest 'emergence' (motivation and political opportunity), the following section will consider how intra-movement dynamics, including leadership and strategy, are also gendered.

Leadership

Significant research has examined how gender affects men's and women's involvement in protests or movements. In general, women in mixed-gender

[23] The existence of a reason to protest is a far cry from actually having the means to make it happen and furthermore, to then make it a success (for more on 'resource mobilization theory', see Edwards and McCarthy 2003).

movements tend to be excluded from leadership positions (Fonow 1998; Roth and Horan 2001; Zemlinskaya 2010), thus reproducing unequal gender hierarchies. Lawson and Barton (1980) find the higher the hierarchical position in a movement organization, the more likely the position was male-dominated. Zemlinskaya (2010) refers to research by Robnett (1996), Thorne (1975) and McAdam (1992) who document how, in various movements in the U.S., women were “excluded from formal leadership and assigned clerical and administrative roles ... their participation was confined to traditional female occupations” (635). Kurtz (2007) also refers to this gendered division of labour where women are seen to do the grassroots activism while men are more visibly in positions of national leadership. Fonow (1998) documents how the participation of women steelworkers in a labor strike in Pittsburgh in 1985 was ‘deeply gendered.' From a leadership perspective, there was only one woman (Cecilia) on the executive committee of the union’s elected officials. Cecilia (who was white, educated and single) was elected to a minor office. She felt that the men did not want to recognize her right to be in the committee - they would sometimes fail to tell her about meetings or neglect to listen to her opinions.

What are the consequences of this lack of women’s leadership on movements? Tanner (1995) argues that the exclusion of women from leadership positions in an agricultural labour union in one village in India is problematic from a strategic perspective because, due to their networks, actually “women have a greater capacity than men to organize and carry out collective activities” (690). Miraftab (2006) calls attention to the drawbacks of male-dominated and masculine leadership in the Anti-Eviction Campaign in Capetown. She notes how the almost exclusively male leadership in the steering committee created a ‘mess’ which caused some activists, mostly women, to push for change (such as greater accountability and less centralization) in order to ‘sort out the mess’ and ‘save the campaign.'

According to Barnett (1993), it is not always that women are excluded from leading, but that the definition of leadership is too narrow and does not allow for recognition of the way women lead. The definition of social movement leadership

should go beyond the movement spokesperson to other ‘leaders’, often women, who serve as community organizers. Stall and Stoecker (1998) also give attention to the role that women already play in leadership and organizing, advocating for a ‘women-centered organizing model.' While their contribution appears to rest on assumptions about the inherent leadership qualities of men versus women, these authors emphasize that the qualities or values of either organizing model are not inherently liked to biological sex but rather have been shaped by the historically-specific gendered experiences of each model’s founders and subsequent organizers. Stall and Stoecker’s assertion shows how gender constructs various organizational roles within a movement, and how that can condition movement strategy (i.e. organizing community versus community organizing). The next section will briefly look at how gender shapes women’s protest activities.

Protest activities

Taylor and Van Dyke (2003) find that in mixed-gender movements, “women are often restricted to protest forms that draw on traditionally feminine roles” (278). Roth and Horan (2001) state:

> Women activists have been expected to be the ones making the coffee for the sake of the struggle. In short, the economy of social movement activism rests on women’s energies in a way that replicates gendered divisions of labor in the larger society (4).

Fonow’s (1998) research also confirms this. Women were more likely to be assigned by all-male picket-captains to kitchen duty than the picket-line (the public face of the strike). According to Fonow, “a clear division of labour emerged in food work: men were more likely to be involved in purchasing, stocking, and distribution, while women were involved in meal preparation and cleanup” (719). That said, Fonow also discusses the ways women challenged the gendered division of labour in the strike.

Women in movements also tend to be affiliated with non-violent protest tactics. According to Beckwith (2002), this is the “result of the active gendering of political movement tactics” (80). Women’s use of nonviolent tactics can be strategic in

making movements more available or welcoming to new participants[24], though in some cases, women's apparent affiliation with non-violent tactics may specifically exclude them from violent actions. Irons (1998) considers the role of identity in determining what kinds of activism (high versus low risk) that women activists will engage in; in the case of the civil rights movement, black women were more likely to participate in high-risk activities like challenging segregated facilities, while white women had lower-risk strategies, like clerical work and teaching. Other peaceful tactics include the use of theatre in protest (Moser 2003), and performances and other cultural events to encourage participation (Staggenborg and Lang 2007).

Ukeje (2004) and Patch (2008) attribute women's peaceful tactics for success in realizing their demands for economic empowerment and compensation in their protests against oil platforms in the Niger Delta. Patch contrasts the women's peaceful means with the largely unsuccessful tactics of militant male-led struggles in the same area. Turner and Brownhill (2005) focus on peaceful tactics by women in other parts of Africa, though with a twist. Kenyan and Nigerian women protesters have at various times exposed their naked bodies to drive home the potency of their messages. Relatedly, Tibbetts (1994) discusses the impact of elderly rural women in Kenya stripping themselves naked in front of police, giving their message added potency: "the public nakedness of women, especially older women, is the ultimate curse, in this particular case, aimed at the Government" (Tripp 2003, 251). This was a powerful gender-specific strategy to drew attention to the protest.

Outcomes

There has tended to be less research explaining the outcomes, over the emergence or dynamics, of contentious politics. This may be because, according to Meyer and Reyes (2010), "assessing influence is no simple matter" (228). Even when scholars have used narrow criteria to try to measure success, like whether a

[24] Consider how the use of violence and aggression in the Black Panther party excluded women from the struggle (as recounted by Elaine Brown to Taylor 1999, 13).

movement achieved its stated goals, it has proven difficult to attribute policy change to any one group or action. It becomes even more challenging to evaluate movements when criteria beyond that start to be taken into consideration, as Amenta et al. (2010) explain:

> The success standard limits the consideration of many possible political impacts. Challengers may fail to achieve their stated program - and thus be deemed a failure - but will win substantial new advantages for their constituents, a situation likely for challengers with far-reaching goals (Amenta et al. 2005). There may be beneficial unintended consequences ... Challengers can do worse than fail; they can induce backlashes, such as repression or increased policing ... Challengers' constituencies may gain political results that challengers do not cause. (290)

Meyer and Reyes point to a range of potential impacts beyond the goals of the movement, such as on individual participants, on future action, and on other campaigns. They state, "social movements exercise influence in a wide range of venues through an even larger number of mechanisms. Influence can persist over a long period of time, and often includes effects that activists did not directly seek" (229).

This section will look briefly at relevant contributions on women, gender and protest outcomes, divided according to different ways scholars accord impact, be it on the stated goals of the protest, the protest tactic, individual participants, or women's empowerment in general.

On stated goals

According to Taylor and Van Dyke (2003), several characteristics of protest have been linked to effectiveness: novelty, militancy, variety, size and cultural resonance. Any or all of these may produce the intended social and political change. McCammon et al. (2001) establish that the suffragette movement in the U.S. was a political success as the movement was granted its demand, that is, the right to vote. They go on to explain how the success was achieved, which they believe was a combination of favourable political opportunity structure, changing gender relations which led to a favourable gender opportunity structure, and certain strategies. Fish (2006) discusses how women in the domestic sector

organized and effectively linked their struggle with women in the state and the new gender provisions in the South African state to gain their right to unemployment insurance (in Walsh and Scully 2006). Other research uses different theories to give a reason why contentious politics failed to achieve stated goals. For example, Ferree and Roth (1998) explain why a strike by West Berlin day care workers in 1989-90 failed. They show how the issue became framed as a women's issue rather than a worker's issue and how that interacted with a gendered political context to result in failure.

On protest

There are a few studies that consider the impact a social movement may have on the future of social movements and the protest tactic itself. Successful protests may diffuse across space, time and groups, influencing the emergence and tactical repertoire of other movements (Taylor and Van Dyke 2003; Whittier 2003). The impact on current or future movements has been called 'social movement spillover' (Meyer and Whittier 1994). This concept emphasizes how "social movements are not distinct and self-contained; rather, they grow from and give birth to other movements, work in coalition with other movements, and influence each other indirectly through their efforts on the larger cultural and political environment" (ibid, 277). Meyer and Whittier investigate how the women's movement impacted the peace movement in the U.S. in the 1980s, with the peace movement adopting feminist ideological frames, tactical innovations and feminist non-hierarchical organizational structures. This was due to organizational coalitions, overlapping communities, shared personnel and broader changes in the external environment.

As already mentioned, political opportunity structures are dynamic and, so while they shape protest emergence, they themselves are changed by movements. In their investigation of activism during the Argentine crisis, Borland and Sutton (2007) find that the crisis generated "a new milieu of protest ... it became a part of daily life, even becoming expected and routine" (709). This new 'activist quotidian' "created new spaces to challenge the status quo" (714) and these activist spaces

changed consciousness about the position of women and gender in society. Tripp (2003) takes a longer-term view of changing political opportunity structures for women in Africa. She explains the exponential rise in women's activism today by showing how the current political landscape is much more conducive to women's mobilization than the political opportunities available to an earlier generation of women activists.

On the individual

Whether movements achieve their goals or not, the impact on their participants may be significant, whether in material ways or in terms of political empowerment. Meyer and Reyes (2010) list a range of factors that may influence and facilitate individuals to take subsequent action, including carrying commitments and capacities to effect change, forge new identities and alliances, develop a sense of efficacy as well as organizational and personal connections. Drogus and Stewart-Gambino (2005) document how women's lives and activities concretely changed in the wake of their activism in grassroots religious movements in Latin America, and how their initial involvement led to stronger self-esteem, critical perception, political awareness and citizenship. The personal empowerment of the women who participated in the protest was thus a notable long-term outcome of the protests decades previous. Similarly, Borland and Sutton (2007) find that protest involvement in Argentina have changed women's consciousness about gender relations and their place in politics, which has facilitated participation in other movements. While this research looks at how newly empowered women go on to participate in further grassroots activism, there is a need to investigate how women activists transition to the formal political arena as well.

Despite these positive accounts, others caution against any kind of simple causality between collective action and individual empowerment. For example, Aguilar and Chenard's (1994) research on Cuban women after the revolution show that despite the power they achieve in the public sphere, the deep roots of macho culture limit their influence in the domestic sphere (in Téllez 2008), echoing Campbell's (1996) research described above. Koch (2006) also challenges

assumptions that women's involvement in collective action will automatically lead to their empowerment. Due to the centrality of the conjugal relationship in urban La Paz, Bolivia, women are not always able to challenge subordination collectively out of the household and must sometimes do it individually at the household level.

Hasso (2001) and Adams (2002) point out that an individual woman's personal and political changes due to protest cannot be evaluated in a vacuum. The choices they make are heavily mediated by their family situations and, following Kandiyoti (1988), their willingness and ability to 'bargain with patriarchy.' Adams shows how for the shanty-women in Chile who participated in the prodemocracy movement both structural (i.e, the strongly patriarchal gender regime) and individual (i.e. husbands) forces resulted in many working class female activists abandoning activism in order to go back full-time to their domestic duties. In her interviews with working-class Palestinian women who had been involved with the former Palestinian Federation of Women's Action Committees, Hasso found that women's decisions to continue participating in activism or not were mediated by several economic, political and cultural factors, and that ultimately most women's options depended on their families and communities. Irregardless, she found that their activist engagement changed their "gender ideologies, political worldviews, sense of the possible and self-definitions" (600), as well as their self-efficacy.

On gender relations

Ferree and Mueller (2003) emphasize that gender relations are variable aspects of contentious politics rather than 'stable' or 'natural' facts. The body of research explored above demonstrates not only how existing gender relations shape protest, but also how movements and protesters shape existing gender relations, whether by reproducing them or challenging and transforming them.

Going back to the earlier insight provided by Ferree and Mueller (2003), all women's movements (or women in movements) have some 'actual or potential' relation to feminism, regardless of whether they start due to 'practical' or 'strategic' gender interests. Borland and Sutton (2007) find that activism led to empowerment

not only on an individual level but also affected the shape, reach and vitality of the women's movement as a whole. Collective action facilitated women to recognize the shared nature of problems and to start also considering what could be classified as more 'strategic' gender goals around legalizing abortion. Similarly, Padilla's (2004) investigation in Peru shows that as women participate they experience changes that reflect on their gender identities, which tend to become more feminist. Walsh and Scully (2006) bring together various contributions to show how the increased participation of women in public (through formal and informal politics) has challenged traditional gender identities, relations and practices, and undermined the common belief that women's role in the public is silence.

Transforming gender relations, however, is neither automatic nor easy. Baldez (2003) and Campbell (2005) find that women's empowerment - both individual and general - may be realized in certain situations but only temporarily. Though at one point encouraged to take part in revolution, once post-struggle (i.e. post-transition or post-revolution), women and gender interests are relegated to their previous status. Baldez looks specifically at the post-transition period in Brazil, Chile and East Germany, finding that feminism was quickly forgotten and women were left with only limited access to decision-making processes. In Eritrea, Campbell (1996) finds that once the broader aims of the movement were achieved, any concern for gender interests and the role of women in public diminished. When evaluating the impact of a social movement on gender relations, it is important to take into account how conceptions, goals and actions of the women themselves have changed as well as society's expectations of women's role in politics.

Contributions to thesis and gaps

The field of contentious politics - in particular women, gender and contentious politics - offers an array of concepts and case studies to understand the dynamics of women and gender in protest. This body of literature not only acknowledges women's presence in protest, but investigates how gender relations shape, and are shaped by, women's participation at every stage of protest from the

emergence to the dynamics and outcomes. It emphasizes how *all* social movements are gendered - whether a women's movement or not, whether pertaining to gender-direct or non-gender direct aims, even involving women or not - because society is. Grappling with how these relations produce protest then is fundamental to understanding not only the dynamics of protest, but the wider political and societal context. Insights from this literature inform how this thesis understands women's protest motivations in Sambas (chapter 6), gendered political opportunity in Sambas and why rural women turn to protest (chapter 7), the dynamics of women's participation in the Sambas protest (chapter 8), and what the real and potential outcomes of the Sambas protest are (chapter 8).

While this literature has helped to shore up the gaps identified in the earlier bodies of research reviewed, alone it would be insufficient for understanding and explaining oil palm expansion and resistance in Indonesia. This literature is well-known for its tendency to focus predominantly on women's movements in the 'First World,' thus overlooking how women participate in mixed-gender movements, especially in rural settings, especially in the Third World. As Tanner (1995) finds, "most of the work on peasant women has not focused on the role of women in rural movements that on the surface do not appear to be addressing the concerns of women specifically ... there is, as yet, little research on the role of gender in peasant struggles" (674). Even now, more than 15 years later, there are still only a handful of case studies that explore the dynamics of women and gender in rural protest.

Conclusion

The task of understanding and explaining the dynamics of women, gender and protest due to contemporary processes of dispossession in Sambas is complex, and any one of the three literatures reviewed here do not provide sufficient tools or cases on their own.

Bringing these literatures together, however, facilitates new insights. For example, in the larger debate around land-grabbing, it allows us to go beyond conventional

political-economic understandings of rural dispossession to highlight how women and gender are a critical though largely ignored puzzle piece. Despite pockets of analysis that consider how unequal social relations produce poverty and further differentiation between and within rural communities, the consequences of future agrarian change (such as agrofuel expansion) are rarely considered from a gender perspective. As this chapter revealed, tools from feminist political ecology are able to provide a new way of understanding how social relations and landscapes are mutually constituted, dynamic and both at stake in the course of environmental struggles (Nightingale 2006).

Synthesizing these literatures also brings forward new perspectives concerning how gender itself is understood, implicated in and transformed through rural politics. The contentious politics literature in particular highlights the ways in which gender shapes protest motivation, opportunity, dynamics and outcomes. Importantly, this literature opens up new dimensions of understanding, including how gender may be altered by protest, over what timescales, with what consequences and for whom. These theoretical insights are key to fully exploring the relationships between women, gender and rural politics.

The main themes gleaned from combining these literatures will frame the case study and analysis, while the gaps identified provide justification for the research aims and contributions of this study. Having investigated the relevant secondary literature, the following chapter will discuss the methdological considerations involved with collecting primary data at the heart of this research study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

In order to answer the research questions outlined in Chapter 1, this thesis uses a combination of secondary literature and primary data. Having already investigated the relevant secondary literature in the previous chapter, this chapter will now describe the challenge of collecting primary data. Primary data in the form of the voices, experiences and settings of 42 women protesters in Sambas are at the heart of this research project. But choosing to focus on these women was far from automatic or given. Actually this was the result of a series of methodological considerations which led to first choosing the case study approach, then the specific case study and an appropriate research design. This chapter will explain why the case study method was employed, how the specific case was selected, then describe the procedural considerations of undertaking and implementing the research. Throughout the research process, I acknowledge the role of power relations in producing the research aims, data and knowledge and in particular my role and positionality as the researcher (England 1994; Whatmore 2003).

Case study approach

Taking methodological inspiration from feminist political ecology and social movement research, this study used a case study approach to explore the dynamics of protest. According to Snow and Trom (2002), a case study is “a

research strategy that seeks to generate richly detailed, thick, and holistic elaborations and understandings of instances or variants of bounded social phenomenon" (147). They may be useful for explaining, describing or exploring complex social phenomena (Yin 1994), though Gerring (2007) emphasizes the last of these, stating that case studies "enjoy a natural advantage in research of an exploratory nature" (39). Considering not only the complex relations, processes and scales that produce women's participation in protest but also the lack of existing understanding or detailed cases on how or why women participate in the context of agrarian change, the case study approach was chosen due to its advantage over extensive or cross-case methods for generating such insights.

That said, the case study method has some drawbacks, for example, its lack of generalizability (Gerring 2007, Yin 1989 in Snow and Trom 2002). Even within political ecology, place-based case studies are criticized for being "ultimately case-specific and poorly linked to a wider context" (Bebbington 2003, 303) and for not being better integrated into broader regional or global analysis (Walker 2006, 387). The need to draw connections between grounded case studies has also been emphasized in feminist political ecology (Hawkins and Ojeda 2011) and feminism, more generally (Mohanty 2003). While case study research often does not scale-up or lend to generalizations in the same way that statistical analyses tend to, this does not mean that it does not or cannot do so. While the case study approach cannot make generalizations about populations or universes, case studies are able to inform theoretical or analytical generalizations (Yin 1989 in Snow and Trom 2002). Snow and Trom identify three ways in which new case studies may contribute to theory - through theoretical discovery, theoretical extension and theoretical refinement. Thus for both its empirical and theoretical utility, Snow and Trom identify the case study approach as a useful research strategy for investigating social movements.

The case study approach was chosen as the most suitable strategy for explaining the complexities of women and gender in protest and exploring an under-researched area where a cross-case method would not have been useful, if even possible. While the empirical contributions of this approach are obvious, an effort

must also be made to link this one case study with the wider context and to consider possible analytical or theoretical contributions. In addition to justifying the case study approach, Snow and Trom also provide a set of procedural considerations for producing an empirically compelling case study. One of these - being open-ended and flexible - resonated with selecting a specific case study for this research study, as will be detailed in the following section.

Case study selection

I went to Indonesia with a structured research plan, however the initial case study I had chosen proved untenable. Subsequent meetings with a range of experts and activists in Jakarta led me to a topic that was far more pressing and contentious - oil palm. Indonesia had recently become the world's largest producer of oil palm and there was much debate on its future. I chose to conduct a pilot study in West Kalimantan, widely known as one of the fastest growing regions of oil palm with one of the highest rates of oil palm-related conflict.

Over the course of one month, I went on three different scoping trips within West Kalimantan to find a specific case study. In the first two trips I met over 25 people in nine different communities spread over two districts in the interior of the province[25]. These included government officials and farmers or workers in the oil palm sector. Many of the latter were involved in movements to defend their rights under the banner of the Union of Oil Palm Farmers (SPKS). These first two trips helped to shed light on the range of contention occurring around already existing oil palm. But beyond what local people were talking about, the issue of *who* was doing the talking (and who was not) also became glaringly obvious. Only one of the 25 people interviewed was a woman. Despite observing the integral roles in agriculture and oil palm that women played in all of the communities I visited, I rarely heard their voices or opinions. This led me to question how gender mattered in both oil palm expansion and resistance. In order to better explore these matters, the NGO Gemawan suggested I investigate the large oil palm protest in Sambas

[25] I was unaccompanied in the first trip and accompanied by a local interpreter in the second trip.

for my third trip in the pilot study. Conducting a mix of scoping interviews and focus group discussions with over 20 men and women in the district confirmed that this one specific protest event would provide more than enough scope to explore not just oil palm expansion and resistance, but the gender dynamics of both. Thus, following the month-long pilot study in West Kalimantan I eventually chose the Sambas protest as my case study.

Though I first went to Indonesia with a structured research plan and case study, unexpected ups, downs and turns led me to change not just where I was studying (from the capital of Jakarta to the rural hinterlands of Borneo), but what (land dispossession related to oil palm expansion) and with whom (women). Though a frustrating process, this twisting path actually led to a case study that is far more contemporary and relevant to the country than my initial research plan was.

Research design

Snow and Trom (2002) establish not only what the case study approach entails and why it should be used, but how: using and triangulating multiple methods (including but not limited to qualitative methods). Just as social realities are multifaceted, so should the methods used to grasp them. Following Snow and Trom, I recognize that no single method can be used to understand complex phenomena and so in this study attempted to combine them to complement and supplement the weaknesses of each (Flick 2004; Madsen and Adriansen 2004). My research study thus featured a mix of primarily qualitative methods. In-depth interviews were the primary method of data collection, though participant observation and a range of secondary data sources (which included quantitative data) also informed analysis (see table 3.1). This phase of primary data collection lasted three months (October to December 2009) and was based mostly in and around Sambas district. The various research methods will be investigated and evaluated below.

Table 3.1: Summary of data collected by research method

Research Method	Data Collected
In-depth Interviews	75 in-depth interviews - 100% transcribed into Indonesian - 40% (approx) professionally translated into English
Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)	2 Focus Group Discussions - 100% transcribed into Indonesian - 100% professionally translated into English
Participant Observation	1 Fieldwork Diary
Secondary Data	- Statistical records from the Central Bureau of Statistics, Department of Food Security and Department of Plantations (Pontianak, West Kalimantan); relevant government departments (Jakarta); UN World Food Programme (Jakarta) - Local maps from government officials (Sambas) - Visual materials from the protest (photos, video) - Newspaper articles - Documents related to oil palm plantation and permit (map, letters) - Documents produced by STSD

In-depth interviews

My interpreter and I conducted 75 semi-structured in-depth interviews with protesters in five rural communities, as well as with other key actors or informants who did not protest either in Sambas, Pontianak and Jakarta (see Appendix A for a full list of interviewees and table 3.2 for a summary schedule of interviews conducted). Interviews in some communities necessitated only day-trips, while other communities (Sebetaan and Teluk Durian) required overnight stays or multiple returns to complete the interviews. While this thesis relies almost entirely on data collected from interviews completed between October and December 2009, it should also be noted that my interpreter returned alone to do nine follow-up interviews in January 2011 to clarify some topics and provide a recent update on the situation. We discussed her findings in person in Singapore in February 2011. In the following section I will describe and evaluate my interview sample and sampling method, followed by how I conducted the interviews and the major issues encountered.

Table 3.2: Interview schedule, October to December (2009)

Location	Number of Interviewees by Type			
	Women Protesters	Men Protesters	Non-Protesters	Total
Sebetaan (Sejangkung)	19	4	1	24
Sekuduk (Sejangkung)	5	4	0	9
Senujuh (Sejangkung)	1	0	2	3
Teluk Durian (Telok Kramat)	16	5	1	22
Terikembang (Galling)	1	2	0	3
Sambas	0	1	5	6
Pontianak	0	2	3	5
Jakarta	0	0	3	3
Total	**42**	**18**	**15**	**75**

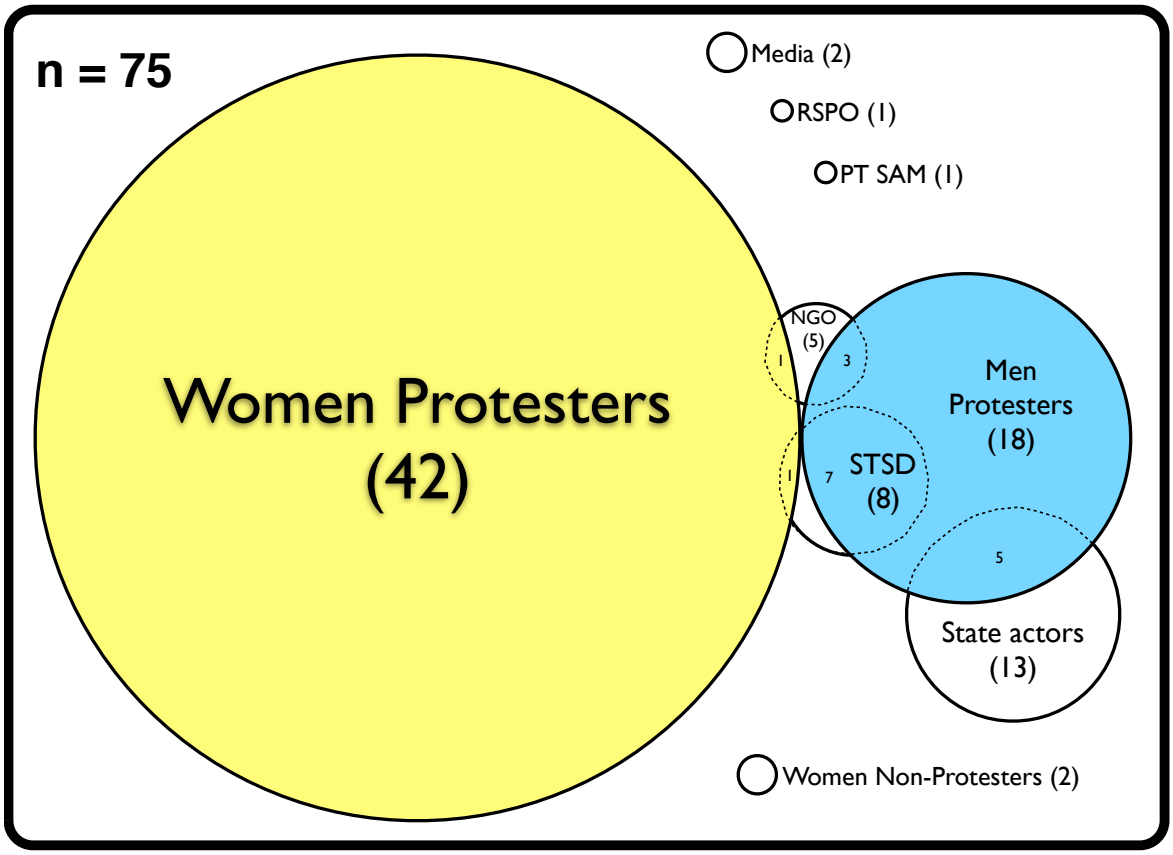
Sampling

There were two criteria that informed the sample of interviewees. One, a sizable sample of women who participated in the Sambas protest in June 2008 and two, a range of other 'key' informants with knowledge on the protest, oil palm development or agrarian change in Sambas in general. In order to fully flesh out debates around these topics I consciously looked for interviewees with new or different views or positionalities and specifically targeted those in leadership or decision-making positions at all scales, from the grassroots to the Bupati of Sambas. Figure 3.1 shows the resulting purposive sample (where n = 75), which includes a variety of actors grouped according to their membership in relevant organisations or sectors, such as with the NGO Gemawan, the local grassroots peasant organisation *Serikat Tani Serumpun Damai* (STSD) or with the state[26]. It also clearly identifies those interviewees who did not participate in the protest as being outside of the protesting circles. The overlapping circles demonstrate how

[26] Interviewees were considered 'group members' if they were affiliated with the group at the time of protest and / or at the time of interview. While all protesters were nominally organized by peasant group STSD, only leaders or organizers of STSD are listed under the STSD group. For a more detailed list, see Appendix A.

some of the protesters (mostly men) occupy more than one of these organisations or sectors.

Figure 3.1: Protesters interviewed according to group membership



Finding a sizable sample of women protesters was my primary goal. This was a challenge due to the small number of women protesters relative to total protesters, the fact that they were spread out and there were no written records of which villages or women attended. I decided on a snowball sampling technique, starting with Sebetaan where I had already developed a rapport with the women protesters and village leaders during the pilot study. In Sebetaan we compiled a list of villages who protested and relevant contacts. We continued to add to this list as we went from village to village. This sampling technique eventually produced a

sample of 42 women protesters spread across five communities[27]. I stopped at 42 women protesters because the sample (a) fulfilled my objective to find a spread of women protesters *between* a range of communities (communities that spanned all three affected sub-districts and exhibited a spread of women's relative protest participation, see table 3.3), (b) consisted of a fairly good spread of women *within* communities (in terms of demographics, land size and land use, incomes and political participation, etc), though the sample is purposive and does not claim to be representative[28], (c) a spread of roles related to the protest, where possible (interviewing the only woman to have taken on any kind of leadership role in the protest, as confirmed time and again by other protesters and informants, and (d) achieved redundancy or saturation in the interviews[29].

Table 3.3: Number of men and women protesters interviewed (2009)

Community	Number of Households	Total protesters		Total protesters interviewed	
		Men	Women	Men	Women
Sebetaan (Sejangkung)	125	64	21	4	19
Sekuduk (Sejangkung)	428	80 - 90	10 - 20	2	5
Senujuh (Sejangkung)	-	-	1	0	1
Teluk Durian (Telok Kramat)	304	260 - 280	20 - 40	7	16
Terikembang (Galling)	625	100	1	3	1

Source: Based on estimates by respective communities

[27] 'Communities' refer to both smaller sub-villages and larger villages. For example, interviews in the village of Sulung (in sub-district Sejangkung) were concentrated in only one of its sub-villages (Sebetaan), so only Sebetaan will be considered. Similarly, interviews in Supadu (in the sub-district of Telok Kramat) were only conducted in the sub-village of Teluk Durian so I will only discuss Teluk Durian. However, in the villages of Sekuduk, Senujuh and Terikembang, interviews were done across sub-village borders so those village names will be used.

[28] In each village, interviews were attempted with all of the women who had been reported to have attended the protest. We could not interview women who had protested but were away from the community at the time. There were at least six women protesters reported to be away at the time of interview. As the sample does not include women protesters who were away working, it skews the sample away from women who are younger, unmarried and without children (the common profile of migrant women workers).

[29] I noted this observation in my fieldwork diary after interviewing 32 women but carried on with the remaining ten to confirm the level of saturation. By the final interview I was confident the interviews provided sufficient depth of information to meet the purposes of the study and had stopped generating new insights in the emerging themes (Guest et al. 2006).

I also interviewed a sample of men protesters. Continuing with the snowball technique, I gained access first to men close or related to the women protesters - 12 of the 18 men protesters were family members of the women interviewed. Then I interviewed other men in the village due to their roles in either the protest or village government (or both). As figure 3.1 demonstrates, there is considerable overlap between the categories of men protesters and STSD, the NGO and state actors. Only one woman protester - Mardiana (Senujuh) - overlapped with both the NGO and STSD. Some of those interviewed were not protesters at all, such as key state actors like the Bupati, a group of DPR members and civil servants in the Department of Food Security (district and provincial level) and Department of Plantations (provincial level). Almost all of these non-protesters were men. Though I tried to actively seeking out women to interview at all levels and in groups beyond the women protesters, they were very difficult to find and / or could not act as appropriate informants on the protest and the oil palm issue in the way that the Bupati, various members of the DPR or civil servants (all men) could. The only exception to this was in my experiences with the NGO Gemawan where women appeared just as prominent as men in the structure of the organisation and the Executive Director, a woman, proved to be a key informant.

Conducting interviews with women protesters

The interview method was chosen because it is a “sensitive and people-oriented” approach that produces “rich, detailed and multi-layered” material (Valentine 1997, 111) - which I felt was required to grapple with the complexities of the lives, opinions and experiences of the women protesters. In contrast to the earlier FGDs used in the pilot study, where women had to compete to speak (see evaluation of FGDs below), the interview method provided a more dedicated platform for individual women to speak. But, as Pini (2003), points out, “it is not the method we use, but how we use the method that gives value to women’s experience” (422). In this sub-section I will discuss the various challenges involved with interviewing women protesters in a way that gave value to their voices and experiences.

Before embarking on the interviews, I developed an interview guide consisting mainly of open-ended questions, ranging from descriptive and structural to more thoughtful questions, that would allow complexities to emerge[30]. I also included a few closed-ended questions, such as age, marital status or number or children, which were useful for understanding the demographic profile of the interviewees but also allowed them to build confidence and 'warm up' (Longhurst 2010, 107). A few questions which I anticipated would be closed-ended, such as those related to income, welfare, land size and land use, actually required further discussion and contributed new dimensions to the interviews. The interview questions were checked by my interpreter; we worked together to translate them into the most appropriate local terminology. Throughout the course of interviews, observations and reflections led us to change the content or emphasis of questions, the order of the questions or how they were asked in the local language. See Appendix C for the final list of questions for women protesters.

When we arrived in each community we met with our local contacts and drew up a preliminary list of women to interview. Since we were unfamiliar with the villages we had to rely on escorts to show us to each house, as there were no markers (street names or numbers). Typically, upon arriving at a woman protester's house, we were almost always welcomed by the man of the house. He would sit down with us to answer questions, while his wife went to the kitchen in the back of the house to prepare tea for us[31]. Often our first challenge, then, was to try to explain that we were there to talk to his wife instead of him. As we were concerned this may be insulting or feel like we were challenging his role in the household as the 'knower', we tried to do this as sensitively as possible. The presence of our escort often helped to moderate this by reassuring people in the household that other women were being interviewed as well and that the questions were only meant for women.

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[30] See distinction of question types in Valentine (1997, p118)

[31] Hart (1991) encountered a similar experience in rural Malaysia: "on my visits to middle class households, it was quite common for a man to intrude on a conversation in which I was engaged with his wife, and send her to make tea while he took over the conversation" (114).

Our escorts acted as ‘gatekeepers’ to the people we hoped to interview. Their implicit support provided us with an immediate level of trust and legitimacy which was required due to the sensitive nature of the topic and who we were asking to interview. Unfortunately, there were also drawbacks of arriving with our escorts, such as unduly pressuring people into inviting us in or agreeing to do the interview. We tried to make it as clear as possible that we were independent researchers from a university, not affiliated with our escort or any other person or group in the village, nor did we come from the state, the company or NGO. We were explicit that there was no renumeration or material benefit for them in doing the interview and that it was fine if they did not want to continue with the interview or wanted to stop at any time. While we did our best to emphasize all these things, in retrospect the presence of the gatekeeper combined with a culture (especially among women) that tends to be agreeable or non-confrontational likely made it difficult for women to say no to the interview. Not one woman refused to give an interview.

That said, there was one woman who agreed to do the interview but was clearly so uncomfortable that we decided to end it soon after it started. During the interview, she lied, changed her details, and was secretive and suspicious, querying if we were from the government. Perhaps she did not want to start the interview in the first place but could not say so directly to us. The experience, though uncomfortable, led to a number of reflections which I captured in my fieldwork diary later that evening:

> Interviewing so many strong, brave, though seemingly ordinary women has made us complacent to the fact that what they did on June 24 2008 was actually far outside their realm of comfort, of normalcy, of security. That many women were too scared to go [to the protest]. That of the women who did go they’re still scared of the consequences of being implicated. Is it about this protest in particular? No, I don’t think so. I think it is about the perceptions of protest in Indonesia as a whole, the history of popular protest and [the history of repercussions for those who] attempt to subvert the government. There is a precedent for how this one 28-year-old woman feels - and arguably it’s a lot more prevalent than the one for women who did go [to the protest] ... Actually I’m surprised this hasn’t happened more often [during the interviews] - this suspicion, this distrust, the desire for anonymity or closing down of stories rather than opening up (of home, of story, of heart) that we have so fortunately experienced elsewhere, despite being outsiders.” (Fieldwork Diary, November 21 2009)

This one failed interview reminded us of how sensitive oil palm and protest still is for these communities, despite the willingness of the other women to open up.

In addition to asking for permission to interview, we asked for the women's permission to use a tape-recorder. At the time this allowed us to concentrate on conducting the interview and letting the conversation flow. In retrospect the recordings were invaluable in countering many of the incorrect understandings (both language and otherwise) I had of the situation at the time of interview. Not all of the interviews were tape-recorded. Two women asked not to be recorded and one interview was too short and spontaneous to tape-record. We also received permission to take photos. Many were keen as it was the first time they had met a Westerner and asked for copies (which I mailed back to them). I also reciprocated where possible by posing for the few who had mobile phones with cameras.

The location of the interview was another key consideration (Elwood and Martin 2000). We initially wanted to do the interviews in the women's houses where possible so she would feel more at ease and we could also get a better sense of her environment. While this was the case, it was far from an ideal setting. Women were often answering questions while surrounded by their children or other family members, or even curious people from the village. We even held an interview in the garden in the back of one woman's house so she could occasionally scare the chickens away from the rice that was out drying in the sun. While televisions, chickens or babies were providing background noise and distraction, it was the presence - both active and passive - of husbands during these interviews that was particularly challenging. This was not only due to husbands interjecting to clarify their wives' opinions, which often occurred. But also when he was not actively interrupting, just by being present we always felt (whether it was true or not) that this prevented women from saying everything they wanted to or from feeling that the speaking platform was firmly theirs. When husbands were present, women often asked for their husband's opinion to questions first or deferred to his account rather than provide their own. Recognizing how problematic this was after an initial round of interviews, we learned to politely ask men to leave the room or the house during the interview or, if that idea was not welcomed, then emphasize that we

were interested only in the women's opinion and it would help us if he remained silent during the interview. This worked better in some households than others and this issue remained a challenge throughout the interview process. This experience is echoed by Goss and Leinbach (1996) who mention how difficult it is to obtain privacy in a personal interview and in particular isolate respondents from their spouses (also see Boeije 2004). While distractions like these led us to consider choosing a neutral location in each village to conduct the interviews, we felt it was unfair to ask these women to distance themselves from their responsibilities and their families for the sake of my research. Further, trying to remove these women from their houses may have compromised the trust we tried to build with all members of the household and perhaps even the ability to interview these women at all.

Men were not the only third-party who interrupted interviews - we also had trouble with our escort in Teluk Durian, Melati[32]. Though Melati played an important role in facilitating the research, by staying and interfering during interviews she also served to block or slow the research process[33]. As one of the eldest and most out-spoken women in the community, Melati acted like she had the answers and felt entitled to speak. She would interrupt, interject or substitute her answer to the interview questions rather than accepting or acknowledging the interviewees. She would fill in the silence that we tried to create to give the interviewee time to think about their answer, jumping in to tell us about everything from the interviewee's public participation, land size and income to why they attended the protest or how they felt about it. While it was clear Melati was excited about the research and trying to help, her presence and interruptions (which sometimes came across as bullying women into saying certain things) fundamentally interfered with a key research aim to provide a safe space for women to express themselves. We were in a difficult situation because, on the one hand, we were thankful to Melati for taking the time to escort us around the village, for her support and excitement about the project and for her hospitality (as we stayed overnight in her house). But on the other hand, we were committed to providing interviewees with a space to

[32] This is a pseudonym.
[33] For the different sides of gatekeeping, see Heller et al. (2011).

give their own interpretations and feelings of the protest without fear that Melati would object or interrupt. At first we asked her to remain silent during interviews, emphasizing the importance of hearing everybody's stories, no matter how incorrect or incomplete she felt they were. But even then, she would make hand gestures, exhibit body language or make noises to encourage the interviewee to say something in particular or to show that she approved or not. Again emphasizing the need to protect the interviewee's space we had to tell Melati (without being insulting) that she could not stay during interviews if she continued to interfere. The situation improved by the second day of interviews but it strained our relations with Melati. The interaction of Melati and other women interviewees showed us how power relations operate not just between men and women but also between women in that community.

During the interviews, we aimed to make the interviewees feel as comfortable and entitled to express themselves as possible, at whatever pace or in whatever way they chose. I was particularly conscious about the need to create the appropriate conditions as the scoping focus group discussions showed that women in these communities tended to be shy, quiet and lack the confidence and practice to express their opinions. While interruptions from third parties provided the most obvious challenges to creating a speaking platform for the women interviewees, there were other obstacles. Some of these were due to our own manner during the interview. While we tried to monitor our own interruptions and interventions, from words to body language, we were not infallible. My interpreter, in particular, was inexperienced at interviewing and tried to give women hints or leading questions when she felt they were put on the spot or needed help. Over time we both worked on becoming more comfortable with the silences and gaps, even if it meant that we did not collect all the answers we wanted or the answers did not come out the way we had intended. Rather than pressure women to answer everything or to answer one way or the other, we had to learn to respect their silences as much as their words[34]. Their silences or apparent confusion on political processes in their communities, for example, was particularly instructive.

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[34] See Jackson (2006) for the muliple reasons behind women's silence.

Regardless of these attempts to moderate our impact, we inevitably influenced how the women felt during the interview and, thus, their responses. Almost all of these women had never been asked to convey their feelings or opinions before, particularly by an outsider and a Western one at that. According to Melati, a Swedish researcher had once visited Teluk Durian to attend a meeting but that researcher had only talked with or interviewed the men, not the women. This made my interview process particularly unnatural or out of the ordinary not just because I was a Westerner[35], but because I was asking women specifically for their opinion. The strangeness of being asked for their opinion and their lack of practice in giving it was a significant, though unavoidable, obstacle. Also, by choosing to investigate the role of women in protest in the first place, we were implicitly according importance to the topic, to their experiences, and to them as protest participants and 'knowers'. Even if they had not felt the protest or their participation in it was special or important before we arrived, this was confirmed to them by being chosen to be interviewed. This most certainly influenced their answers. While some may consider this influence as distorting women's 'true' feelings or voices in the interview, I acknowledge and embrace my role (though my research aims, positionality and the way I conduct the interview) in producing interview data (Roulston 2010; Whatmore 2003).

Once the interview finished, typically after 30 to 45 minutes, we thanked the interviewee with a small gift. Despite a range of ethical questions around compensating research participants[36], my interpreter and i both felt that it was culturally appropriate (as giving little presents is common in Indonesia) and it was not so large as to coerce an unwilling interviewee to agree to participate. We allowed women to choose from a range of sarongs that we had purchased for US $2 in the local market. We decided on these sarongs because we knew they would be practical, as women use them for a variety of purposes in these villages. Also, it would be a present exclusively for the women due to the pattern. While other researchers have encountered 'over-researched' communities or 'project

[35] No matter how reflexive the interview process is, Pillow (2003) encourages us not to obscure the 'colonial' relationship of the researcher-researched and to acknowledge 'reflexivities of discomfort' (in Roulston 2010, 118).

[36] See the section on compensation or rewards in research in poor communities in Morrow (2009).

communities' where research-fatigued interviewees have learned to expect or demand compensation[37], the opposite was true in our case and both interviewers and interviewees seemed happy with the gift.

Overall I felt the way in which we conducted interviews with women protesters was successful. It was successful in terms of producing interesting interview data to fulfill my research objectives. But more than this, I felt the interview process itself was successful in affirming these women's experiences and helped to make them to feel more confident in speaking and sharing their opinions, at least in the moment. During the interview process, I wrote in my fieldwork diary:

> Nobody ever goes to these women specifically and asks them these things - asks them to believe in themselves and their knowledge enough to produce an answer. What does it mean to them when I arrive in their village and tell them that I am there to interview them? That I'm interested in what they have to say, about their contributions. Does it validate their experiences in any way? In some places (for example, Sebetaan), women did say they were happy and proud to have participated in a demo if it means that a foreigner could be interested in them and their lives and struggles. (November 12 2009)

Scheyvens and Leslie (2000) pose the question "can participation in research projects be an empowering experience for Third World women?" (126). These interviews were a one-off experience located within a specific interview space and can hardly be credited or blamed for empowering women to speak in these communities. Whether they led to an increased sense of empowerment or not I would be careful to make such leaps for fear of reinforcing neocolonial discourses or equating a 'sense' of empowerment with an 'actual' increase in power (see discussion in Scheyvens and Leslie 2000). It is, however, worth reflecting on the possible longer-term impacts of doing these interviews and consider the ethical implications of encouraging women to express themselves.

Conducting interviews with other key actors

We also interviewed other key actors in order to gain a better understanding of the range of perspectives surrounding oil palm expansion and resistance. As

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[37] See, for example, Scott et al. (2006) and Clark (2008).

compared to the interviews with women protesters, the interviewer/interviewee power differential was reversed with certain key actors[38]. Though my positionality as a rare Westerner generally allowed me privileged access to government offices, officials and documents, access to the Bupati was restricted. When we finally did obtain access through a gatekeeper I had met, the interview felt very different. There was no need to encourage the Bupati to feel entitled to speak and he firmly held on to his role as the 'knower' throughout. We felt far more timid and submissive. Whether overtly or more subtly, he decided when the interview started and stopped, how much he was going to answer, when and where we would take photos and even what we would wear. Again we went in with an interview guide but were flexible to allow the interview to flow, though tried to direct it from topics that he was clearly more comfortable with (such as agriculture and land use change, including oil palm expansion), to more sensitive ones like the protest and the role of gender in politics). Thus while the Bupati was clearly in control of key elements of the interview, we also felt that we were able to direct the interview enough to ask even the most sensitive questions.

I also encountered serious difficulties gaining access to the company in question, PT SAM, though pursued it as I felt it was fundamental to understanding the oil palm complex in Sambas. Despite having made contact with the company several times in Pontianak, I was eventually told that they did not have any information on the protest in Sambas. In Jakarta we managed to obtain an interview with a representative from PT SAM's parent company, Ganda Group. Though he was able to provide some information about Ganda Group, he quickly became suspicious and defensive when we started asking for further details, even accusing us of coming from the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil. He did not provide any exact details or figures, only informed us there was nothing publicly available. He changed his story regarding when Ganda took ownership of PT SAM when we started to ask about the protest. After a long process to try to access a company representative, it was just that much more frustrating that the only person we interviewed either did not know what they were talking about or, worse,

[38] Though I hope to avoid typical stereotypes of unilateral power relations within so-called 'elite' interviews (or interviews with marginalized populations, for that matter), I did experience notable differences in interviews with certain key actors (see discussion in Smith 2006).

lying or covering it up. At the same time, it was an instructive experience as the trouble involved in gaining any kind of solid data on the company provided insight into how difficult it would actually be for a community member in rural Sambas to interact with the company if they wanted to do so.

In conclusion, we conducted 75 semi-structured in-depth interviews in total. Along the way I encountered some major difficulties but attempted to resolve, manage or correct them where possible. As my primary research method, these interviews provided the bulk of the data used to inform this thesis.

Focus group discussions

During the pilot study, I conducted two FGDs in two separate communities (Piantus and Sebetaan). They were set up by my guide who had a strong network of contacts within and across the villages, especially contacts related to the protest. The FGD in Piantus consisted of five men and seven women; the one in Sebetaan consisted of four men and ten women. There were also numerous children present at both. Both were tape-recorded (with participants' permission) and each lasted approximately 1.5 to 2 hours. As in other research, the FGDs proved useful for this phase of exploratory research, helping orientate myself in a new field, test the feasibility of the topic and inform the interview questions used later (Kreuger and Casey 2000; Longhurst 2010; Morgan 1996, 2006). Some of the commentary and insight went beyond scoping to be analyzed and incorporated into the thesis.

While the FGDs proved successful, there were a number of challenges. The first was my affiliation with my guide Tomo. Tomo worked for the NGO Gemawan and had a strong role in organizing the protest. While Tomo's relationship to the protest allowed me privileged access to the protesters and a certain level of legitimacy and trust in these communities, his position also potentially compromised perceptions of my neutrality regarding the protest[39]. I was concerned that Tomo

[39] I recognize that neutrality is neither possible nor desirable but being seen as aligned with the NGO on a divisive issue from day one was also not ideal.

had a particular interest (whether consciously or not) of leading me to communities that had favourable experiences and opinions of him and the protest. During the FGDs I felt that people were potentially less willing to express objections to Tomo or the protest, particularly women who tended to revert to men's opinions anyhow, let alone a man seen to be of particular esteem in the community. It did not help that Tomo was not only present at the FGDs but often jumped in to ask new questions or clarify words or opinions. Thus while Tomo played an essential role in introducing me to relevant contacts and communities, I decided not to include him in the other phases of research and had to make it clear in future research that I was not affiliated with Tomo or the NGO.

The second challenge related to the composition of the two focus groups. Much of the previous research on FGDs encourages intra-group homogeneity (such as men's or women's only groups) to allow participants to speak freely (Morgan 1996). However, there are a few that point out differences within ostensibly 'homogeneous' groups and show that heterogeneous (such as mixed gender) groups may provide new and interesting insights for participants and researchers alike (Bosco and Herman 2010; Goss and Leinbach 1996). Considering the latter position, I was keen to try a mixed-gender group format to observe gender dynamics within a FGD. This was certainly informative in that men were generally the dominant or authoritative voices in each FGD. However, due to the open format of the FGDs and the internal group dynamics, it was difficult to hear the women's voices I was interested in. When I specifically targeted some of the questioning towards the women, it did encourage some women to speak, but others exhibited signs of discomfort with speaking in front of the others (by giggling or shying away, for example)[40]. Some also appeared to lack confidence in their opinions or voices, deferring to other discussants in the room especially people like Tomo or the protest or village leaders (all men) who also participated in the FGD. Though this lack of confidence may be present no matter the space, researcher or external crowd, the dynamics of a mixed-gender focus group discussion certainly did not help most of the women participants to feel

[40] Onwuegbuzie et al. (2009) suggest that when men dominate FGDs it is up to the moderator to make necessary adjustments though clearly this did not help to incorporate all women.

comfortable expressing themselves. As one of my goals of the research process was to acknowledge and hear women's voices in Sambas, I wanted to create as safe a space as possible for individual women to feel like they had their own platform to speak, rather than having to compete for their speaking space. I felt this was far more achievable through a more intimate research method such as in-depth interviews and so did not pursue the FGD method in further research stages.

Participant observation

I also used participant observation to try to capture my observations and experiences while in the field. I recorded these in a fieldwork diary, either at the time I observed something (like during an interview) or at the end of each day (retrospective observations). This included anything from informal meetings, tours of people's vegetable or rubber plots, what we ate, as well as my impressions of people and communities, and my feelings and insights into the research process or topic. I also asked for my research assistant's observations and used photos and videos to aid my memory. Where the interviews strived to capture the voices and words of the research subjects, the fieldwork diary attempted to capture my voice, thoughts and reflections. Thus, this method emphasized my role in the research process and encouraged me to constantly reflect on this position (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995).

The extent of my 'participation' in participant observation is certainly worth considering (Cook 1997; Walsh 1998). Staying with hosts in two communities provided opportunities to participate in daily life, whether in food preparation, accompanying a villager to their land or sleeping on basic mats. While these opportunities led me to see, feel and experience parts of life in these communities - from rubber tapping, to roasting fresh coffee beans, to trying a new kind of tropical fruit, to attending a gathering at a mosque - the amount of time was limited. Furthermore my ability to get my hands 'dirty' while in communities was limited by my status as a special guest. Even if I had been there longer or been able to get involved in deeper ways, I am aware that my positionality would always

prevent me from being a full participant in the ‘field’. Beyond the question of how to participate fully or whether it is ever possible to do so, perhaps is is not even desirable. For example, while staying in Sambas there was an opportunity to attend an oil palm-related hearing with some STSD and community members at the Sambas House of Representatives. However, I decided not to go. Just by attending, whether intending to observe or participate actively, I was concerned I would be seen as affiliated with STSD, with repercussions on their legitimacy as an independent movement and my legitimacy as a researcher. Also, considering the pressing nature of the member’s concerns, I did not want my presence to detract from their purpose.

As a common tool of research in the field of ethnography, participant observation tends to involve a prolonged period of fieldwork. Though this was not the case in my fieldwork, the opportunities I took to stay in communities, actively engage in participants’ daily lives as much as possible and make and record observations and feelings while I was in the field have all helped to provide a more accurate picture of the lives and environments of my research subjects. It has also allowed me to reflect on my position in the field and on the research process.

Secondary data

Finally, I collected a range of secondary sources to provide a context for the case study (Clark 1997). Much of this data was quantitative, consisting of statistical records on demographics, food security, agriculture and land use change (especially around plantation and oil palm development), though I also collected maps, policy reports and journal articles. These secondary sources were collected from a range of sources at all levels, from relevant government departments at district, provincial and state levels (including the Central Bureaux of Statistics, Departments of Plantations and Departments of Agriculture) to United Nations-affiliated programs (UN World Food Programme, the UN Development Fund for Women, and the World Bank) and a range of related organisations (such as The Women’s Journal Foundation, Sawit Watch and The Forest People’s Programme). I also collected artifacts directly related to the protest, including: photos and video,

newspaper clippings, documents related to the PT SAM plantation and permit, documents produced by STSD, and reports on oil palm.

Interpretation and translation

Language was one of the most significant barriers to carrying out this research. Although I dedicated the first months in-country to learning Bahasa Indonesia, this was of little help in Sambas where most people only speak a local dialect of Malay. Furthermore, I lacked the proficiency to understand the complexities and nuances of words and inflections, let alone the other subtleties involved in communication. The pilot study helped to identify the need for an interpreter. A problematic trial run with a young male interpreter helped me to further identify the need for an interpreter that was preferably a woman with a personal interest in the topic, willing to work long hours and prepared to translate everything. The criteria I set made it nearly impossible to find even one person for the task. English language skills are almost non-existent in West Kalimantan, let alone the capacity to translate to English. The likelihood of finding a woman to do it was even lower, particularly a qualified woman who did not already have a full-time job and/or family responsibilities. Eventually a contact from Gemawan found Ridho, who fulfilled these criteria and more. She may have started as an interpreter, not only of language but also of local culture, but she quickly became so fundamental to the research process occurring at all that even 'research assistant' seems an inadequate title[41]. In addition to the interviews we conducted together, Ridho transcribed all the interview scripts and conducted a set of follow-up interviews in 2011.

Prior to arriving in Indonesia I had naively hoped to learn enough of the language to conduct interviews myself (Watson 2004). Influenced by mostly negative accounts of interpreters, both scholarly and personal, I was wary of relying on an interpreter that could potentially compromise the validity of the research and stand in the way of building relationships with my interviewees (Ficklin and Jones 2009;

[41] Turner (2010) emphasizes how interpreters simultaneously become cultural consultants and assistants during cross-cultural fieldwork (207).

Smith 1996; Turner 2010; Twyman et al. 1999). However, I found that having Ridho as my interpreter actually opened up new avenues to understanding and relating to the women protesters. Though she did not have interview experience, her style put the women at ease in a way that I never would have been been capable of, even if I had been able to speak the local dialect perfectly. She reassured them, by touching their hands or joking with them. She would warn them before asking anything personal and put any difficult questions in their terms. She was careful about reading signs that I missed when questions or settings were uncomfortable or inappropriate. She knew the proper local etiquette and helped me when I was not clued in.

In initially focusing on what interpreters do, I had never truly considered the interpreter as a person and the potential relationship that could develop with an interpreter. Again, my experience was transformational. Ridho quickly became my closest friend and ally. We were rarely parted for the full three months, whether in the same bed in Sambas, on overnight trips or when conducting research in Pontianak and Jakarta. She motivated me and took care of me when I was very ill with dengue fever. She introduced me to day-to-day life in Sambas, from the earliness of early morning prayers to how to cook local dishes to washing my clothes by hand, and provided me with a unique look into one local woman's hopes for her country. Ridho changed my life, and not just because she helped me to survive the rigours of research but because she inspired (and continues to inspire me) with her faith, duty, generosity and kindness.

I aimed at some form of reciprocity with my interviewees, but the limited nature of our interactions made it more difficult than anticipated. However, my relationship with Ridho came as close to embodying the ideal of reciprocity I sought during the research process. This was not just in terms of financial compensation. It was also in the sharing of my own feelings and opinions with her, as much as asking for hers. Both during the research and since then, Ridho has emphasized the impact

of meeting me and the research we did together. Recently I asked her to record in an email what the research meant to her[42]:

> I learn many thing. I learn language from you, I try to be confident speaking English, I learn how to doing research, how to interview people base on their experience, knowledge, culture. And I learn how to manage my self to not interrupt when they talk, even some time I still do it ... I learn how you really want to understand what exactly happen there. And yes, I learn something about my self. I learn how to manage my self, how socialize with people, how to doing interview with some one I've never meet before and it was their 1st time being interviewed. I learn how to cook what you eat, I learn your culture, I develop my skill in English. Doing research with you give impact to me. It change my point of view about some thing. It's make me give more respect for people especially for women who work to get money to fulfill their family need [sic]. (Email dated 19 July 2011)

Ridho was always clear about how the research helped her to improve her skill set, in particular her English language and interviewing skills. The experience also helped to build her confidence and when she returned home, she found a job as a kindergarten teacher. She was also offered a job as a translator for the NGO Gemawan.

Ridho has also said that meeting me opened up horizons related to travel. For the last few interviews in Jakarta, I asked Ridho to accompany me. It was her first flight. Since then she has travelled significantly within Indonesia and obtained her first passport to go to Malaysia and then later Singapore to meet me. Over email correspondence Ridho has said:

> Having you as a friend, make me dreaming about the world. Dreaming about everything I've never even think before. And I realize now, there is nothing impossible ... About my dream, its not like a real dream, but it's like i make wish to my self. Before I meet you, i just thinking that i'll be stuck in Singkawang forever ... I never even dream about to visit other island. And you inspiring me, that i can do it. And i did. Visit other province few months ago. (email correspondence dated 20 and 25 October 2010)

Prior to the interviews, Ridho said she also felt scared to drive a motorbike but has since learned to drive one and obtained her license. She has said this gives her a new degree of freedom and independence that she did not have previously.

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[42] This is an all-too-brief attempt to acknowledge and 'hear' the voice of the interpreter, as encouraged by Turner (2010).

Ridho also told me the research helped her to see the world from a new perspective. When I first told Ridho about my research goals, she told me that women in Indonesia do not protest and we would not be able to find any women to interview, especially in Sambas. But as we interviewed more and more women protesters, it was evident that Ridho's prior conceptions (which were a reflection of broader societal norms) of what women, even poor rural women, in Indonesia do, should do and were capable of were changing. Her initial surprise that there were women protesters at all was replaced by a new commitment to learning more about these women. Whenever I doubted the direction of the research, the increasing value of the project to her as an Indonesian woman became an added motivation. With a new dedication to women's empowerment, Ridho signed up as a local volunteer with Gemawan after I left. She now regularly visits several women's empowerment groups in her local area to help them to achieve their goals. She has also received training from Gemawan and increasingly learns about women and gender in Indonesia. She said, "I enjoy my new work as a volunteer for women empowerment at Singkawang. It give me more knowledge about gender, and other important things" (email dated 24 March 2010).

Initially I was concerned with how an interpreter's positionality and subjectivity would interfere with my research. In fact my interpreter invaluably enhanced my interactions with interviewees and my understandings and observations in the field. In addition, my interpreter and I unexpectedly developed a relationship that has transformed and enriched both of our lives.

Data analysis and write-up

Prior to data analysis, tape-recorded interviews were transcribed (from the local language to Bahasa Indonesia) by Ridho, then translated (to English) by Kate, an Australian translator. I also did some of the translation with the help of a combination of web translation services. To analyze the interview scripts and field notes, I used NVivo software. Developing the right codes was a process of alternatively using inductive and deductive techniques, then melding them together. Three rounds of coding later, I eventually developed a set of codes that

both spoke to the literature *and* was faithful to the interviews. This long process of data analysis forced me to realize how different my initial interpretations of the women's stories were (due to my feelings and assumptions while in the field) from what these women actually said. What I thought I had heard while conducting the interviews was incomplete, or worse, totally inaccurate. Having tape-recorded interviews and going through a long process of analysis were invaluable to the final conclusions of the thesis.

One of the most significant challenges to analysis and writing was deciding how much of the data to actually use. I had originally planned to focus on interviews with the women protesters but also draw from key informants to validate, confirm or even contrast with the women's accounts. However, eventually I decided to focus exclusively around data generated by the women, not wanting to undermine the legitimacy of the women's voices and perspectives on their own. Even if this my be blamed for being only a partial account, I was encouraged by Hammersley and Atkinson (2006) who suggested we, "take responsibility for how we choose to represent ourselves and others in the texts we write" (258). A related consideration was how to best present these women's voices, and I was wary about speaking too much for or in place of the women, and so tried to provide a structure and style (featuring the widespread use of direct quotes) to allow their voices to come through clearly. Finally, though none of the women specifically asked to be anonymized, due to the sensitive nature of the topic and potential ethical issue, I have chosen to use pseudonyms for the protesters (men and women) and put restrictions on the thesis[43].

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to describe the key methodological considerations of this research study which led to selecting the case study approach, the specific case study in Sambas and the multiple methods of data collection. Qualitative

[43] My decision to give pseudonyms was informed by the following logic provided by Townsend (1995): "information and life stories were explicitly given to be published, but would the givers now approve of the extracts which we are publishing? We cannot know. For this reason, the people .. are identified only by fictional names" (in Campbell 1996, 58).

case study methods of the kind employed here may initially appear to be ‘ideally suited’ to women studying women (McDowell 1992, 406). However, power differentials are inevitable and must be acknowledged in the production and representation of knowledge. Throughout all the issues and considerations outlined I was aware of how my positionality (real and perceived) - as an outsider, a Westerner, a woman, a caucasian, a researcher, an ‘expert’ - influenced the production of data. While this is unavoidable, I hope that by having (a) acknowledged my influence and positionality in and through the research process and (b) conducted research as sensitively and reflexively as possible (England 1994; Rose 1997), this has produced substantial and useful (rather than perfect) primary data.

Chapter 4:
Introducing the case study

Introduction

Oil palm expansion and resistance is produced by a complex and changing combination of factors at every scale, from the international to the local. In the Introduction, I discussed how international demand and trade of oil palm may influence future expansion in Indonesia, especially due to the state's increasingly liberal reforms. Meanwhile, there is growing international or transnational activism around oil palm, linked to local resistance movements (Potter 2008; Pye 2010). However, depending on where oil palm initiatives 'land' in the country, or even within a province, this can result in quite different outcomes for oil palm expansion and resistance alike. Peluso et al. (2008) discuss how the recent Reformasi process has produced a "mish-mash of diverse, decentralised districts, each dealing with shifting and uncertain politics in differently endowed agrarian environments with different institutional and social histories of land management" (399). They point out that while it is useful to consider how the agrarian context looks in contemporary Indonesia as a whole, the uneven process of decentralisation means that it is also essential to explore the significant local variations.

As such, this chapter will investigate one small corner of Indonesia - the district of Sambas. It will first explore how oil palm expansion is likely to transform the current agrarian landscape. The second half will introduce the case of one particular oil palm development (PT SAM) and look at the sub-districts and

communities affected by that proposal, before exploring how oil palm conflict and resistance has emerged in Sambas.

Sambas district

Overview

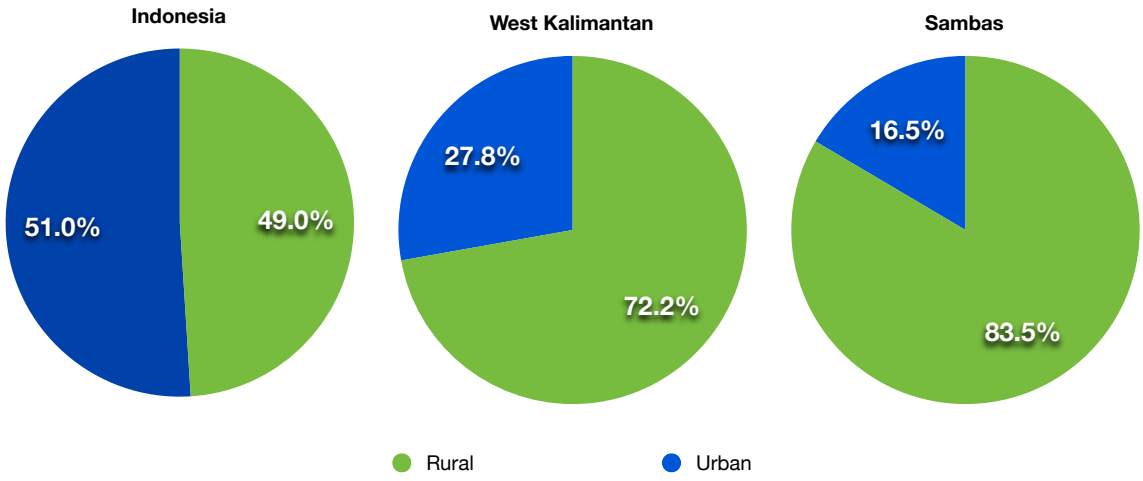
The district of Sambas is literally in a corner, in the north-west of West Kalimantan, in the north-west of the Indonesian part of the island of Borneo (see map in Chapter 1). Sambas is surrounded by the Natuna Sea to the west and borders Sarawak, Malaysia to the north and east. Sambas is one of 12 districts / municipalities that make up West Kalimantan, which is one of 33 provinces that comprise the Republic of Indonesia (see structure of administrative units in Appendix H). The district is composed of 19 sub-districts and 184 villages and has a small administrative capital with a population of 44,000, also named Sambas. The name 'Sambas' derives from a minor Sultanate who ruled the area in pre-colonial times (van Klinken 2007).

In 2008, Sambas had a population of just less than 500,000 people. Approximately 84 percent of the total population is rural, which is a much higher proportion than for the province and Indonesia (see figure 4.1 below). Almost 80 percent of the Sambas population today is Malay (van Klinken 2007)[44]. There was previously a significant transmigrant population from Madura island as well, but a series of high-profile violent conflicts in Sambas and nearby districts in the late 1990's resulted in the expulsion of 50,000 Madurese from Sambas alone and they are still

[44] Sambas used to be composed of both Malay and Dayak populations but at the end of 1998, the district was split, creating an inland Dayak-dominated district named Bengkayang and a coastal Malay-dominated district which retained the name Sambas (Davidson 2009b, van Klinken 2008). According to Dove (2007), 'Dayak' is a loose colonial-era term for the heterogeneous groups of indigenous peoples of Borneo who are pagan or, more recently, Christian. Malays are typically also considered 'indigenous' to Borneo and are 'likely' descendents of Dayaks who converted to Islam (Davidson 2009b, 125). For more on the construction and consequences of these ethnic identities see Cramb et al. (2009), Peluso (2005), Peluso (2008), Peluso and Harwell (2001) and Tirtosudarmo (2002).

prohibited from returning (Davidson 2009b)[45]. The implications of this conflict will be discussed later in this section.

Figure 4.1: Proportion of population classified rural or urban (2008)



Sources: IFAD (2010), BPS Provinsi Kalimantan Barat (2009)

The local Bureau of Statistics reports that only 14 percent of the Sambas population live below the poverty line, roughly comparable to provincial and national poverty rates. However, in terms of other key poverty and human development indicators, Sambas district is time and again listed as one of the poorest and most vulnerable districts in Indonesia, lagging behind both provincial and national averages. For example:

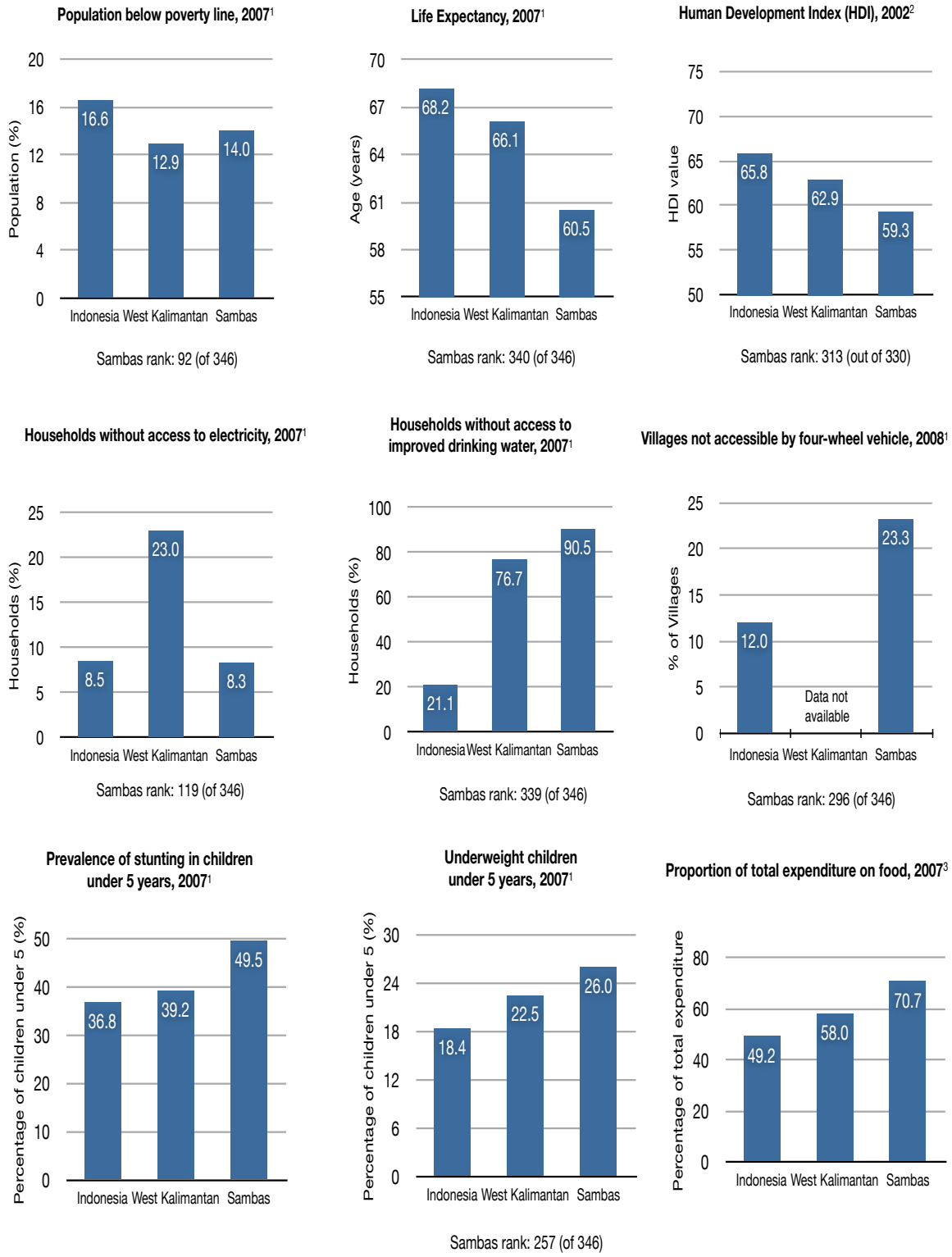
1) Sambas has one of the lowest average life expectancies in the country at 60.5 years of age (WFP Indonesia 2009).

[45] Dove (2007) describes how what started as minor altercations between Dayak and Madurese youth escalated into a "full-scale ethnic conflict" (71) in the western regions of West Kalimantan in late 1996 and early 1997. This conflict consisted of widespread arson, destruction of crops, the displacement of tens of thousands of people and approximately 1,000 deaths, some involving beheadings and cannibalism (ibid). A second conflict followed in early 1999 in Sambas specifically, this time instigated by Malay gangs led by the youth militia, the Communication Forum of Malay Youth (FKPM). According to van Klinken (2007), by "imitating the earlier Dayak repertoire of burning homes and dismembering Madurese they surprised even themselves by their ferocity and their success" (60). This second conflict took hundreds of lives and resulted in the expulsion of 50,000 Madurese from Sambas.

2) Sambas received a value of 59.3 in the most recent UNDP Human Development Index, ranking 313 (of 330) districts (UNDP et al. 2004).
3) Sambas is considered one of the most highly vulnerable districts in the country, ranking 46 out of the 100 most highly vulnerable (of a total of 346 districts), according to the WFP's (2009) Food Security and Vulnerability Atlas. The district's high vulnerability can be attributed in particular to
    a) high rates of underweight children (signifying mixed chronic and acute malnutrition),
    b) high prevalence of stunting (typically indicating persistent, long-term, chronic malnutrition),
    c) inadequate village accessibility, and
    d) lack of access to improved drinking water.

Paradoxically, while these statistics indicate high rates of chronic and acute malnutrition in Sambas, the district has relatively high food availability (in the 'High Surplus' category). The data compiled above (and in figure 4.2) suggests that poverty is much more prevalent in Sambas than what is calculated or reported as poverty in official statistics.

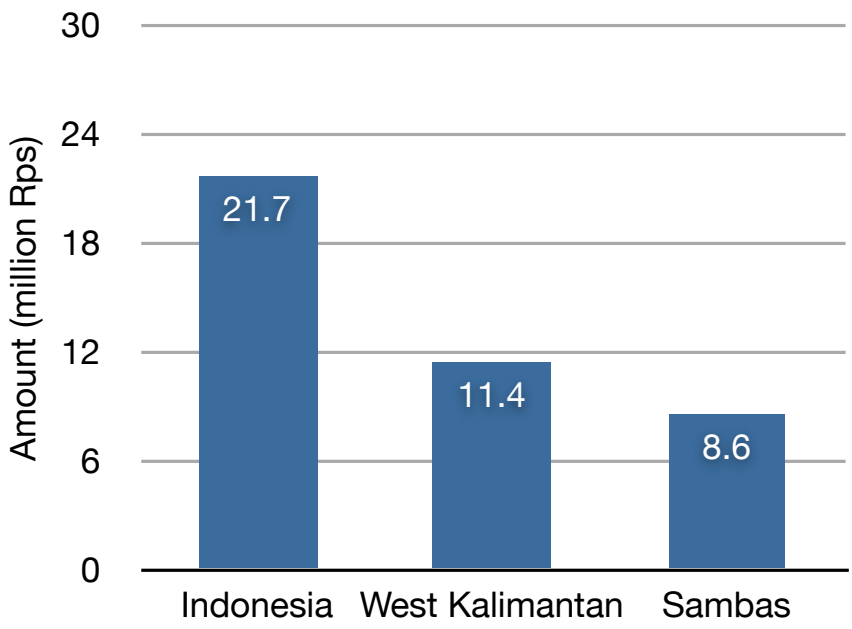
Figure 4.2: Comparison of relevant administrative units according to key indicators, including ranking of Sambas district (where available)



Sources: [1]WFP Indonesia (2009), [2]UNDP et al. (2004), [3]BPS Republik Indonesia (2010), BPS Provinsi Kalimantan Barat (2009), BPS Kabupaten Sambas (2009)

In 2008, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Sambas was 4,692 billion Rupiahs (Rps), or approximately US$500 million[46]. In the same year, average GDP per capita was 8.6 million Rps per year (approximately US$860), lower than the provincial and national averages (see figure 4.3). These relatively lower incomes in Sambas result in people spending more on food versus non-food products[47]. People in Sambas spend approximately 70 percent on food, compared to the province (58 percent) and the country (49 percent). 75 percent of the Sambas population spend less than 300,000 Rps (approximately US$30) on food and non-food items per month, and only 3 percent of the population spend more than 500,000 Rps (US$50) per month. See figure 4.4 for the proportion of population by monthly expenditure.

Figure 4.3: Gross Domestic Product per capita at current market prices (2008)

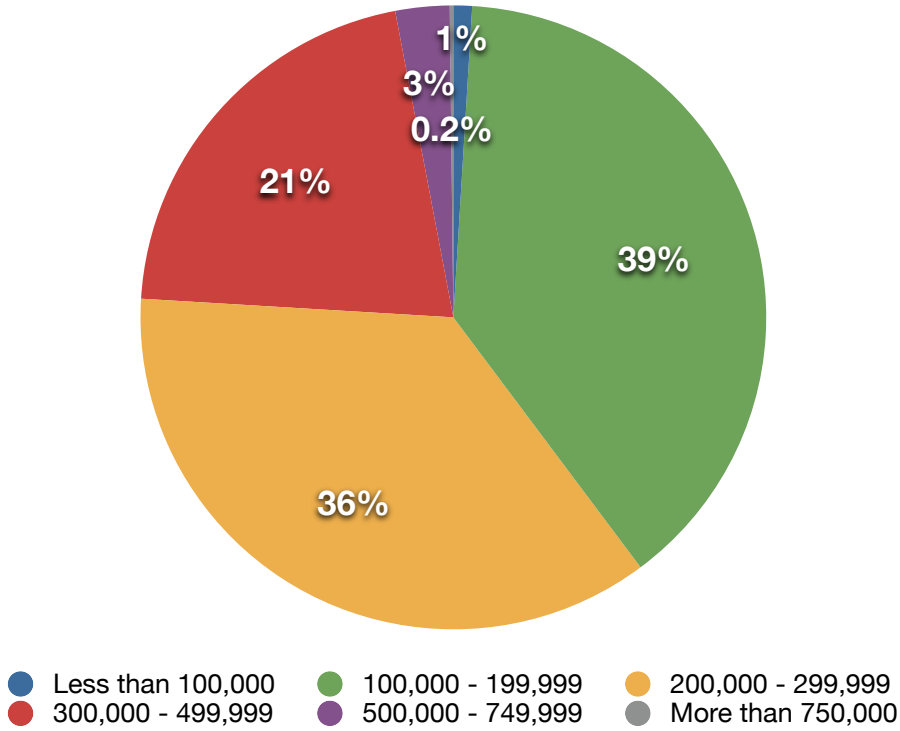


Sources: BPS Republik Indonesia (2010), BPS Provinsi Kalimantan Barat (2009), BPS Kabupaten Sambas (2009)

[46] At the time of interview, the exchange rate was 10,000 Rupiahs (Indonesian) to US$1 (United States). Though figures have obviously fluctuated since, the thesis will rely on this exchange rate.

[47] This includes housing, goods and services, clothing, durable goods, taxes, and ceremonies, among others.

Figure 4.4: Proportion of population by monthly expenditure (expenditure per capita, Rupiahs), Sambas district (2007)



Source: BPS Kabupaten Sambas (2009)

These statistics provide some insight into the demographic composition of Sambas. To summarize, Sambas is dominantly rural and generally suffers from high rates of poverty, low human development indicators and low GDP per capita. But how is Sambas otherwise represented in the literature? The scant literature available on the district and its surroundings relates almost exclusively to the ethnic conflict already mentioned (Davidson 2008, 2009b; van Klinken 2007, 2008). Scholars have attempted to explain the motivations, proceedings and consequences of this series of conflicts. While I do not have time to explore all of the related literature here, the various analyses do raise certain insights that are particularly salient to the focus of this thesis on changing agrarian relations and landscapes in Sambas.

One point is how a certain ethnic order has been written and re-written on to the landscape in West Kalimantan over time. Peluso (2008) asks us to consider the

interplay of ethnicity and resources, and the particular local histories that produced the racialisation of territories which resulted in the ethnic conflict. From the era of Dutch rule to the New Order and now the Reformasi period, identities have been constructed and mobilized by various actors in a variety of ways. Whether identities are constructed from the 'outside', so to speak, to exclude certain types of people from land or resources, or from the 'inside' to mobilize an otherwise disparate group to fight for land or against another group of people, identity has real, material, even life-or-death, consequences (also see Peluso and Harwell 2001). Another point is that until very recently there has been contention - even violence - around land issues in Sambas. The conflict is still fresh and not all the land involved has been resolved. Generally, local people did go on to purchase or appropriate the fields, gardens and houses of the Madura (Peluso and Harwell 2001, 84). That said, the violent displacement of the Madurese from their land adds yet another layer to the already sensitive and oftentimes fuzzy issue of land tenure in the region.

These insights help to contextualize the current agrarian landscape in Sambas as well as provide tools to understand how recently proposed changes, particularly the expansion of the oil palm sector, may affect socioecological relations in the future. The following sections will first describe the current agrarian landscape in Sambas, before moving on to consider the ways in which it is changing.

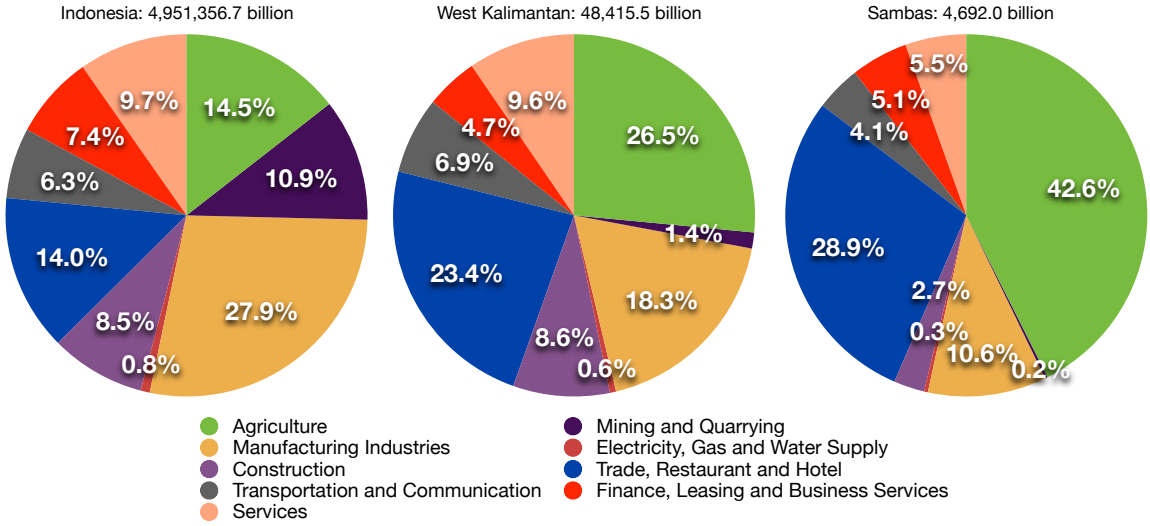
The agrarian landscape

Agriculture has a major role in the lives and landscapes of Sambas. The district economy is heavily reliant on agriculture. While Indonesia as a whole has largely diversified its economy[48], at the provincial and district levels, agriculture is still a vital source of income (see figure 4.5). In 2008, agriculture accounted for over 40 percent of the total GDP in Sambas. Its contribution rose from 1.25 trillion in 2004 to 2 trillion Rps in 2008. Employment statistics also reveal Sambas' reliance on agriculture. Figure 4.6 shows how 66 percent of males and 79 percent of females

[48] Indonesia has long been one of the world's great agricultural producers, though the share of agriculture in the Indonesian economy is declining. Despite this trend, agriculture remains the largest sector for employment at 41 percent of the workforce in 2007 (World Bank 2011).

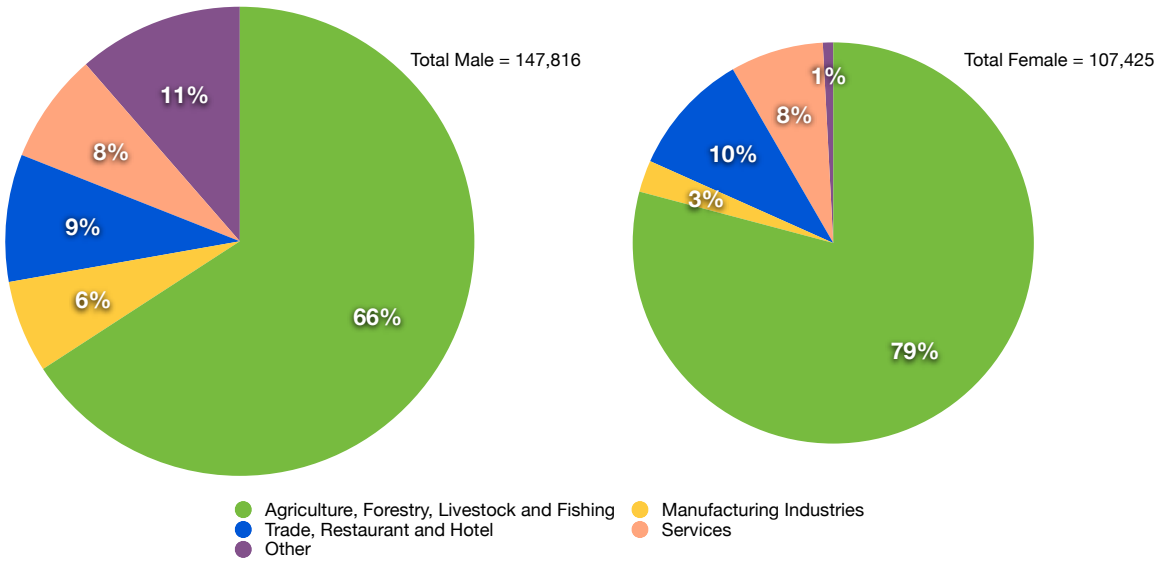
over the age of 15 were employed in the agriculture, forestry, livestock and fishing sector. Unsurprisingly, agriculture accounts for a significant proportion of land use in Sambas, with approximately one-third of all land used by plantations, wetland paddy and dry, non-irrigated gardens (see figure 4.7).

Figure 4.5: Distribution of Gross Domestic Product by industrial origin at current market prices (2008)



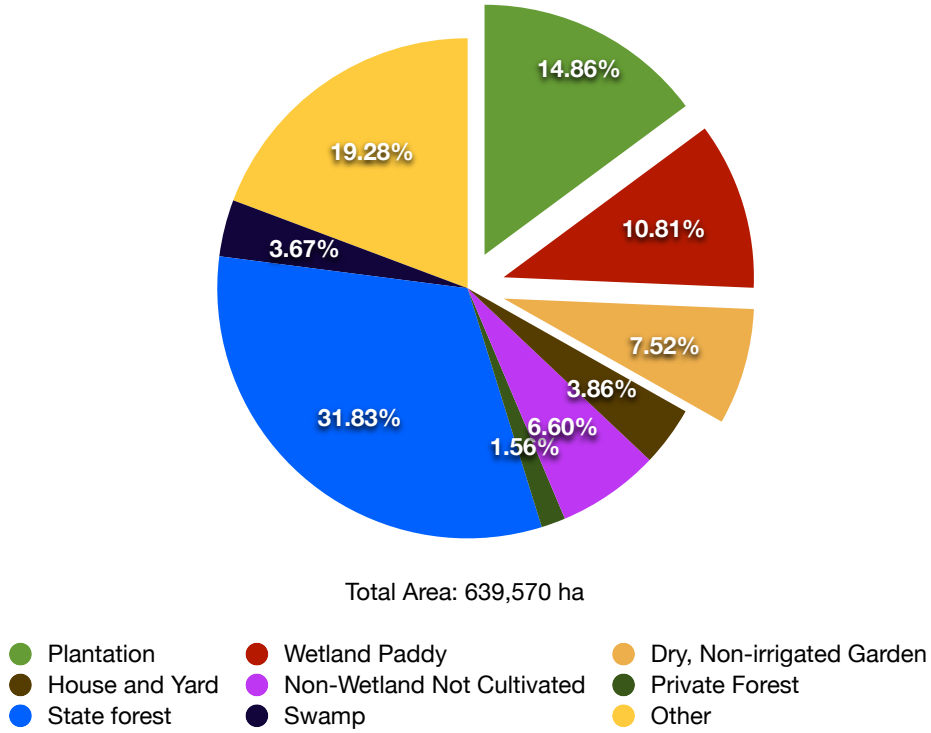
Sources: BPS Republik Indonesia (2010), BPS Provinsi Kalimantan Barat (2009), BPS Kabupaten Sambas (2009)

FIgure 4.6: Percentage of male and female population age 15 and over employed in previous week by sector, Sambas district (2007)



Source: BPS Kabupaten Sambas (2008)

Figure 4.7: Land use in Sambas district, emphasizing agricultural uses (2008)

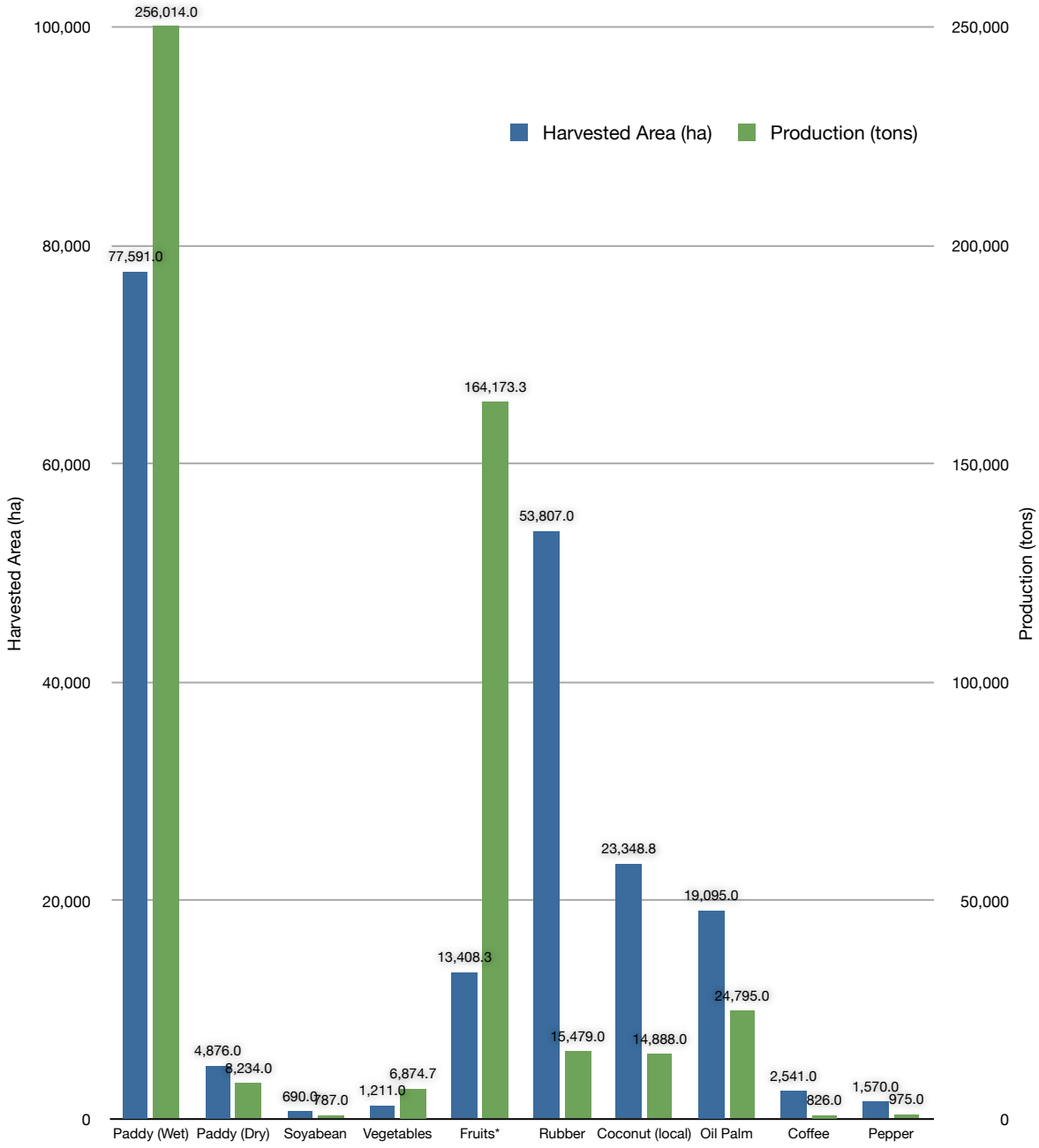


Sources: BPS Kabupaten Sambas (2009), BPS Provinsi Kalimantan Barat (2008)

Food and planation crops constitute 86 percent of agricultural-related GDP in Sambas (with livestock and fishery making up the rest). Food crops consist of rice paddy (both wetland and dryland), cassava, sweet potatoes and soybeans, which have all seen increases in production, as well as peanuts, maize and green beans, which have decreased. Rice is far and away the most important food crop both in Sambas and Indonesia. Sambas was the second largest rice producer in West Kalimantan in 2008, producing over 260,000 tons of paddy (wetland and dryland) on over 80,000 hectares of land. Sambas also produces a considerable variety of vegetables (namely, cucumbers, chinese cabbage, string beans, eggplant, cabbage, spinach and chilli), as well as fruit (durian, oranges, mango, jackfruit, pineapple, banana, rambutan, salak, sawo, soursop and breadfruit). The district is particularly notable for orange production, and also produces more durian, cucumber, rambutan, sawo and salak than any other district in West Kalimantan. In total, farm food crops contributed 1.2 trillion Rps (approx US$120 million) to

Sambas in 2008. For a breakdown of the major food and plantation crops in Sambas, see figure 4.8.

Figure 4.8: Harvested area and production of major crops, Sambas district (2008)

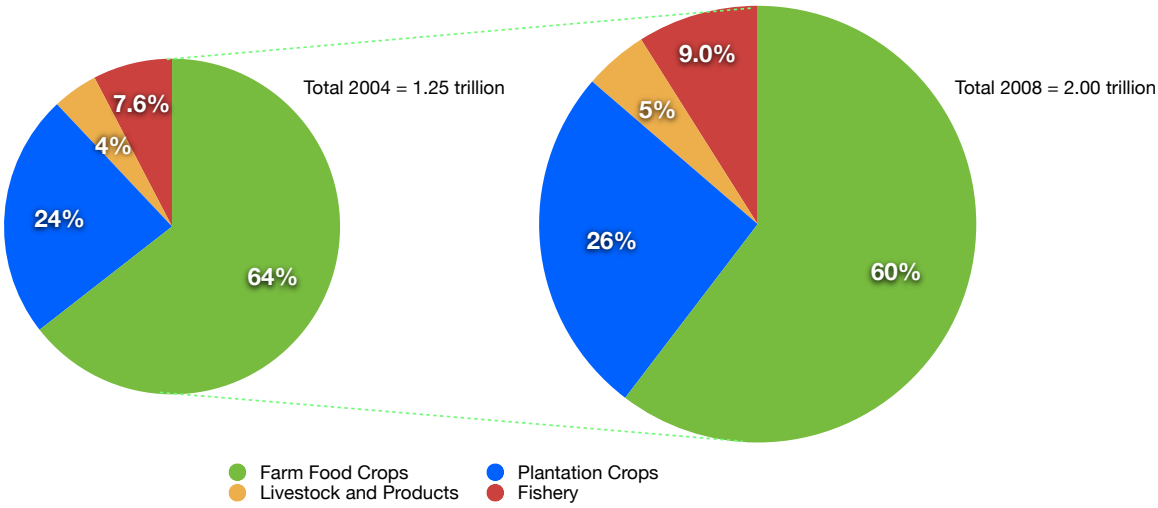


Source: BPS Kabupaten Sambas (2009)

* Harvested area of fruits estimated based on current production levels (BPS Kabupaten Sambas, 2009) and average yields for oranges (Direktorat Tanaman Buah, 2005), durians and other fruits (Sovan, 2006).

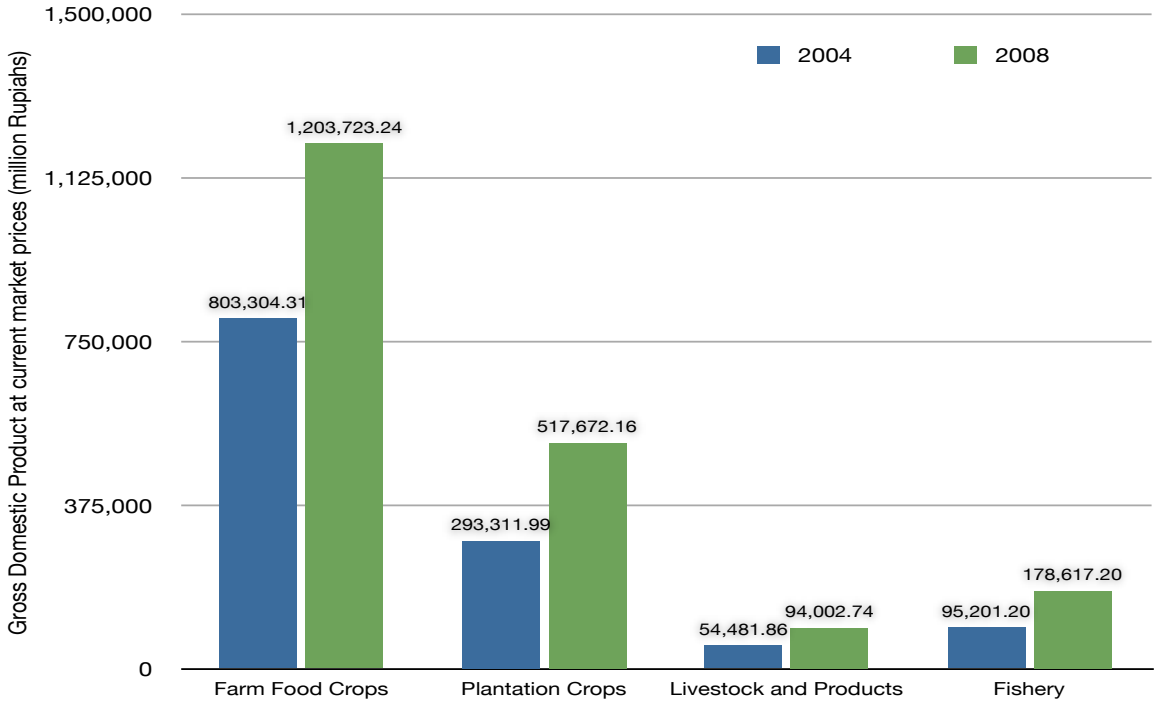
In the period 2004 to 2008, Sambas saw a relative drop in the importance of food crops to total agriculture in Sambas, from a contribution of 64 to 60 percent of the agricultural share of GDP (see figure 4.9). During this same period, plantation crops rose slightly, contributing 517 billion Rps (US$50 million) in 2008 (also see figure 4.10 for the contribution of agriculture type to GDP). Plantation crops in Sambas include rubber, oil palm, coconut (local and hybrid), pepper, coffee and cocoa, with the first three currently the most significant in Sambas (as seen in figure 4.8).

Figure 4.9: Contribution of agriculture type to Gross Domestic Product of total agriculture, Sambas district (2004 and 2008)



Source: BPS Kabupaten Sambas (2009)

Figure 4.10: Gross Domestic Product by agriculture type, Sambas district (2004 and 2008)

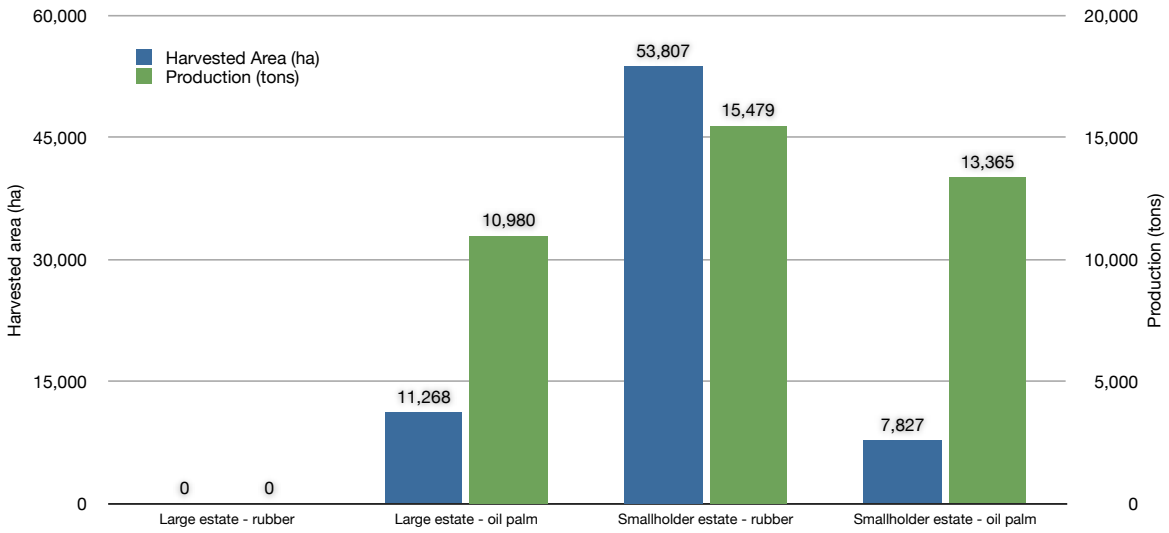


Source: BPS Kabupaten Sambas (2009)

These plantation crops are produced by smallholders, large plantations or some combination of both. Figure 4.11 shows the different ways in which oil palm and rubber are harvested in Sambas today. While oil palm is harvested by a mix of both large-scale plantations and smallholders, rubber is exclusively a smallholder crop. Despite having been initially established as a large estate crop by Dutch colonists in the early 1900s, rubber quickly became - and still remains - a firmly smallholder crop in Sambas (Dove 1993,1996; Potter 2005). Dove (1996) described how smallholders not only had an advantage over estates (due to the smallholders' lower-cost labour inputs and minimal or non-existent capital inputs), but also how rubber smallholders benefit from the rubber crop. Rubber tends to complement rather than replace existing forms of subsistence agriculture. Thanks to the mutual enhancement of resource use, households with rubber tend to be better off than those without. Rubber enables farmers to "participate in the market economy to a remarkable extent on their own terms as opposed to the market's, thereby avoiding many of the risks that the latter entails" (145). This is particularly

valuable, as many smallholders are 'politically and economically marginal farmers' (ibid). That said, while rubber production can complement swidden agriculture, subsistence production has not survived in all places. In some areas there has been an overall reduction or elimination of swidden and subsistence agriculture in favour of rubber production, which does leave farmers more vulnerable to market variations (Cramb et al. 2009, 330). While some swidden or subsistence agriculture remains, Dove's account of the century-long history of rubber in West Kalimantan emphasizes the long history of export-oriented cash crop cultivation in these areas[49].

Figure 4.11: Comparison of harvested area and production of rubber and oil palm on large versus smallholder estates, Sambas district (2008)



Source: BPS Provinsi Kalimantan Barat (2009)

This brief look at Sambas' current agrarian landscape highlights the integral role that agriculture (especially agriculture for export) plays in Sambas and, notably, how and why the dominant plantation crop - rubber - has long been produced by smallholders. While there appears to be a preference for the production of food crops, namely rice paddy (especially wetland paddy) and fruits, the composition of

[49] Padoch and Peluso (1996) emphasize how rural people in Borneo have participated in "such 'untraditional' activities as long-distance trade, cash crop production and mining" for millenia (2-3). Also see Peluso (2009).

Sambas' agricultural landscape is already showing signs of change towards more plantation crops. This is not to claim that plantation crops are a new phenomenon in Sambas. In reality, rural people in Sambas have a long history of export-oriented cash crop cultivation. However, like in many other parts of Kalimantan, the landscape is expected to change significantly due to the proposed expansion of oil palm, not only in what types of crops are produced but how. Considering the major role that agriculture plays in the lives and landscapes of Sambas, this change will unquestionably have wide-ranging consequences. The following section will investigate the district's plans for oil palm expansion.

Oil palm expansion

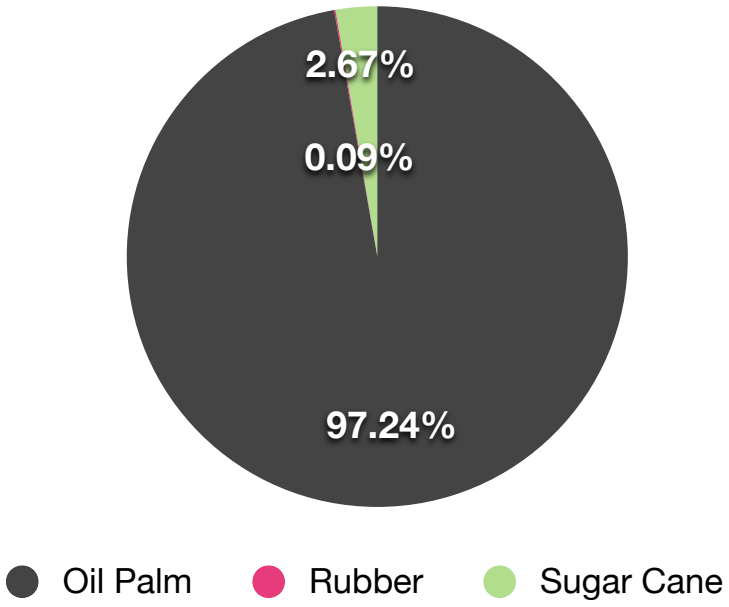
Since 2004, interest in oil palm expansion has soared in Sambas district. There are several proposals for oil palm plantations currently under consideration and, if all were approved, it could potentially result in over 225,000 hectares of land allocated to oil palm development, approximately one-third of Sambas's total land area. This signifies a potentially massive change in the agricultural landscape of Sambas, where currently rubber and coconut account for larger land areas than oil palm (which at present accounts for only three percent of the district's land area). In 2008, Sambas produced a relatively small amount of oil palm (24,795 tons), contributing only about three percent to the province's total production of oil palm (845,309 tons) (BPS Kabupaten Sambas 2009; BPS Provinsi Kalimantan Barat 2009). Plans for oil palm expansion in Sambas, however, could transform Sambas from an area dominated by the rubber plantation crop to that of oil palm.

As future oil palm development in West Kalimantan is predicated largely on the expansion of large-scale plantations[50], oil palm would transform Sambas' agricultural landscape not only in terms of what *types* of plantation crops dominate, but also *how* crops are produced. As in other parts of Indonesia, the recent surge in oil palm features one form of expansion, that of large-scale, even industrial-sized, monocrop plantations (Colchester 2011; Li 2011). These

[50] Sheil et al. (2009) find 'substantial' differences in smallholder versus large plantation patterns throughout Indonesia, with the relative share of smallholders in newly planted area much higher in Sumatra (51 percent) than in West Kalimantan ('only' 15-20 percent) (41).

plantations are facilitated by state agencies and land laws and policies, and driven by "massive" private sector investment (McCarthy and Cramb 2009, 121). As a result, while oil palm is currently harvested by a mix of large-scale plantations and smallholders, future plans for oil palm development in Sambas are dominated by private companies and large-scale plantations. In contrast to the current dominant plantation crop rubber, which is exclusively produced by smallholders, the oil palm crop is increasingly correlated with large-scale plantations. Figure 4.12 shows how almost all (97 percent) of Sambas' large plantation proposals are for oil palm.

Figure 4.12: Land area (proposed and actual) of large plantations by crop type, Sambas district (2009)

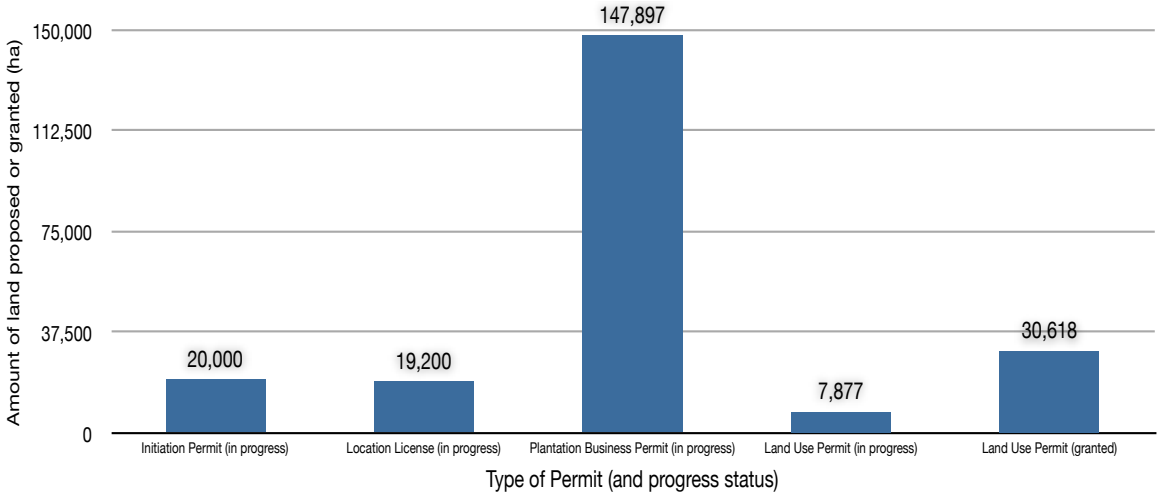


Source: Dinas Perkebunan Provinsi Kalimantan Barat (2009)

An investigation of all the proposals submitted in Sambas for large-scale oil palm plantations reveals not only the surge in demand for land to grow oil palm but also to expand via large-scale plantations. Prior to 2004, there was only one land use permit granted for oil palm development on large plantations (for 8,268 hectares of land in 1995). But in 2004, four proposals (in the form of initiation permits, or *izin prinsip*) were submitted to the district government for 43,800 hectares for large plantations; in 2005, there were an additional nine proposals for 102,370 hectares.

While this period features the largest spike, between 2004 and 2008 there were a total of 28 initiation permits submitted for 237,757 hectares of land for large oil palm plantations. Many of those who have submitted initiation permits are still in various stages of the permitting process, and certainly not all of this proposed land has or will be approved for plantation development[51]. Some applications have already been amended and rejected. Figure 4.13 indicates where the majority of permit applications currently stand. Almost 150,000 hectares of land are currently waiting to be approved for a Planation Business Permit in order to submit their final application for a Land Use Permit, after which point a company has the right to start planting and producing oil palm.

Figure 4.13: Amount of land proposed or granted for large oil palm plantations according to stage of permit process, Sambas district (2009)

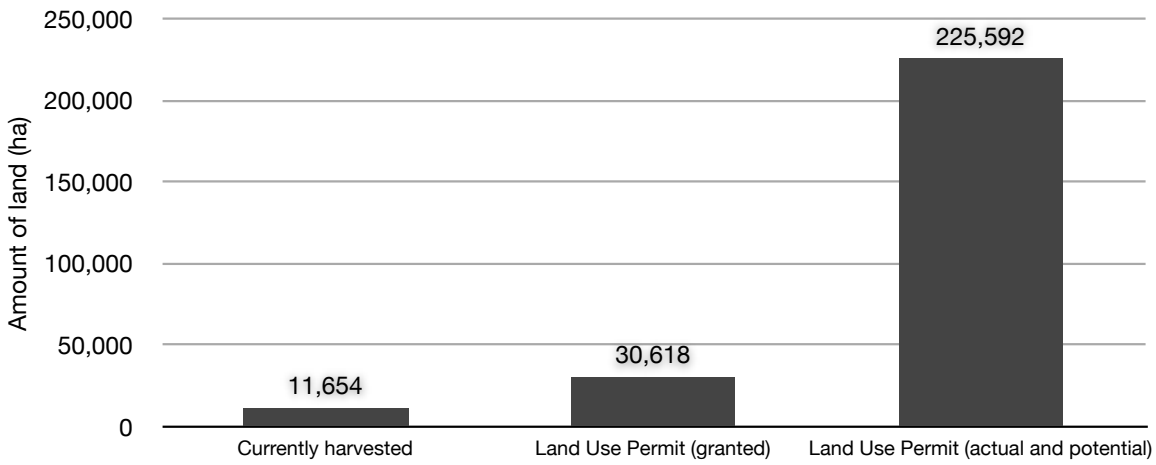


Source: Dinas Perkebunan Provinsi Kalimantan Barat (2009)

[51] In order to obtain a Land Use Permit (*Hak Guna Usaha*), companies must have first obtained their (a) Initiation permit, (b) Location License (*izin lokasi*) and (c) Plantation Business Permit (*Izin Usaha Perkebunan*). The entire permitting process, from the Initiation permit to HGU, takes about three years. It requires companies to produce a variety of documents and conduct impact assessments and consultations before the Land Use Permit can be granted. See more details about the procedure of obtaining a Land Use Permit in Colchester et al. (2006), Marti (2008), Milieudefensie et al. (2007), and Sirait (2009).

As of 2009, Land Use Permits had been granted to four proposed oil palm plantations, totaling 30,618 hectares of land[52]. Applications still in the permitting process (not yet been granted the final Land Use Permit) account for a further 195,000 hectares of land. As already indicated above, if all the proposals were to be granted, up to 225,000 hectares of land could be allocated to large-scale oil palm plantation development in Sambas alone, almost one-third of the district's total land area (see figure 4.14).

Figure 4.14: Amount of land already harvested, granted or potentially used for large oil palm plantations, Sambas district (2009)



Source: Dinas Perkebunan Provinsi Kalimantan Barat (2009)

The oil palm expansion plans in Sambas district are not unique. Increasing liberalisation, combined with high demand for oil palm globally, have stimulated a remarkable push for oil palm expansion throughout Indonesia (McCarthy 2010, 844). At the same time, the role of the state has changed from directly financing or closely managing agricultural sectors or plantations to facilitating large-scale private capital to do so. Potter (2008) finds that in West Kalimantan, government oil palm estates have since been replaced by private capital: "private enterprises

[52] Some of this land is already producing oil palm and some of it is not, hence the disparity between the total amount of land granted (30,618 ha) and the actual amount of oil palm harvested on large plantations in 2009 (11,654 ha) (Dinas Perkebunan Provinsi Kalimantan Barat 2009).

now dominate" (3). With the decentralisation of governance and fiscal balance, local districts like Sambas have had significant incentive to encourage large investments, even in the face of known company violations and complaints. In Sambas, the desire of the district government (particularly the head of the district, the Bupati) to encourage or be friendly to oil palm investors has caused "irregularities" in the issuance of permits (Milieudefensie et al. 2007, 42). This includes approving permit applications too quickly and/or before the necessary assessments or consultations have been completed. In 2007, a local Sambas newspaper reported that nine plantation companies had been illegally awarded Plantation Business Permits despite not having secured approval from the Environmental Impact Assessment Commission.

But not everybody in Sambas agrees with oil palm expansion, particularly the way oil palm companies and state actors like the Bupati have attempted to push through plans without following the appropriate procedures and without adequately consulting affected populations. Despite the intention of Indonesia's decentralisation laws to extend political accountability, in reality, local communities in Sambas have found it difficult to be involved in decision-making processes surrounding the future of oil palm development, even when it includes the future of their own land. This is partly because of 'irregular' actions which actively shut out these populations. It is also due to inadequate policies. Marti (2008) observes that though rules were initially introduced to regulate community participation in land acquisition and plantation permitting processes and in plantation management, legislation that followed tended to limit the ability of communities to object to plantations or meaningfully participate in making decisions on local agricultural development. Also, while the permit process was meant to allow community consultation, in reality those consultations rarely take place in an appropriate manner, if at all. McCarthy and Cramb's (2009) work in Jambi demonstrates how minimal state involvement allows the private sector to bargain directly with customary landowners without any clear legal frameworks and effective oversight, creating problems of accountability and transparency.

Unsurprisingly, as the oil palm industry has expanded and communities have been shut out of formal means of negotiation, the incidence of overt conflict has increased across Indonesia (Afrizal 2007; Casson 2000; Collins 2007; Marti 2008; McCarthy and Cramb 2009; Potter 2008; Pye 2010; Sirait 2009). As of 2008, Sawit Watch was monitoring over 500 active conflicts between communities and oil palm companies, though some believe the actual number of conflicts may be double that (Marti 2008, 39). Lacking access to formal political spaces, local communities have instead engaged with new informal or non-institutional forms of politics. These include the development of farmer's organisations and worker's unions, for example, as well as shorter-term contentious events, like street protests and occupations. Throughout Indonesia, everybody from independent farmers, oil palm smallholders, plantations labourers, local NGOs and international advocacy organisations, among others, have been organizing to resist and contest both private companies and local political officials to prevent dispossession, or to demand better tenure arrangements, wages or benefits.

Despite being a new 'frontier' region of oil palm expansion, there have already been a few notable cases of land conflict in Sambas district. One case, that of PT WSP in Senujuh, is particularly prolific, having received significant international attention. This will be explored later in this chapter. The other, that of PT SAM, led to a protest of unprecedented proportions in the capital of Sambas. This dramatic protest was considered a rare 'success' against oil palm expansion, and yet few details are known about the case. The rest of this chapter - and thesis - are dedicated to better understanding the circumstances surrounding the company's expansion plans, how these were halted, and by whom. It strives to not only acknowledge the presence of women in oil palm resistance but also to consider how women and gender relations shape, and are shaped by, protest participation.

PT SAM plantation

The company PT Sentosa Asih Makmur (PT SAM) is one of at least 15 subsidiaries of the Ganda Group, a relatively new Indonesian business group focusing on oil palm agribusiness. Its founder (Ganda) has strong ties to Singapore-based Wilmar International (founded in 1991), the largest oil palm trader and one of the largest agribusinesses in Asia (Forbes 2010). Mr. Ganda is not only a former employee of the Wilmar Group but the brother of Wilmar's founder and CEO, Martua Sitorus[53]. The Ganda Group provides crude palm oil to Wilmar[54] (Milieudefensie et al. 2007).

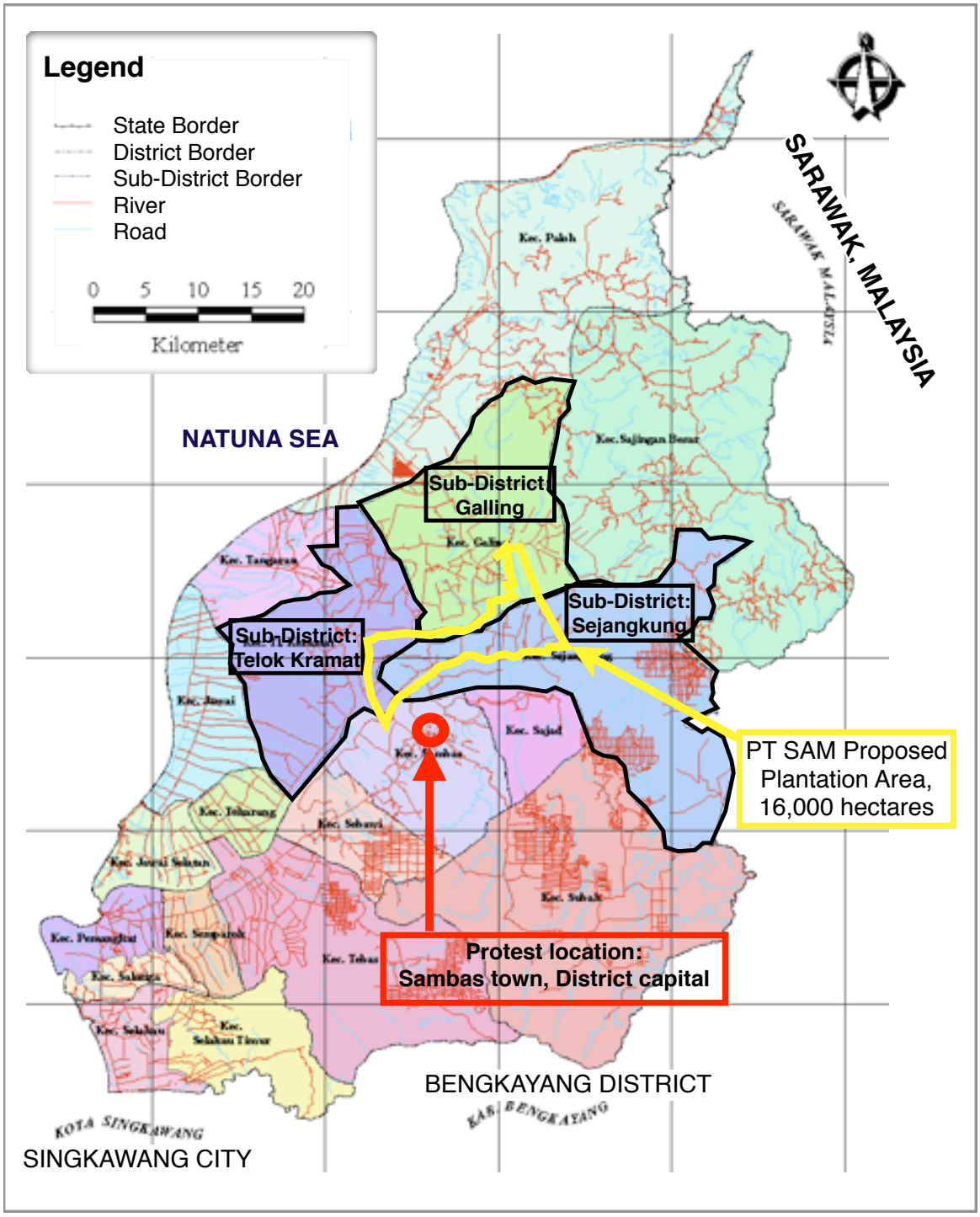
In 2006, PT SAM acquired both the Location License and Plantation Business Permit for 16,300 hectares of land to develop an oil palm plantation in Sambas district[55]. The proposed development spanned three sub-districts – Sejangkung, Galling and Telok Kramat – with the majority centered on the sub-district of Sejangkung (see map in figure 4.15). The next two sections will provide details about the (a) sub-districts and (b) communities affected by the proposed plantation. The characteristics of these settings help to provide insight into the livelihoods and environments central to this study.

[53] According to the 2010 Forbes Rich List, Martua Sitorus has a net worth of over US$3 billion, making him the 4th wealthiest person in Indonesia and 316th in a list of 'world billionaires'.

[54] Ganda is a private company and does not have publicly available information on its operations, including that of PT SAM.

[55] See Appendix D for location map of the permit.

Figure 4.15: Map of PT SAM proposed plantation area in Sambas district



Sources: BPS Kabupaten Sambas (2009), Location Map of PT SAM in Sambas district (2006)

The affected sub-districts

This section will briefly describe significant features of the sub-districts affected by the proposed PT SAM oil palm plantation. Despite the proximity of these sub-

districts, they differ in some important ways. The varying characteristics of the affected sub-districts help to contextualize the impact of the proposed PT SAM oil palm plantation.

Of the three sub-districts, Telok Kramat is the biggest, both in terms of population and area. It also has the highest population density than the other two sub-districts, which have considerably lower population densities (see all relevant demographic data in table 4.1). Compared to the proportion of poor households throughout Sambas district, only Telok Kramat has a slightly lower proportion of poor households. Both Galling and Sejangkung have much higher rates of poor households, at 35.52 and 41.27 percent of total households respectively.

Table 4.1: Demographics of Sambas district and affected sub-districts (2009)

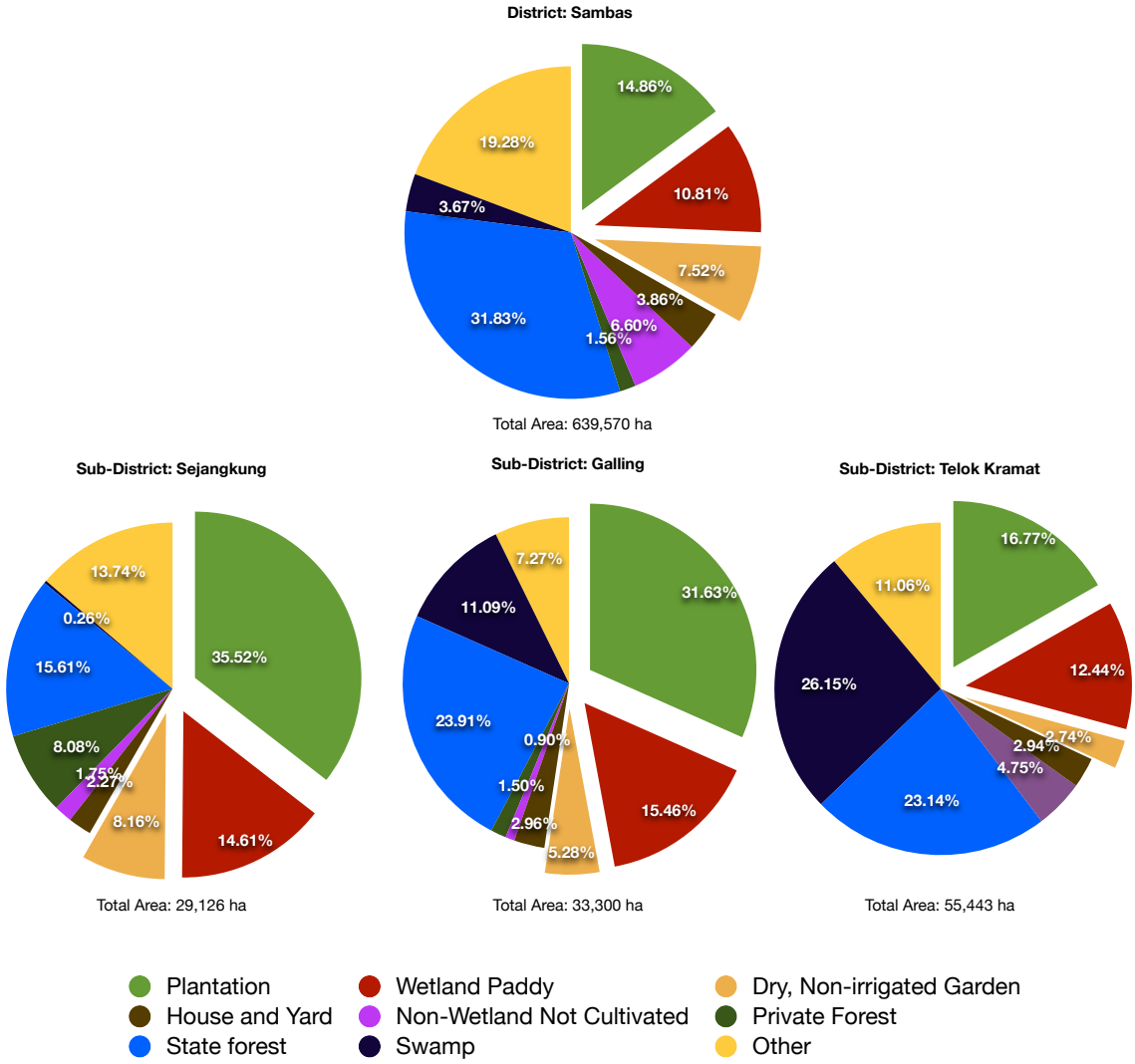
	Sambas (District)	**Sejangkung (Sub-District)**	**Galling (Sub-District)**	**Telok Kramat (Sub-District)**
Number of Villages	184	12	10	24
Population	492,799	19,089	16,173	64,303
Households[1]	107,833	4,177	3,539	14,071
If sub-district, % of Total Population of District	/	3.87%	3.28%	13.05%
Total Area (ha)	639,570 ha	29,126 ha	33,300 ha	74,110 ha
If sub-district, % of Total Area of District	/	4.55%	5.21%	11.59%
Population density (people per km^2)	78	66	49	116
Number of Poor Households	29,012	1,724	1,257	3,078
i.If sub-district, % of Total Number of Poor Households in District	/	5.94%	4.33%	10.61%
ii. % of Total Population in Given Administrative Unit	21.88%	41.27%	35.52%	21.87%

Source: BPS Kabupaten Sambas (2009)
[1]Number of households have been estimated using Indonesia's average household size of 4.57 persons (see FAO 2008b).

As in Sambas district as a whole, agriculture plays a crucial role in all three of the affected sub-districts, particularly in Sejangkung and Galling. Figure 4.16 shows how all three sub-districts use more land to cultivate wetland paddy than the district average, Sejangkung has a higher proportion of its land dedicated to dry, non-irrigated gardens, and both Sejangkung and Galling dedicate significantly more land to plantation crops than the district average. All three have

proportionally less non-cultivated land and less forest than the district as a whole. In short, this means these sub-districts are already well-cultivated and have relatively little empty or 'idle' land.

Figure 4.16: Land use in Sambas and affected sub-districts, emphasizing agricultural uses (2008)



Sources: BPS Kabupaten Sambas (2009), BPS Provinsi Kalimantan Barat (2008)

In Sejangkung, Galling and Telok Kramat, the most significant crops are paddy (rice), rubber, oil palm, coffee and pepper. As mentioned earlier, rice is the most important food crop in Sambas. The proportion of land planted with paddy (both wetland and dryland) in these sub-districts roughly mirrors that of Sambas district

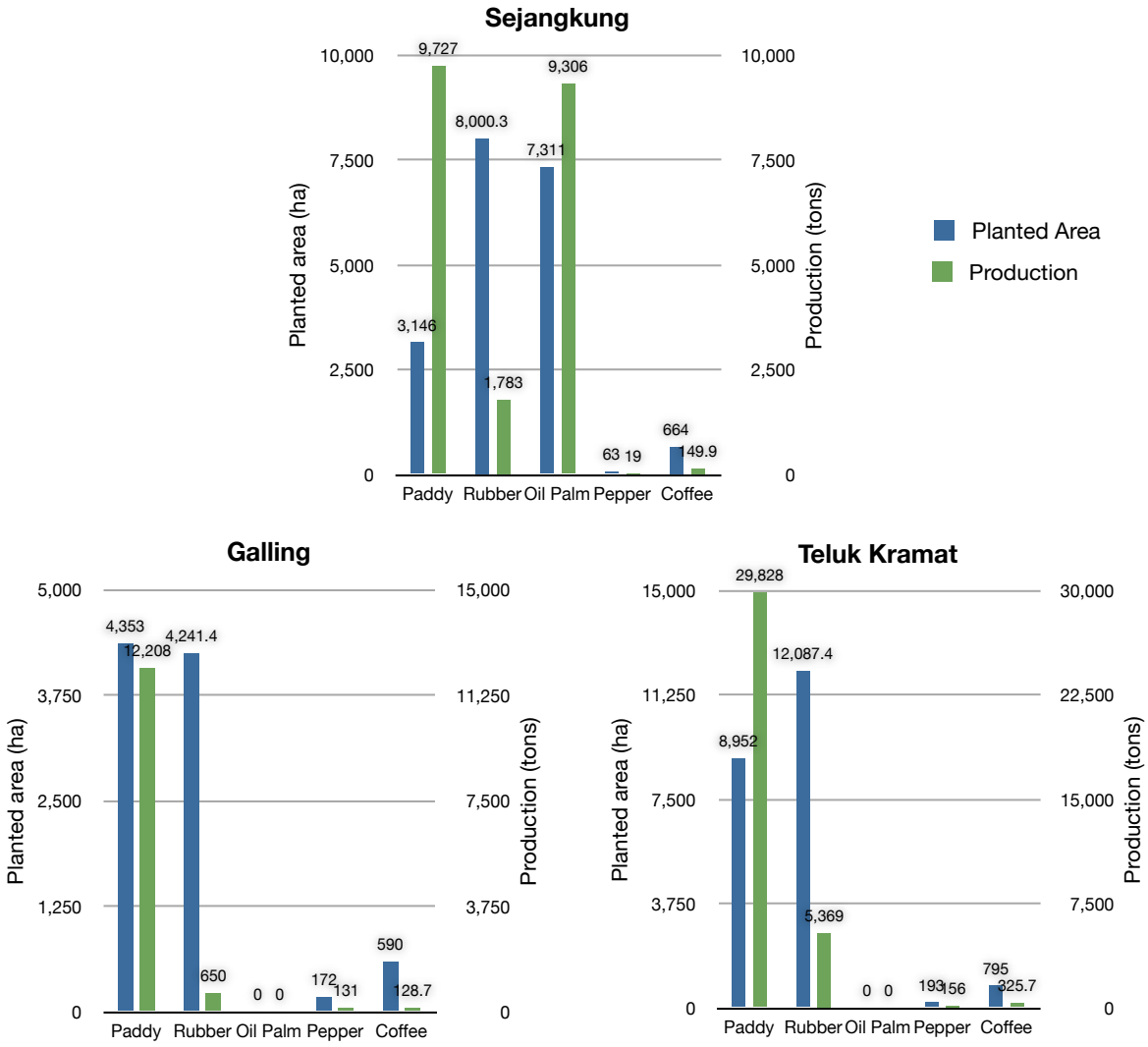
as a whole (see more detailed comparisons in table 4.2). The amount of land planted with rubber is far more variable, much more significant in certain sub-districts (Sejangkung and Telok Kramat in particular) than the district as a whole or in Galling. Notably, Sejangkung is the second largest producer of oil palm in Sambas, while neither Galling nor Telok Kramat have yet had any evidence of oil palm production (see figure 4.17 for this disparity). In Sejangkung, already 25 percent of its total land area is dedicated to oil palm production, far above the district average of three percent.

Table 4.2: Crop production in Sambas district and affected sub-districts (2008)

	Sambas (District)	**Sejangkung (Sub-District)**	**Galling (Sub-District)**	**Telok Kramat (Sub-District)**
Total Area (ha)	**639,570 ha**	**29,126 ha**	**33,300 ha**	**55,443 ha**
If sub-district, % of Total Area of District	/	4.55%	5.21%	8.67%
Wetland and Dryland Paddy				
i. Planted Area (ha)	82,467 ha	3,146 ha	4,353 ha	8,952 ha
ii. Planted Area as % of Total Area of District or Sub-District	12.90%	10.80%	13.07%	12.08%
iii. Production (tons)	264,248 tons	9,727 tons	12,208 tons	29,828 tons
iv. Productivity (tons / ha)	3.20 tons/ha	3.09 tons/ha	2.80 tons/ha	3.33 tons/ha
Rubber				
i. Planted Area (ha)	53,807 ha	8.000.3 ha	4,241.4 ha	12,087.4 ha
ii. Planted Area as % of Total Area of District or Sub-District	8.41%	27.47%	12.74%	21.80%
iii. Production (tons)	15,479 tons	1,783 tons	650 tons	5,369 tons
iv. Productivity (tons / ha)	0.29 tons/ha	0.22 tons/ha	0.15 tons/ha	0.44 tons/ha
Oil Palm				
i. Planted Area (ha)	19,095 ha	7,311 ha	0 ha	0 ha
ii. Planted Area as % of Total Area of District or Sub-District	2.99%	25.10%	0%	0%
iii. Production (tons)	24,795 tons	9,306 tons	0 tons	0 tons
iv. Productivity (tons / ha)	1.30 tons/ha	1.27 tons/ha	0 tons/ha	0 tons/ha
Coffee				
i. Planted Area (ha)	2,541 ha	664 ha	590 ha	795 ha
ii. Planted Area as % of Total Area of District or Sub-District	0.40%	2.28%	1.77%	1.43%
iii. Production (tons)	826.03 tons	149.94 tons	128.7 tons	325.7 tons
iv. Productivity (tons / ha)	0.33 tons/ha	0.23 tons/ha	0.22 tons/ha	0.41 tons/ha
Pepper				
i. Planted Area (ha)	1,570 ha	63 ha	172 ha	193 ha
ii. Planted Area as % of Total Area of District or Sub-District	0.25%	0.22%	0.52%	0.35%
iii. Production (tons)	975 tons	19 tons	131 tons	156 tons
iv. Productivity (tons / ha)	0.62 tons/ha	0.30 tons/ha	0.76 tons/ha	0.81 tons/ha

Source: BPS Kabupaten Sambas (2009)

Figure 4.17: Planted area and production of major crops in Sejangkung, Galling and Telok Kramat (2008)



Source: BPS Kabupaten Sambas (2009)

This section has briefly explored the demographic and agricultural profile of the three sub-districts affected by the proposed oil palm plantation. In general, these sub-districts are rural, poor and already use a significant proportion of the land to cultivate both food and plantation crops. Paddy and rubber production is high across all three of the sub-districts, with Sejangkung the only sub-district to be already producing oil palm. This broader description of the socioecological setting in which the PT SAM plantation was proposed will be complemented by more specific details of the affected communities in the following section.

The affected communities

At least ten communities were affected by the PT SAM proposal, of which only one or two were reported to not have protested[56]. Protesters came from six affected villages in Sejangkung, two in Galling, and one in Telok Kramat. The majority of the data was collected in five of these communities - Sebetaan, Sekuduk and Senujuh (all Sejangkung), Terikembang (Galling) and Teluk Durian (Telok Kramat). Some data was also provided by the few women who participated in the focus group discussion (FGD) in Piantus (Sejangkung). See map of protesting communities (figure 4.18). In the following, I will describe these protesting communities.

Sebetaan is the community closest to the capital of Sambas, which is the main political and economic center of the district. Yet, it is only accessible by a small uneven dirt path[57] which skirts the marshy floodplain of the nearby Sambas River. As such, the community cannot be accessed by car or truck and people and goods must be transported in by foot or on motorbike. The motorbike journey is often slow and treacherous, due to the nature of the path and several rickety wooden bridges along the way, especially in the rainy season when the agricultural land and people's yards on either side of the path are flooded. Sekuduk and Piantus are similarly located along this dirt path, several kilometers further along from Sebetaan. As such, while Sebetaan, Sekuduk and Piantus may be located closer to the capital of Sambas distance-wise than other communities, access is slow and difficult.

Meanwhile, Teluk Durian and Terikembang are situated further from Sambas but are both located on a fairly well-maintained, mostly paved road[58]. As such, they tend to have easier access to Sambas town and can use cars and trucks for transportating people and goods. While the first three communities are on or near

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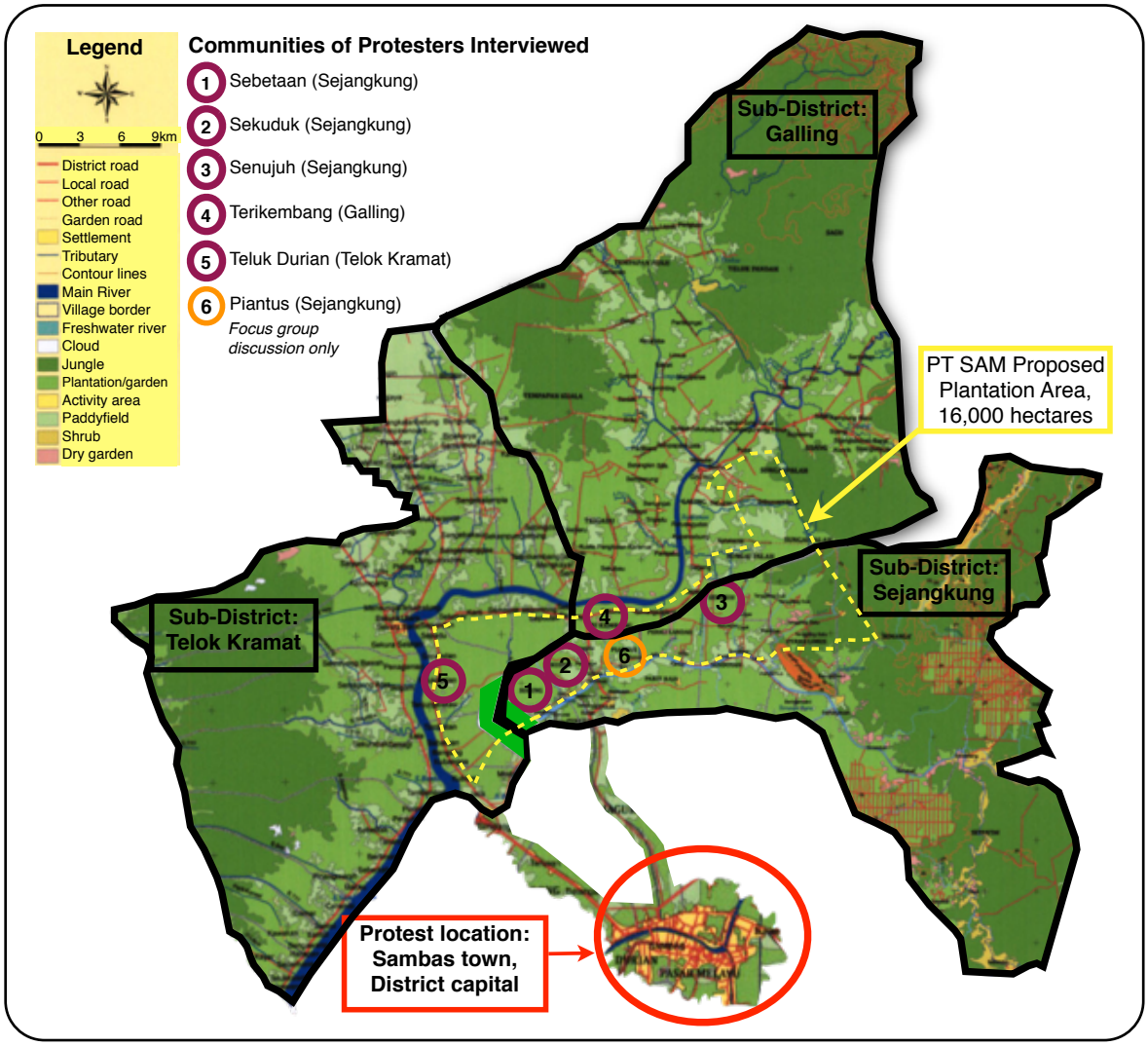
[56] It was difficult to obtain exact numbers of communities who were (a) affected, (b) attended the protest, and (c) did not attend the protest. The numbers presented here are based on estimates made by various protest organizers and participants.

[57] On government maps, this road is classified as a *jalan kebun,* or 'garden road / path'.

[58] On government maps, this road is classified as a *jalan kabupaten,* or 'district road'.

to the Sambas River, Teluk Durian and Terikembang are on or near to the Bantanan River.

Figure 4.18: Map of protesting communities



Sources: BPS Kabupaten Sambas (2009), Location Map of PT SAM in Sambas district (2006)

Senujuh is the most remote community of them all, both in terms of distance and accessibility. Though technically in the sub-district closest to Sambas town, it is located in the more inaccessible north-east reaches of Sejangkung. Though a similar garden path provides transport links with the capital (by motorcycle only), the length of the journey makes a 1.5 hour water barge trip the preferred mode of transport for most residents. The boat travels between Sambas and Senujuh one or two times a day, stopping at various other communities as it travels up and

down the Sambas River. Senujuh is located at the base of Mount Senujuh and is the only community with a considerable amount of lowland rainforest still remaining. In all of the other communities, there is very little remaining forest or empty or 'idle' land remaining. The land is almost entirely used for agricultural crops or buildings (houses, schools or mosques). Sari (Sekuduk) said:

> All the land is productive. Paddyfield and rubber. There is no more empty land here anymore, in the sub-district of Sejangkung ... Here there is no land that is neglected ... All is garden.

Some of the older women remember when there was still forest in their community and having to clear it in order to plant rubber and other agricultural crops. For example, Melati (Teluk Durian) told us how difficult it was when her and her husband had to burn trees and cut down the forest to prepare the land to grow rubber. In the FGD in Piantus, one person said, "here the land has been made into rubber plantations, for cultivation, not forest ... In Piantus there is no more forest, it's all [rubber] farms." However, not all the forest is gone. Some women protesters mention still finding or foraging food from (small) forested areas.

As the one community with a significant amount of empty forested land, Senujuh is also the only community in the sample to have been directly impacted by oil palm development prior to the proposed PT SAM plantation. In 2005, PT Wilmar Sambas Plantation (PT WSP), a subsidiary of Wilmar Group (one of the largest oil palm companies in the world[59]), began illegally clearing land for an oil palm plantation within the community's borders. Despite (a) not having the appropriate permits, (b) operating outside the area allocated to it in preliminary permits and (c) not having the community's approval, PT WSP went on to clear approximately 450 hectares of customary land in Senujuh.

Senujuh is also the only community in the study to have already experienced oil palm conflict. In response to the actions of the company, villagers reportedly stopped 31 company workers from this illegal land clearing by confiscating an excavator and five chainsaws in March 2006. The villagers also gave a public statement to express their desire to stop oil palm expansion in their village and

[59] According to Marti (2008), the Wilmar Group handles about a quarter of global palm oil output and is "rapidly expanding" its operations in West Kalimantan (50).

their regret that their village head had allowed the company to work in the area. Claiming to have mistaken the village of Senujuh with another village they were meant to be operating in in the neighbouring sub-district of Galling, PT WSP eventually paid a sanction set by the community (US$550). No effort has since been made to restore the land.

Land conflicts due to oil palm like this one in Senujuh are not unique, yet this case has received significant international attention due to the events that ensued. The case of PT WSP was highlighted in a number of reports and letters issued by various civil society organisations who accused the Wilmar Group of breaking Indonesian law, the Principles and Criteria of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil and the company's own public corporate social responsibility policies (see, for example, Milieudefensie et al. 2007). Then, in 2007, a group of civil society organisations submitted a complaint to the Compliance Advisor / Ombudsman of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), seeking to investigate the IFC's decisions to continue financing Wilmar Trading and Wilmar International (including PT WSP in Senujuh) despite the company's multiple violations (Forest Peoples Programme et al. 2007). This led to an internal audit by the IFC to evaluate its compliance with its own policy provisions (rather than evaluate the performance of Wilmar specifically). The audit showed that the IFC had "allowed commercial interests to override its social and environmental standards in making major loans to the palm oil sector in Indonesia" (Forest Peoples Programme 2009). In 2009, Robert Zoellick, the President of the World Bank, accepted the need to tighten IFC procedures and publicly announced a review of the IFC's engagement with the oil palm sector, during which there would be a moratorium on all new investment in the sector. In March 2011, the World Bank Group Framework and IFC Strategy for Engagement in the Palm Oil Sector was released. While this new finance strategy has taken on board some of the comments of NGOs and improved polices, Colchester believes that "serious weaknesses remain" (Forest Peoples Programme 2011).

Following their conflict with Wilmar, the Senujuh community were 'shocked' to learn that another oil palm company had obtained permits to their community

lands and, furthermore, that that company was closely tied to Wilmar (Milieudefensie et al. 2007). That company, of course, was PT SAM.

From permit to protest

As mentioned, PT SAM acquired both the Location License and Plantation Business Permit in 2006. However, most of the affected communities did not find out about the company, the plantation proposal and the permits until early 2008. Community leaders reported first being alerted to it by finding signs marked 'PT SAM' in land around their communities. They also heard of one community (Seburuan) where the company had started to plant oil palm seedlings despite not having the appropriate permit (let alone the consent of the local people). Though the company had already received a Plantation Business Permit, it had clearly not carried out the consultations (commonly referred to as '*sosialisasi*') with the community required at earlier stages in the permit process (Sirait 2009). The affected communities blamed both the company and the state for allowing this to happen.

The communities were upset partly because they were not informed or consulted about the proposed development and also because there was little to no 'empty' or 'idle' land for which to develop a plantation. According to law, local governments are required to clarify that land released to companies is empty or unproductive (no cultivated crops) (Collins 2007, 56). However, in the case of PT SAM, the proposed concession consisted mostly of cultivated land. As a member of the Sambas House of Representatives at the time, Almizan (Sambas) explained that the land may have *appeared* empty on maps due to the lack of legal or official ownership over land in these communities, but actually the land was very much in use. In these sub-districts, Almizan said, the land "has all been worked already for maybe tens, hundreds of years." The general lack of empty or idle land in these communities was consistently repeated by people in the affected communities (as described below and in forthcoming chapters). However it was also revealed that most households held only *Surat Keterangan Tanah* (SKT), that is, Land Information Letters issued by village heads to provide proof of land ownership.

These letters may be issued for land that has been cultivated for more than 20 years, either by individuals or a community. The letters prove customary land ownership but are not officially recognized at the state level (though can be used as a recommendation for securing official land certificates). Of the households interviewed, only one in Teluk Durian had an official land certificate issued by the National Land Agency (BPN), that is, their land ownership was officially recognized by the state[60].

Since information on district maps can differ so much from the reality on the ground, the company and the local government must go to these communities and 'look at the real state of things in the field' before making plans to develop an oil palm plantation, according to Almizan. However, in the case of PT SAM, the procedures were not followed correctly:

> The Bupati's assistant did not go to the field. The company also did not go to the field. And in the meantime the company wants things to be worked out quickly, so chop it down. Because they already have the license in their pocket. (Almizan, Sambas)

Because the procedures were not followed, the 'real' situation on the ground - that the land was already productive and thus not suitable to oil palm expansion - was not acknowledged and plans were going ahead to establish PT SAM's plantation.

It is not clear whether the company and the government would have stopped pursuing plantation plans even if the 'real' situation was known. Perhaps they did know but the government and company were still willing to push through with the development. A local NGO worker suggested that, regardless of the state of the maps or official land ownership status, it was obvious that the lands were already cultivated. However, it was not in the interest of the companies or the regional government to map out these areas accurately because it would require the company to negotiate with local communities:

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[60] Colchester (2011) cites World Bank studies which show that less than 40 percent of all landholdings in Indonesia have formal titles; the rest are held under customary tenure (6). For more on the distinction between non-certificate land through the SKT (customary, recognized locally) versus certificate land (formal, official, recognized by the state), see ADB (2010) and Ngakan et al. (2005). Also see Siagian and Komarudin (2008) on local land claims without written proof of ownership (p 14).

> That land is considered empty land ... It's as if they divide up Sambas as if it were a cake. This is for that company, this is for that company. As if there are no community areas here. (Anong, Gemawan)

While it is unclear in this case whether the company and/or government officials deliberately ignored the obvious fact that the concession included cultivated land, it would be unsurprising. There is a history of such concessions being granted to oil palm companies in other parts of Indonesia[61]. The communities involved certainly felt that the company and the Bupati were willing to overlook the fact that their land was already productive, leading them to take action to protect their land.

First, community leaders and NGO representatives initiated a long series of community meetings which led to the formation of the first grassroots peasant organisation in this region, which they named the Peaceful Farmer's Union (STSD). Newly united, representatives of the affected communities embarked on a series of hearings at the district-level House of Representatives (DPR) to voice their disapproval at the proposed development. They pointed out that all or most of the land in their communities were already cultivated by smallholders (and thus not appropriate for a large-scale plantation) and provided evidence that PT SAM was already illegally planting oil palm seedlings despite not having the required permit. Over the span of a few months a total of seven hearings were held at the DPR, one of which involved upwards of 300 villagers. But no action could be taken as the Bupati did not attend any of these hearings.

The Bupati finally agreed to meet with the affected communities in the village of Teluk Durian. According to a local community leader, over a thousand people from 11 villages came to meet with the Bupati on this occasion. The crowd was able to tell the Bupati directly that they rejected the proposed plantation. In response the Bupati promised to withdraw the company's permit. However, the letter that followed outlined the Bupati's plans to temporarily suspend the company's activities in the area, rather than permanently revoke their permit as he first

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[61] Collins (2007) find that corporations 'frequently' bribe officials to include cultivated land in a concession. Even though companies are required to negotiate with local farmers if cultivated land is included in a concession "typically, however, there was no negotiation and no compensation paid ... villagers who did not want to participate in the scheme were forced to do so through intimidation" (56). Also see Sirait (2009) and Colchester (2011).

promised. In light of this development, the community leaders decided it was time to try a new strategy. With the help of NGO partners, they organized a protest, rarely if ever seen in Sambas, to push the Bupati to respond to their demands.

On the morning of June 24, thousands of protesters assembled outside the DPR building in the small capital of Sambas. Together, they marched to the Bupati's office and stood outside demanding to meet with the Bupati. When they were told that the Bupati was away in Jakarta, they said they would wait. Many were committed to staying there as long as they had to, even overnight, to resolve the issue. The Bupati eventually arrived in the early evening. He climbed on top of a truck, from where protest leaders had been rallying the crowd, and announced that he was withdrawing PT SAM's permit to the land.

Conclusion

Oil palm expansion is already transforming lives and landscapes across Indonesia, and this process is set to continue. The investigation of this one proposed oil palm development in Sambas district emphasizes the multi-scalar mechanisms behind rural dispossession, making a contribution to literature on contemporary processes of land-grabbing (Borras Jr et al. 2010; Gerber 2010, 2011; Gerber and Veuthey 2010; Li 2011; DeSchutter 2011; Walker 2008). The findings support research in this field which explain how neoliberal processes and policies from the global to the local scales produce dispossession in the world today (Araghi 2009; Li 2010; White and Dasgupta 2010). By identifying the ways in which customary or unofficial land ownership and access facilitate dispossession in Sambas, this research contributes to similar findings in other parts of Indonesia (Colchester 2011; Collins 2007; Siagian and Komarudin 2008) and around the world (Borras Jr and Franco 2010b; Cotula et al. 2008).

Unsurprisingly, the incidence of overt conflict due to oil palm is on the rise as people attempt to resist and contest expansion plans by private companies and government officials alike. While a significant literature is emerging on the conditions or violations fuelling these conflicts, there is very little research on who

participates in these protests and how. Having set the scene for the emergence of one oil palm-related protest in the district of Sambas, the rest of this thesis will explore if and how women specifically participate in protests around oil palm.

Chapter 5:
Women, gender and rural life in Sambas

Introduction

This chapter will introduce the sample of women who protested in Sambas on June 24 2008. By investigating their key demographic attributes, their relationships with land and crops, household incomes and reliance on social welfare assistance, I aim to construct a detailed and nuanced picture of this diverse sample of women protesters. This purposive sample is not meant to be representative of rural life in Sambas, or even of their own communities. But this illustration provides a window into (a) the diverse biographies of individual women protesters and (b) the uneven processes at work within the contemporary rural environment which leads to differentiation among a relatively small and geographically concentrated sample of women. As such, these insights aim to shatter any preconceived or simplistic notions of 'protesters' and to challenge illusions of an essential 'peasant' class, let alone a generic 'rural woman' (Bernstein 2008; Bernstein and Byres 2001; Carr 2008).

Demographic profile

The sample of women protesters consists of 42 women from across these five communities. Figure 5.1 summarises the demographic profile of the sample. It demonstrates that there is not one clear 'type' of women protester, but variation

among the protesters along the following attributes: age, marital status, children, education, literacy and Indonesian language skills[62].

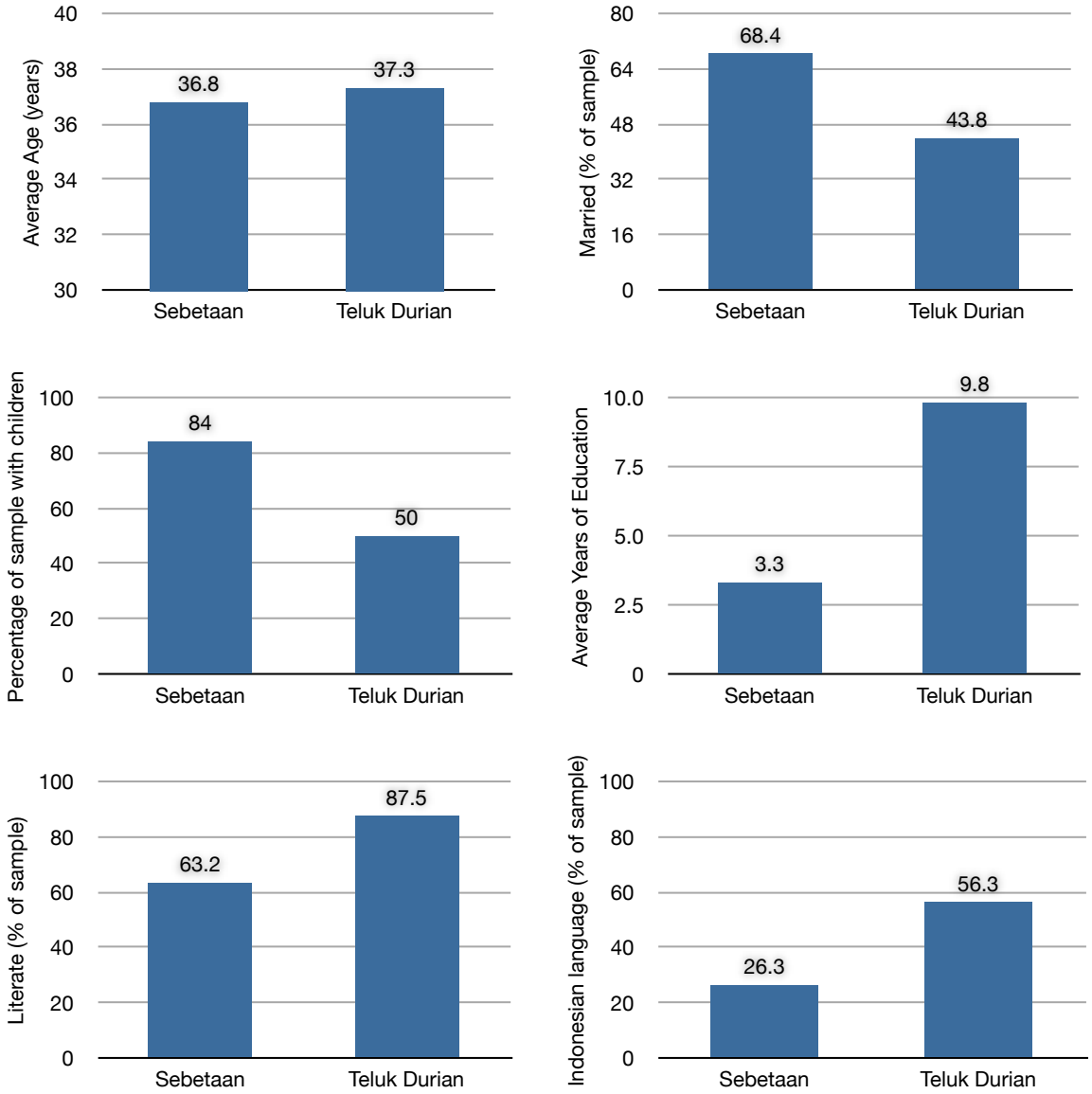
Table 5.1: Demographic spread among sample of women protesters

Attribute	Sample of 42 Women Protesters
Age	- Average age was 36.3 years - Ranged between 18 to 62 years - The majority ranged between 30 and 44 years
Marital Status	- 25 women were married - 17 women were either never married, divorced or widowed
Children	- 29 women have children - Of these, 6 are single mothers - Average number of children is 3.1
Education	- Average years of education is 6.1 - 24 women had an elementary education (one to six years) or less - 3 women had not attended school - 1 woman had an undergraduate degree
Literacy	- 33 women classified themselves as 'literate' - 5 women as 'somewhat literate - 4 women as 'illiterate'
Indonesian language	- 18 women were confident in their Indonesian language skills - 19 women said they understood some Indonesian but were not fluent - 5 women said they had little to no Indonesian skills

Demographic data also varied along community lines. While it was not possible to compare across the communities with smaller samples of protesters (i.e.. Sekuduk, Senujuh and Terikembang), a comparison of Sebetaan and Teluk Durian provide some indication of the variation between different communities[63] (see figure 5.1).

[62] In all of the communities, the primary language spoken was a local variation of Malay, not the official Indonesian language (*Bahasa Indonesia*) which is used in schools, media and government.
[63] As the sample sizes are still small, these relationships cannot be considered statistically significant but are meant to show general trends.

Figure 5.1: Variation between women protesters in Sebetaan and Teluk Durian



Only average ages are similar in both Sebetaan and Teluk Durian (and similar to the total sample). Otherwise, figure 5.1 reveals variation between the communities. In Sebetaan, a greater proportion of the women protesters are married and have children, as compared to the sample and to Teluk Durian, where only a minority are married and half have children. The average years of education in Sebetaan was much lower than the rest of the communities and almost all of the women had only an elementary education or less. Meanwhile, in Teluk Durian, the majority of women had attended high school and above (including one woman with an undergraduate degree). Titin (Sebetaan) provided a possible explanation: there

had not been a school in the community previously and transport was difficult. In contrast, Teluk Durian has always had a local school. Unsurprisingly, levels of literacy and Indonesian language (the main language of instruction in schools) were lower in Sebetaan than in Teluk Durian. Age also had an impact on education, literacy and Indonesian language with younger women in the sample generally achieving higher levels of all of these[64].

Variation in demographic data among individual women and between protesting communities reveal that there was not one only one type of woman or community that protests or is capable of protesting. Despite popular perceptions of protesters as young male university students, the fact that there is a sample of women protesters, let alone one with considerable demographic spread, demonstrates that protesters are not just men, but may also be women, may be young and old, married and single, with children and without, and with varying levels of education and literacy. While this sample shows the diversity of protest participants, this does not negate the possibility that some demographic attributes are more likely to lead to protest participation and could be a fruitful topic for further research.

Relationship with land

Despite the diversity in the sample of women protesters, all were clear about the centrality of land to their lives. That said, how much land each had and what they used the land for differed. The next part of this chapter will investigate the many varied ways that women protesters use and conceive of land.

Land tenure

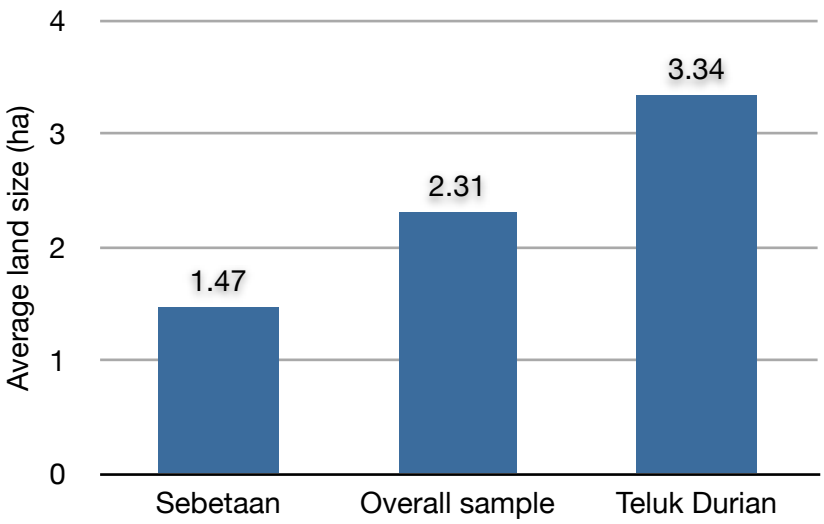
The women protesters reported owning or having access to, on average, 2.31 hectares of land each. However, this figure does not adequately represent the majority of cases. A majority of the sample, 28 (out of 41 women who responded) reported having two hectares of land or less. The most common land size (the

[64] Mandatory universal elementary education was introduced in 1984 and extended to a mandatory junior high school (nine years of education) in 1994 (Franken 2010).

mode - 15 women) was 0.51 to 1 hectare of land. Individual responses ranged from 0.16 to 15.5 hectares. Three women in Teluk Durian mentioned having land or access to land in locations other than Teluk Durian to fulfill different purposes. Wati and Nanang noted small plots of land in their husbands' villages of origin (in different sub-districts). Another, Saraswati, discussed the significant amount of land in another sub-district which they were given by the government through a transmigration scheme to cultivate oil palm. Five women said they accessed land through crop-sharing arrangements. For example, Indri (Teluk Durian) had no land of her own but cultivated rubber on one hectare of her aunt's land. For every three kilograms of rubber she tapped, she gave her aunt one kilogram and retained two kilograms to sell. Three women reported accessing others' land to grow their own rice for household consumption, as their own land was being used to cultivate rubber.

Land size varied between communities as well as individual women. As figure 5.2 shows, individual women protesters in Sebetaan have less land on average than the overall sample and Teluk Durian. Even when taking out the major outlying response in Teluk Durian (15.5 ha), the average land size of 2.53 hectares in Teluk Durian was still larger than in Sebetaan. Teluk Durian also has the largest land sizes in the sample, with women reporting land areas of 6, 8.5, 10 and 15.5 hectares of land. One of these women, Melati, notes how some people in Teluk Durian, including herself, were able to obtain extra land by buying it from their former Madurese neighbours who had all fled during the conflict in 1999 (see similar account in Peluso and Harwell 2001). Age also appears to be correlated with land tenure, with all four of the women with land areas greater than 3.5 hectares over the age of 45.

Figure 5.2: Variation in average land size



'How much land do you have?' Though initially considered a straightforward question during the closed-ended portion of the interview process, the hesitation and variety of responses proved how complicated the issue of land ownership and access is in Indonesia today. As already described in Chapter 4, households in the affected communities typically have customary, rather than officially-recognized, ownership of the land, which makes their tenure particularly vulnerable in the face of government and corporate plans for oil palm expansion. This one question brought up further questions for these women such as: Who owns land? How do they conceive of ownership versus access, in particular for those who are crop-sharing? How much is 'private', 'community', or 'state' land? Do they own or access land in different communities? How is their land officially recognized? In the interviews, many of the women did not know how much land they had and had to consult with their husbands or others present in the room to give a response. Many women would say it was not her land that she worked on, but belonged to her husband or her family[65]. This revealed that in a context of insecure land tenure, women's relationship with the land is particularly uncertain or tenuous.

[65] According to the FAO Gender and Land Rights Database (2010), even though there is no discimination in Indonesian law between men and women in land ownership, in practice women's rights for landowning are limited to their male counterparts. Male head of the households tend to be default holder of land titles. See more on the relationship between men's and women's access and control of land in a case study in Jambi province (Komarudin et al. 2008, p 12).

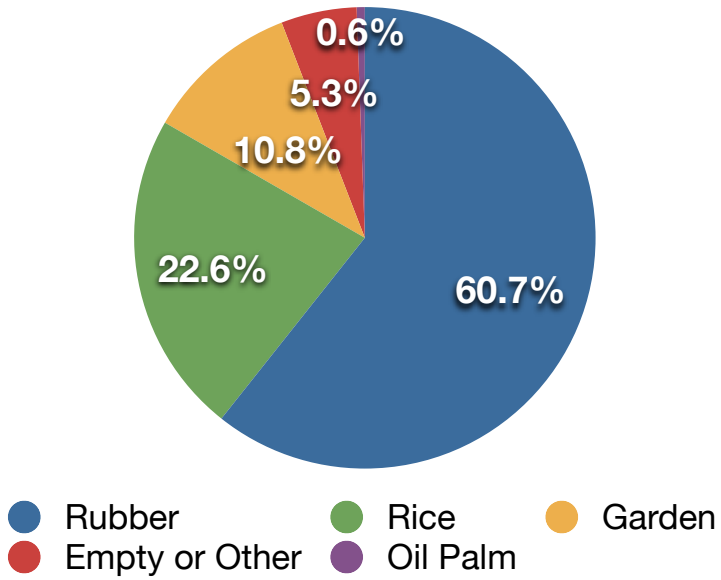
It was not in the scope of this research project to fully investigate the complexities of land ownership and access for each of the women in this study. However, the above discussion on land tenure reveals (a) the varied and fuzzy ways that women own and access land vis-a-vis their family members and (b) the complexity of land ownership and access in the affected communities, a reality common to other cases of dispossession in Indonesia (Colchester 2011; Collins 2007; Siagian and Komarudin 2008) and around the world (Borras Jr and Franco 2010b; Li 2011; De Schutter 2011). For almost all the women and their families, reliance on customary Land Information Letters (SKT) make them particularly vulnerable to contemporary processes of enclosure and dispossession (Cotula et al. 2008; White and Dasgupta 2010).

Land use

Beyond land tenure, women described how they used their land to cultivate rubber, rice and / or small garden crops for sale or for use. Far from romantic ideals of rural people fighting to protect their subsistence lifestyles, this section will reveal how for these women protesters the production of crops for sale dominates production of crops for direct use or subsistence purposes. That said, within the sample, there is great differentiation based on their relative extent of production for use versus production for sale (see Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2010b). This section will first give a broad overview of land use, then address each crop.

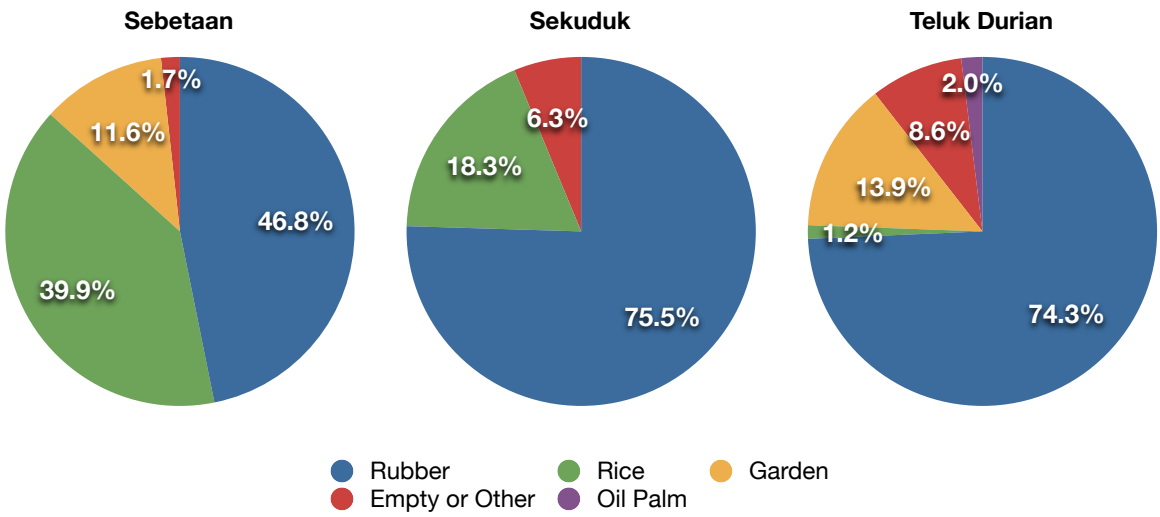
By analysing the proportion of land that each woman allocates to certain crops, it is possible to get an indication of the relative importance of certain crops for sale or use in these communities. As figure 5.3 demonstrates, across the sample the majority of land is used to cultivate rubber (for sale), then the rest is for growing rice (for use) and small garden crops (for sale and use). Five women also mentioned having empty land or land for other purposes, and only one woman had land allocated for cultivating oil palm.

Figure 5.3: Land use of entire sample of women protesters



There is variation in land use across the five communities (see figure 5.4). Women in Sekuduk and Teluk Durian reported allocating a much larger proportion of their land towards cultivating rubber, while in Sebetaan, there is a much more even split between cultivating rubber (for sale) and rice (for use) than in the other villages.

Figure 5.4: Variations in land use according to community



Rubber production

The women protesters were adamant about the importance of rubber to their lives and livelihoods. One woman from the FGD in Piantus stated: “we go out every day and tap, tap, tap [rubber]. That’s what gives us our livelihood.” Seruwati (Teluk Durian) was clear that rubber is not just her main source of income, but her only one: “rubber is our only source of livelihood. Only from rubber tapping. There’s nothing else.” Also, Mahsuri (Teluk Durian) stated, “we could not live without our rubber.”

For almost all of the women, tapping and selling rubber - which they do on a daily basis - is their main source of income. Only one woman in the sample did not receive an income from rubber tapping. While some men and husbands also tap rubber in these communities, it was evident that rubber tapping is predominantly done by the women. As Lastri (Sebetaan) stated: “it is mostly the women who do the rubber tapping.” The women discussed how the incomes they derive from rubber tapping complemented their husbands’ income from other sectors (see more in next section). For single women and / or younger respondents, they often speak about rubber tapping as their contribution to their parents’ or family income. Melati (Teluk Durian) discusses how her children go out to tap rubber daily to contribute to the family’s income but actually only her three daughters tap every day, not her son nor her husband. Only five women mention tapping rubber alongside their husbands.

The women credited their income from tapping and selling rubber for providing for their daily needs, particularly for buying food. Bethari (Sebetaan), said “we can eat because of the rubber ... rubber is how we can eat every day.” Maziah (Sekuduk) says, “the rubber that we extract brings yields each day to eat.” Melati (Teluk Durian) attributes more than just their food supply to their income from rubber: “everything is from rubber .. for buckets, for spoons, for our food, everything is from rubber.” She even credited rubber for being able to send her children to school, then university:

> Eight of my children are in school. What can the funds for that come from? From rubber, it's all from rubber. For education, buying shoes, and all the others, it's not from anywhere else. Only the rubber ... From primary school to university.

For many of the women, rubber production was essential to the history of their families and their very identities. According to Bethari (Sebetaan), "since our ancestors until now we have been working with rubber." Also, Nurbani (Sekuduk) said: "rubber is already from the time of our parents and ancestors. Already from a long time ago, rubber." Melati (Teluk Durian) said, "*kami dari getah. Semuanya dari getah*," meaning, "we are from rubber. Everything is from rubber." Many of the women linked their identities and lives to the rubber that they cultivated.

The women often mentioned liking or preferring cultivating rubber to other crops. Saraswati discussed why she returned to tap rubber even though they have a new house where they harvest oil palm in Subah. She said: "after harvesting [oil palm], we're happy to live here and tap. You can relax and sing if tapping...we like our rubber plantation. We prefer the rubber plantation to the [oil] palm." Similarly, Melati (Teluk Durian) made clear her preference for rubber over other crops:

> What's best to plant in a location like this? It's only rubber sap that seems comfortable in our thoughts, that we feel comfortable looking after, that feels good. If we wanted to plant corn we just feel so-so ... same as rice ... For us here, rubber is what we feel okay with.

Melati also points out that one of the benefits of tapping rubber is only having to work for half a day to get enough for her needs:

> My wage for half a day is enough, from rubber tapping, I get 20,000 Rps for half a day ... We're already really comfortable working just half a day. If we tap twice a day, we can get food for two days.

In general the women defended the centrality of the rubber crop to their livelihoods and identities. However, whether rubber tapping was enough to support their material well-being was less obvious and varied from woman to woman. Differentiation is produced by variation in the amount of rubber tapped and incomes received, which is partly dependent on varying land sizes used for rubber and the different capacities and responsibilities of the woman who are cultivating it. The amount of rubber produced also varies throughout the year. Weather, particularly rain, affects their ability to tap rubber day-by-day and across the

seasons, especially the rainy season. Across the sample, individual daily incomes varied from 10,000 to 100,000 Rps/day (or one to ten kilograms of rubber sold). On average, the women receive just over 40,000 Rps/day. Women from Sebetaan had the lowest average income from rubber (32,722 Rps/day) and lowest median amount (20,000 Rps/day).

The price that the women receive per kilogram of rubber also varies. At the time of interview, women reported receiving a 'good' price for their rubber (10,000 Rps per kilogram). However, they also reported that the price of rubber varies considerably over time. For example, the year prior, the price of rubber had dropped to lows of 6,000 to 7,000 Rps per kg. A few, particularly those with smaller land areas and who did not grow their own food, mentioned how these lower prices compromised their ability to buy sufficient food for them and their families. The risk and vulnerability associated with relying increasingly on crops for sale over crops for direct use has been well-documented (see, for example, Carr 2011; Cramb et al. 2009; De Schutter 2011).

Rice production

The women next allocated the largest proportion of their household land to cultivating rice. In contrast to rubber, which they produce to sell, rice is cultivated almost entirely for direct consumption by the household (none reported deriving an income from growing rice). Rice is the main staple food in all of the affected communities, as in the rest of Indonesia[66]. Of the sample who answered questions related to rice production and self-sufficiency (35 women), a majority (21) reported growing at least some rice to feed themselves and their family. Seven of these women classified themselves as fully self-sufficient in rice production, producing enough of their own rice over the year for their consumption needs. 14 women grow some rice but not enough for the whole year. As one woman In the FGD in Piantus said:

[66] According to the latest FAO (2005) data, the average per capita consumption of milled rice in Indonesia was approximately 127 kilograms per year (FAO 2005). This is far and away the most important food staple consumed in Indonesia. Between 1970 and 2002, Indonesia experienced a 50 percent increase in per capita rice consumption (Bourgeouis and Kusumaningrum, 2008).

> We grow rice by ourselves. In order to eat we grow it by ourselves. Though sometimes it is not enough ... usually in one year we don't have enough.

Of the women who grew some of their own rice, the most commonly cited period for rice self-sufficiency was three to four months, meaning they had to buy rice for eight to nine months though the actual amounts varied year-on-year. A much larger segment of the sample (14 women) reported never growing their own rice and used a significant portion of their income to purchase it.

The women reported being solely or mostly responsible for rice production within their households, with the exception of Wati (Teluk Durian), whose husband produced rice in his community in another sub-district, and Sari (Sekuduk), who hired local labourers (mostly male) to work on her 0.64 hectare rice plot each morning (paying them 14,000 Rps each) while she tapped rubber[67].

As figure 5.4 shows, Sebetaan allocates the largest proportion of household land to cultivating rice. Rice production also varied according to land size, being largely concentrated among those with less than two hectares of land. Though among this group (17 women) only three are mostly or fully self-sufficient. Of those with more than two hectares of land, there is a split between those claiming to be fully rice self-sufficient and those who do not produce any rice at all. In the first case, women with more than two hectares of land disproportionately account for those claiming to be fully rice self-sufficient. Of the six women with more than three hectares of land, five of six of them only buy, not produce, rice.

There were noticeable differences in how women discussed the importance of growing rice to their lives and livelihoods. Many of the women discussed how their livelihoods consisted of growing both rice *and* rubber simultaneously. As Risa (Sebetaan) says, "for every day needs, little by little, we produce from harvesting rice, harvesting rubber." Numerous statements on the importance of cultivating rice in Sebetaan contrasted to Teluk Durian, where very few discussed cultivating or even wanting to cultivate rice. Melati (Teluk Durian) provided two different reasons

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[67] This reflects a typical pattern throughout Indonesia where women are thought to provide 75 percent of the farm labour required for rice production (FAO Gender and Land Rights Database 2010).

for this. One, that the soil in Teluk Durian had become too acidic in the last few decades to cultivate rice so people have planted rubber in former rice plots. Two, during the 1999 conflict with the Madurese, people in Teluk Durian were too scared to go to their paddyfields. When they did eventually go to their paddy several years later, their plots had grown over and it was easier to plant rubber rather than go back to rice. Though in Teluk Durian the trend has been away from cultivating their own rice for use, this trend is not apparent in the other communities. In fact, in Sekuduk, two women reported recently obtaining extra land through crop-sharing arrangements in order to be able to grow their own rice where previously they only had enough land to produce rubber. Lusi (Sebetaan) produced rice for the first time during the year she was interviewed.

Even for those who are rice self-sufficient, it was clear they relied on the *combination* of rice and rubber rather than on just rice. Like the rest of the women they still relied on cash to buy various food products[68]. All of these women made it clear that production solely for subsistence was just not feasible (let alone desirable). It was not surprising that zero respondents were purely subsistence (grew rice or other crops solely for personal consumption and none for sale), that a number of respondents (particularly in Teluk Durian) only cultivated rubber for sale (no rice), and that most relied on a combination of selling rubber and growing rice to meet their household needs. The changing price of rice and foodstuffs was a common concern for all women.

Other agricultural production

The women also grow a variety of other garden-type crops, again typically a women's responsibiility in these communities[69]. Some women mentioned growing these crops between their rubber or rice crops and / or having a separate garden space for this. In Sebetaan, women reported growing a variety of crops, such as

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[68] Essential food products are commonly referred to as *sembako*, or 'nine staple commodities', which are: rice, sugar, cooking oil, meat, eggs, milk, corn or sago, kerosene and salt.

[69] As with rice, women in Indonesia also tend to be responsible for growing 'kitchen garden' crops, for domestic food supplies and household income (FAO Gender and Land Rights Database 2010). Colfer (2008) finds that in East Kalimantan, this kind of production tends to be the responsibility of women and central to their identity and purpose (in Cramb et al. 2009).

vegetables, coffee, cassava, coconut, rambutan and hibiscus (*Kalimbauan*). In Sekuduk, they grew vegetables like bitter beans (*petai*), eggplants and chiles and fruits like rambutan, durian and *cempedak,* a fruit similar to jackfruit. In Piantus, villagers reported growing or foraging for plants like bamboo shoots (*rebung*), fiddleheads (*pakis*), green leafy vegetables (*kangkung)*, green edible fern (*miding*), bitter bean (*petai*) and dogfruit (*jengkol*). In Terikembang, villagers grow cucumber, pineapple and watermelon. Finally, in Teluk Durian, women protesters mention growing pepper, sugar cane, vegetables like green beans, eggplant and gourd (*labu*) and fruits like pineapple and snake fruit (*salak*)[70]. While these garden crops were mostly for household consumption, a number also sold surplus (particularly, coffee, pepper, snake fruit and pineapple) for additional income. These garden crops for use seemed to be produced by women across all communities, even in Teluk Durian where they tend to purchase all their rice. In Teluk Durian, some of the women claimed to be self-sufficient in terms of vegetables and fruits. During our stay in Teluk Durian, Melati proudly marched us around the various crops in her garden, saying: "I grow beans and eggplant. I only have to buy rice. I even grow my own sugar cane so sometimes I don't have to buy sugar."

Summary

This section on the relationship of women protesters with their land demonstrates the varied nature of these women's relationships. To summarise, the majority of the sample have less than two hectares of land, though there is great differentiation in land size and production across the protesters and between communities. Almost all the women have fuzzy or insecure tenure over the land they claim as their own. There are some women, and some communities, that still grow some or most of their own food for direct use, but more who produce for sale and purchase most or all of the food. Both in terms of shifting prices for selling rubber and purchasing rice and other foodstuffs, these rural women are already very much reliant on the market. Furthermore, selling crops to buy their food does not appear to be a new phenomenon. Many of the women trace their rubber-

[70] This is certainly not a complete or exhaustive list of crops. These individual accounts are not meant to be representative of the individual villages but do provide some insight as to the diversity of crops that are variously grown in the women's environments.

producing, and therefore more or less market-dependent, livelihoods to their ancestors.

These insights challenge the commonly held (and romantic) belief that rural peasants still lead subsistence, or mostly subsistence, lifestyles. Actually, as discussed in Chapter 4, rural people in Borneo already have significant experience with export-oriented cash crop cultivation (Dove 1993,1996) and households are increasingly relying on agricultural production for sale rather than use (Cramb et al. 2009). Also, the variation in land size and different configurations of agricultural production for sale or use among the women reinforces the observations in the literature that challenge the idea of a universal or essential 'peasant' (Bernstein 2008; Bernstein and Byres 2001) or generic 'rural woman' (Carr 2008). The next sections on diversity of household income and poverty among the sample will provide further evidence of the differentiation among rural residents in Sambas.

Household incomes

For almost all of the women, cultivating and selling rubber was their primary source of income, though some also sold smaller crops such as coffee and snake fruit. Only one, Saraswati (Teluk Durian), also derived income (jointly with her husband) from cultivating oil palm. Beyond these crops, the women's household incomes were often bolstered by various other activities. Five of the women mention deriving income from owning or working at small shops in their communities. Sari (Teluk Durian) gained additional income from managing a vegetable cart in the village. Two women mention supplementing their rubber incomes by making handicrafts like baskets, rice sieves or food covers or weaving mats from bamboo or cane which they find in the forest or cultivate themselves. Three women in Sebetaan also reported occasionally working as day labourers, for example, working for their neighbours in their paddyfields.

Four of the women had previously worked outside of their communities - two in Malaysia, one for a company in the oil palm industry in another part of Sambas and one for a credit union in the Sambas capital. Aside from these women, the

practice of leaving the community for work is so common that it is likely that other interviewees had also worked outside their communities. During the FGD in Sebetaan, the women said that many women have to leave the village to find work in Pontianak or Malaysia as there is no work in the village. They may work in the timber or rubber industries (like the men, they said), or work in households or restaurants (mostly women). In the FGD in Piantus, an older woman told us that she was left to take care of her grandchildren when her daughter left the village to find an income. She said:

> Their mother is not here, she went to Malaysia. Why? Because there was no work here ... whether they want to or not, some become maids, some go to Pontianak, some to Singkawang, some to Sambas, the young ones.

A number of women (15 of 41 women) mentioned receiving remittances from their children or husbands who were employed as foreign workers (*Tenaga Kerja Indonesia*, TKI), mostly in Malaysia[71]. The largest number of women received remittances from jobs related to the timber industry in Malaysia, but other women also reported having children or husbands who worked on oil palm or rubber plantations, as well as in the service industry. Locally, women mention household incomes bolstered by their husband's jobs. Two husbands were employed as local teachers (permanent jobs with stable salaries), two husbands worked as construction labourers (on a daily, non-permanent basis), and three had husbands who worked as coolies, or general day labourers.

Not all women have access to multiple or diverse source of incomes, if any at all. Although some women had found income-generating activities outside of their households and plots of land, the decision and ability to take up outside employment was gendered. During the FGD in Sebetaan, one woman said:

> We collect little by little. It's hard for us to find income from somewhere else. We look outside, it's difficult too. Looking outside for income is difficult for us as housewives, difficult to go out. Only looking after the kids at home. It's hard.

While a small number of women in the sample do derive income from off-farm labour, most of the women relied solely on agricultural activities, whether working

[71] Besides Malaysia, one mentioned her husband working in Sumatra (island) and another in Sintang (district).

for themselves on their own plots or for others as day labourers. The only formal or permanent jobs mentioned were held by husbands, not by the women interviewed[72]. Women's higher dependence on informal and low-paid labour opportunities meant that deriving sufficient resources for the household meant relying on a husband or children for added wages or, if on her own, channelling her labour in multiple ways (cultivating for sale *and* use on their own plots, and possibly selling their labour to neighbours). However, even that was not always enough or feasible in the long-term.

The ability to labour in these ways became more difficult with age and ill health. For example, Mlathi (Sebetaan) - who reported being 50 years old but was likely much older - could only tap a little rubber every day. Her husband was blind and had not worked for twelve years, and her son sent only a small amount of remittance once per year. She said, "I have to find food on my own." On her own, she could only cultivate a little rice for consumption and used her small rubber income to support her and her husband. Another older woman from the FGD in Piantus discussed the impact of age and health:

> This old woman [pointing to herself] doesn't work anymore, but looks after the grandchildren. So I don't have a daily income ... For me to eat I have to depend on my children. I hope that my children bring me something after working. There are two of us who don't work, me and their grandfather who can't work anymore either. It's been three years, can't work, can't even walk ... we're old and sick ... he's sick. Almost had a stroke, has high blood pressure.

It was apparent that gender, age and health, in particular, limited these women's abilities to benefit from multiple (and almost always, higher) sources of income.

While these factors shaped the differential labour opportunities and incomes for individual women, their communities appeared to have an impact as well. When women provided estimates of their household's daily income, women in Teluk Durian and Sekuduk consistently received higher incomes than those in Sebetaan.

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[72] This is not unique to these communities. The labour market in Indonesia is "highly segmented along gender lines," limiting the types of work available for women and gender disparities in wages (Arif et al. 2010, 2). FAO et al. (2010) shows that there are significantly less females than males in every employment category but 'family workers', where women outnumber men four to one. Furthermore, that same study found that the male wage advantage in rural Indonesia is one of the largest among a sample of countries, at 0.427.

In Teluk Durian, four women estimated receiving more than US$10/day, with Saraswati reporting a daily income of up to US$30/day, due to her household's combination of income from rubber, oil palm and remittances. From oil palm alone, she received approximately US$16/day. At the lowest end of the income scale in Teluk Durian, five women received US$2-4/day. All five reported being solely reliant on income from their crops, with two only cultivating rubber and three also growing a little coffee, snake fruit or pineapple for sale. Four of the five women did not have husbands: two had not been married and two were once married but were now single mothers (they did not receive any income from their ex-husbands). Of the lowest-income women, Wati was the only one with a husband (though no children) and said their income from selling rubber and snake fruit was enough to support them. She explained this was partly due to the couple not having to purchase rice, as they grew enough on their own, and not having to purchase cigarettes. Wati said she was lucky to have a husband who did not smoke and hinted that if he did, their household income of US$2.50/day would not be sufficient[73].

Despite being a small sub-sample, women in Sekuduk appeared to have relatively diverse sources of income and high incomes. At the lowest end of the income scale, Maziah reported deriving her US$4-5/day from a combination of rubber tapping, occasional work in construction (husband) and remittances (son in Malaysia). At the high end of the income scale, Sari received at least US$20/day from rubber tapping in the morning, managing a vegetable cart in the afternoon and her husband's teacher wages. With upwards of three hectares of land for rubber, she could tap enough rubber to pay labourers to work on her paddyfields and still profit. So she not only had the highest income but did not have to spend any of it purchasing rice. Only Siska derived her income solely from rubber but, due to having two hectares that both her and her husband tapped, she received approximately US$8-9/day from rubber alone.

[73] See Damayanti et al. (2010) and Semba et al. (2007) for more on the relationship between poverty and cigarette expenditure in Indonesia.

Compare these diverse (and higher) sources of income to Sebetaan, where daily household incomes were relatively lower. Only a few women reporting incomes higher than US$10/day and nine (of 19 women) received only US$1-2/day to support their entire household. Three of these women derived their income from rubber alone. They did not have husbands or children, and relied on their families for accommodation and / or land access. Two other women in the lowest income bracket also reported being almost wholly reliant on their rubber income (US $1-1.10/day) but each had one child to support as well. Despite both of them having husbands working in Malaysia, they reported that their husbands either did not yet receive sufficient income to send remittances home or only sent a small amount, Meri did not grow much of her own rice and thus had to spend a portion of her US$1.10/day to purchase rice for herself and her child. On the other hand, Lastri allocated half of her 0.8 hectare land plot to grow rice. She reported that this was enough to feed her and her child for the entire year, thus allowing her to spend her US$1/day on other household needs beyond rice. Three other women in the lowest income bracket in Sebetaan all reported receiving very low incomes US$1.20-1.50/day, even with the small help of remittances or the odd daily work in the community. All three reported growing their own rice on plots of less than 0.5 hectares, but said it was not enough to feed their households and all had to purchase rice for the majority of the year. Only one woman (Lusi) relied solely on her husband's remittance and did not tap rubber at all.

Even among this small sample of women, it is clear that smallholder agriculture alone is insufficient and most bolster their incomes through a range of other activities that may not be seen as 'rural' or 'agricultural' in the traditional sense. Following Bernstein (2008), this is a case of 'dissolving identities' or dissolving distinctions' (14), as the distinction between 'rural'/'urban' or agricultural/non-agricultural breaks down as rural households diversify their livelihoods with additional sources of income derived from, among other things, income from urban areas or non-agricultural activities. While almost all of the women in the sample say they rely on smallholder agriculture, actually their sources of household income are multiple and diverse. The reality of rural livelihood diversification is already well-discussed in the literature (see Barrett et al. 2001; Ellis 1998). Though

many of the women protesters benefit from diverse sources of income within their household, factors such as gender and marital status, age, health and community limit some households' capacities to diversify their livelihood strategies. This results in (a) differentiation among the sample of women and (b) some of the poorer women in the sample reporting incomes insufficient to meet their needs. The prevalence of poverty and reliance on welfare within the sample of women protesters will be explored in the next section.

Poverty and social welfare assistance

In the earlier context chapter, it was revealed that Sambas district has lower average Gross Domestic Product per capita and lower average life expectancy, as compared to the rest of West Kalimantan and Indonesia, as well as one of the highest rates of food insecurity and vulnerability in the country. Interviews with women protesters shed light on the prevalence of low incomes in rural communities in Sambas as well as the potential impact that insufficient incomes has on basic human development indicators.

As elaborated above, estimates of household income varied. So did the women's perceptions of whether those incomes were sufficient to meet their household needs. For example, Lastri (Sebetaan) had one of the lowest estimated incomes (approximately US$1-1.50/day) but said it was enough because there was only her and her child and she grew sufficient rice for consumption. Meanwhile, Hikmah had a similar income but said it was not enough for her needs. Hikmah, a widow, had less land than Lastri (0.4 hectares in total) and could only derive a small income from rubber tapping and remittances from her son in Malaysia. She cultivated a little rice as well, but not enough for most of the year. She had to live in her sister's house and told us that she did not have enough money and life was hard. She said normally they could only afford to eat twice per day and could not afford to buy protein, like fish, eggs or chicken. They may eat either fish or eggs twice per week and chicken once per year during Ramadan. She said she had to believe that Allah would give her the sustenance she needed. Hikmah's mother, who was also involved in the conversation, cried when we discussed the various

foods they could or could not afford, telling us she was sad thinking about how poor her children are.

The different accounts of poverty provided by Lastri and Hikmah show how other factors beyond household income need to be taken into account when considering the condition of the women protesters, particularly in terms of poverty. In general, the feasibility of household incomes to meet needs in these communities seemed to be influenced by: the number of people in the household, the age and income-generating capacity of household members, the number and diversity of income-generating activities, the season or time of year (particularly those who were mostly or solely dependent on crops), the amount of rice produced versus purchased, and what were classified as household needs (from food and education, to cigarettes).

Several of the women confidently said that their daily incomes were sufficient to meet their household needs. Several others were more hesitant and, used the Indonesian terms '*cukup-cukupan'* and *'pas-pasan'*. This technically means their incomes are adequate or just enough to get by but, according to my interpreter, it was a more polite way of saying their household income do not meet their needs. In the FGD in Sebetaan, one woman said, "if we want to eat, it's difficult. Even just to eat! ... we feel we don't have enough ... it's hard to look for income. It's so hard to get income day by day." Another said, "we do not have much income, just a little. Just US$2.50/day. And have to support four children." At least three of the women hinted that though their incomes may not always be enough if they were 'clever' they could manage to meet their needs. A few others said that small incomes or not, it had to be enough and relied on running up small debts at their local village store in order to purchase the goods they needed even if they did not have enough money.

One dimension to highlight is the day-to-day nature of the women's incomes and the continuous threat this presents to the women's abilities to meet household needs, even for those who had sufficient incomes. At any one time the women say they can provide for their household, but changes in their environment,

communities, households, and so on may leave them vulnerable to not meeting basic needs the following day, month or year. Several women emphasized the day-to-day nature of their income and lives. For example, Risa (Sebetaan) said, “we live as the little people ... we work hard every day to get results.” One woman in the FGD in Sebetaan said, “It’s a little bit, only enough to provide for our family from one day to the next ... We go little by little .. for women, for daily needs ... we provide for our children.” At any one time these women may be able to find sufficient income to fulfill household needs, but the day-to-day nature of their livelihoods leave almost all of them in precarious positions.

A large portion of the sample relied on social welfare assistance from the government to assist them in meeting their household needs. The Indonesian government has a series of major poverty reduction programs targeted to poor households, including those that subsidise rice (RASKIN), health insurance (Jamkesmas), and education (BKM/BSM). At the time of interview there was also a program ‘BLT’, which was, “an unconditional cash transfer to enhance the financial liquidity of poor households” (Suryahadi et al. 2010, 21)[74], providing eligible households with US$10/month.

In an attempt to shed light on the number of households in the sample whom the government deems as poor (to complement the women’s own perceptions), the women protesters were asked whether their households had received social welfare assistance in the past few years, in particular, Raskin or BLT. 16 of 41 women said they had received Raskin, BLT or both[75]. In Sebetaan, 11 of 19 women reported receiving welfare assistance. Compare this to the other villages where only a minority of women reported receiving this type of assistance, such as Teluk Durian (three of 16 women) and Sekuduk (one of four women). Relatedly, land size appears to influence the propensity to receive social welfare assistance. Of the women with than one hectare of land, a majority (ten of 19 women) reported

[74] The BLT was terminated in late 2009 (after interviews were finished). It was replaced with a conditional cash transfer program (PKH). See Suryahadi et al. (2010) for more details.

[75] The actual number of recipients of social welfare assistance may have been higher, particularly for BLT recipents. However, according to the sub-village head in Sebetaan, because BLT payments went directly to the household head (in most cases, the husband), sometimes the money was received and spent without women in households even knowing about it.

receiving social welfare assistance while of the women with over two hectares, only three of 13 received assistance. None of the six women with over three hectares of land received either welfare program. Of the six single mothers in the sample, half of them reported receiving assistance.

For the most part there was a clear relationship between those who received state welfare assistance and who had said or hinted in the interviews that their incomes did not meet their household needs. However, this was not true in all cases. As described, Hikmah (Sebetaan) said her small income limited her from buying basic foodstuffs but said she did not receive subsidised rice through Raskin. She said did not understand why because she was a poor widow and richer people had received it. This could have been due to Hikmah herself underestimating her income or misjudging her income level vis-a-vis other people in the community. More likely, it is a testament to one of the main difficulties in the government's assistance programs as a whole, that is, targeting inaccuracy. Suryahadi et al. (2010) say that mis-targeting in these programs has "created leakage to the rich while undercover [for] the poor" (21). Arif et al. (2010) blame the lack of gender sensitivity in the design of social protection programmes like Raskin, despite evidence of the gendered nature of food security (and poverty more generally). Ito (2011) goes further, pointing to the role of local power relations and lack of downward accountability for the poor not fairly receiving the subsidised rice they are due (426).

This investigation of poverty and social welfare assistance reveals how a significant proportion of the women protesters not only rely on low incomes but, for many, those incomes leave them unable to meet their household needs. Many who require it, particularly in Sebetaan, receive social welfare assistance while others may have been overlooked. The prevalence of poverty among this sample reflects the particularly high incidence of poverty among the rural populations in Indonesia (and Sambas) as a whole. In the FGD in Sebetaan, one woman said, "we are rural [*kampung*] people, it is hard for the little people. Difficult for the little people." Risa (Sebetaan) was also reflective of the link between her geographical position (rural) and class (poor). She told us that they lived as the "little people,"

denoting her position as poor and less powerful, and voiced her aspiration to leave both her geographical and class location: “if we were rich, it would be better not to live in the rural village, to move somewhere else.”

That said, not all the women equate being ‘rural’ with being poor. Some women have notably higher incomes and are confident in their ability to meet household needs. For example, Melati (Teluk Durian) said, “we can comfortably eat. We usually buy chicken ... We’re already really comfortable.” Siska (Sekuduk) reported making enough income to save every day. Saraswati (Teluk Durian) makes upwards of 30 times more per day than the lowest incomes in the sample. Four women even mention having been able to send one or more of their children to undergraduate education, either in Pontianak or Jakarta[76].

While this sample confirms the presence of rural poverty, it also demonstrates how multifaceted rural poverty actually is, from how it is produced and reproduced to who is most impacted and how, as well as the role of government assistance, and so on. It again challenges the concept of a universal ‘peasant’ or even a universal ‘peasant woman’, showing the diverse and uneven ways that rural people and communities derive incomes, from within their rural environments and outside of them (and how the flows of people and capital link various locations). It reveals how some people and communities prosper while others struggle, even within a relatively small geographical area.

Finally, the significant number of poor women protesters calls into question a common assumption that poor people cannot or do not participate in protest. For example, Bebbington (2007) states:

> The chronically poor are so asset deprived that to engage in organisation, mobilization or political action demands time, social networks and material resources they do not have, and incurs risks they are likely to tolerate. (796)

Edwards and McCarthy (2003) also discuss the resource constraints that enhance the likelihood of privileged social groups mobilizing over economically

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[76] Attending higher education is still relatively rare, especially for rural people: in 2003, the enrollment rate to tertiary education in Indonesia was 16 percent with only 2.1 percent of rural people attending. See more at Fahmi (2007).

marginalised groups. While mobilization is certainly easier for economically powerful groups, the literature does acknowledge the (rare) presence of poor people in political mobilization. Kim and Bearman (1997) accord a “crucial role for human agency in transcending the durable social and economic barriers to mobilizing underprivileged constituencies” (142). While initially I hypothesised that interviewing a sample of women protesters would lead me to a privileged sub-set within each community, the sample instead features a range of incomes and even includes the poorest women in each community.

Conclusion

In this chapter I attempted to provide a detailed and nuanced account of the lives, livelihoods and environments of the women protesters. Throughout the chapter, I challenged simplistic conceptions of a universal ‘peasant’ class, or even a unitary ‘rural woman’, showing instead (a) how prevalent differentiation is, whether in terms of land size, land use, incomes or poverty, among others (Bernstein 2008; Bernstein and Byres 2001; Carr 2008) and (b) how pervasive market forces already are for ‘rural’ populations and environments today (Cramb et al. 2009; Dove 1993,1996). According to Dauvergne and Neville (2010), it is crucial to acknowledge the “divides among and within” social groups in order to fully understand the differentiated consequences of plantation development. Relatedly, Pye (2010) observes that oil palm is introduced into already socially differentiated landscapes in Indonesia thus accelerating the process of differentiation. He states, the oil palm boom is “creating multiple and ambiguous social formations and is affecting different classes in different ways” (856).

This diverse sample of women also serves to shatter conventional images of protesters, showing that they are not just men, but may also be women, and further, young women, old women, married women, single women, literate or not, educated or not, and rich or poor. In short, there is not one type of protester. Certainly some populations are more likely to mobilize or protest than others, but it is important to recognize differentiation within a protest population (along multiple

axes) in order to consider how that impacts if and how certain people participate in such political events.

The unequal social relations in Sambas observed in this chapter, especially along gender lines, produce a ‘gendered agrarian landscape’. Drawing inspiration from feminist political ecology, the concept of a ‘gendered agrarian landscape’ is one in which gender relations and landscapes are mutually constituted. Gender inequalities often determine who typically works in the fields and with what crops, which then tends to lead to certain crop configurations and agrarian landscapes. Similarly, the existence of ‘traditional’ crop configurations may be used or mobilized to reinforce existing gender inequalities. Thus the landscape is made and re-made while gender relations are produced and reinforced.

That said, neither the dominant gender relations nor the landscape can be understood as all-encompassing or as static (Nightingale 2006). In Sambas, significant differentiation between communities, within communities and even among women in the same community demonstrate that gender relations are neither experienced in the same way across the board nor that they are fixed. Instead it appears that gender inequalities are being challenged or transformed even as they are being re-constituted or reproduced. The dynamics of gender relations lead to changes of and within agrarian landscapes, seen for example in the variation of crop combinations (crops for sale versus use) in rural Sambas. The consequence of changes in agrarian landscapes may then feedback to influence gender relations, which then influence the landscape, and so on. This insight into how ‘gendered agrarian landscapes’ are constituted is of particular importance when considering the possible impacts of major changes to agrarian landscapes, such as the introduction of oil palm plantations. This kind of change would inevitably influence the gender relations inscribed on them yet there is still little analysis of the differentiated consequences of oil palm development along gender lines. The following chapter will attempt to respond to this gap in the literature by introducing a gender lens in order to understand the full impact of oil palm expansion in Sambas district.

Chapter 6:
Women, gender and motivation in Sambas

Introduction

The women first found out about PT SAM's plans to develop an oil palm plantation on their land in 2008, a few years after the Bupati had granted the permit. Many of them mentioned receiving information from their family or neighbours in their community, while others heard from representatives of STSD or the NGO Gemawan. For a number of women the shocking realization first came upon seeing wooden signs on their smallholdings marked 'PT SAM'. Yana (Teluk Durian) discussed the day she found the signs:

> When we went that day to tap there were already red signs there ... On the road going to our land. But all of our land would be taken. We come across the red signs. Asked around but nobody knew. Before the land is mine.

The women believed that they owned the land and therefore had the right to decide what happens to or on that land (or at least be consulted about it). However, the actions of the government and PT SAM to agree to initial land permits and physically stake out their land with wooden signs seemed to indicate otherwise. Lacking any other channels of influence, the women turned to protest to defend the land and claim back their right to decide its future.

The women discussed a number of reasons that drove them to protest. While there has already been a significant amount of literature produced on the environmental impact of oil palm, there is less on the social consequences. As Rist et al. (2010) state, "there is now little doubt that unregulated oil palm expansion

poses a serious threat to tropical ecosystems, biodiversity and potentially the global climate ... the broader social and livelihood implications of biofuel cultivation remain poorly understood" (1022). Recognizing this, and in-keeping with the focus of the women themselves, this chapter will only briefly touch on the potential environmental threats of plantation development before turning to a range of 'social' concerns[77]. It must be emphasized that the women's concerns derive almost entirely from their *perceptions* of oil palm development rather than direct experience with it (apart from a few women who have had experience with palm). Thus, their views on oil palm development have very much been shaped by any combination of the media, talking to their friends or neighbors, socialization by NGOs and / or what they learned at the protest itself, among others. Regardless, many of their concerns reflect the negative experiences that others have had cultivating oil palm, biofuels or other agroindustrial crops, both near and far.

The previous chapter demonstrated how precarious many of the women's current lives and livelihoods are. In this context, it may seem reasonable that some of the women would be open to the promises of "rural socio-economic improvement" (Rist et al. 2010, 1011) offered by the oil palm boom. However, this was not the case. The women were wary about the risks associated not only with oil palm itself, but the way the land would be controlled and managed, by a company rather than themselves. While they may be poor at least they were in charge of key decisions over the land and their livelihoods. They were not willing to trade this in for any promises of 'improvement'. Also, the women seemed to be aware that 'improvement' would not be experienced evenly. While certain types of smallholder schemes may have more potential to benefit the poorest or most vulnerable (see McCarthy 2010; Rist et al. 2010; De Schutter 2011), the current model of oil palm development in Indonesia - which tends to rely on transferring so-called 'idle' or 'underutilized' land to private, often foreign, capital to establish industrial-sized monocrop plantations - has just the opposite effect (Li 2011). Already vulnerable and marginalized populations almost certainly suffer disproportionately from the socio-environmental ramifications that result. This

[77] Here I divide environmental and social concerns for ease of organisation though recognize they are interrelated and inseparable.

chapter will focus on how gender power relations produce impacts for women in particular. However, it does so acknowledging the multiple axes that produce vulnerability within a population and how, even within this one sample of rural women, some concerns are felt to a greater or lesser extent by certain individuals.

Environmental concerns

Most of the women's environmental concerns revolved around deforestation and increased fertilizer use. Deforestation is one of, if not the most, commonly cited drawbacks of oil palm development (see Koh and Wilcove 2008; Sheil et al. 2009; Wilcove and Koh 2010; World Bank and IFC 2011). As the only protester from Senujuh (the one community with remaining forest land), Mardiana was the most vocal on the issue of deforestation and its impacts on biodiversity and local livelihoods. Her community's past problems with oil palm development (PT WSP) have almost certainly influenced Mardiana's perspectives on the relationship between plantation development, deforestation and local livelihoods[78]. Despite the small forest area in the other communities, there were a few other women concerned about potential impacts. One elderly woman from the FGD in Piantus said she feared that the food products that she finds in the remaining forest "out the back of our houses" would be lost due to the proposed development:

> Lots of things. *Pakis* and *simpur* are foods from nature. That's very much the main thing for us, for our health. No cholesterol, amazingly healthy ... too much cholesterol, eat lots of *simpur*, eat *miding* ... *Rebung* has how much nutrients? What about *petai*? Ya Allah, Oh God. *Jengkol*.

Lastri (Sebetaan) mentioned the additional risk of flooding due to deforestation, "oil palm cannot absorb water. If there are trees / forest, water (flooding) can be absorbed. If there is flooding, oil palm cannot."

Women protesters were also concerned about the impact of increased chemical fertilizer use in their communities. Sheil et al. (2009) find that plantations require "large" quantities of nitrogen-based fertilizers to increase and maintain yields (35), which contrasts with the current situation in communities, where fertilizer is

[78] See Milieudefensie et al. (2007) for the impact of PT WSP on forest-based livelihoods in Senujuh.

expensive and rarely used. Women were worried that this change in fertilizer use would pollute their land (soil) and water, thus affecting their food crops, their drinking water, washing water and fishing potential.

A few women said an oil palm factory upstream from Sebetaan was already impacting the community. Ryani said that fish were dying, while Risa said the following:

> Because of the palm company in upstream areas - factories - waste has already reached here ... even though it's not in our region, we still are affected ... Some of our citizens have already started vomiting, itching and having diarrhoea. The colour of the water has also changed, sometimes it's clear, sometimes green and sometimes the base of the river can be seen. Sometimes the water is oily too.

Risa said that a male nurse that visits the village said to her, "of course the people here get itches, vomiting and diarrhoea with the water here being affected by palm." Sheil et al. (2009) note that oil palm mills result in large amounts of effluent in natural water courses, leading to a high concentration of heavy metals such as lead in fish populations (36).

Poverty determines how this community obtains its water and thus makes them particularly vulnerable to oil palm development and new chemicals in the environment. Risa (Sebetaan) was conscious about the disproportionate impact that such pollution has on her community:

> We are the little people, different from the employees [of the oil palm factory]. I'm sure they drink water from plumbing (tap water). People like us, we still use water from the river. If the water is polluted, we will become ill.

Lastri (Sebetaan) also revealed the disproportionate impact on them as poor women. She compared the impact on her versus the Bupati:

> We are the little people that are tread on. He [the Bupati] uses a gallon of water every day. What about us? Yes, if there is rain. If there is no rain? We drink this water, river water, fertilizer water. What is it? It is chemicals.

Lastri also introduces how woman are particularly impacted by new fertilizers. She says that because of the chemicals "it is possible that women cannot give birth. For a long time. The chemical is strong." The World Bank and IFC (2011) identify

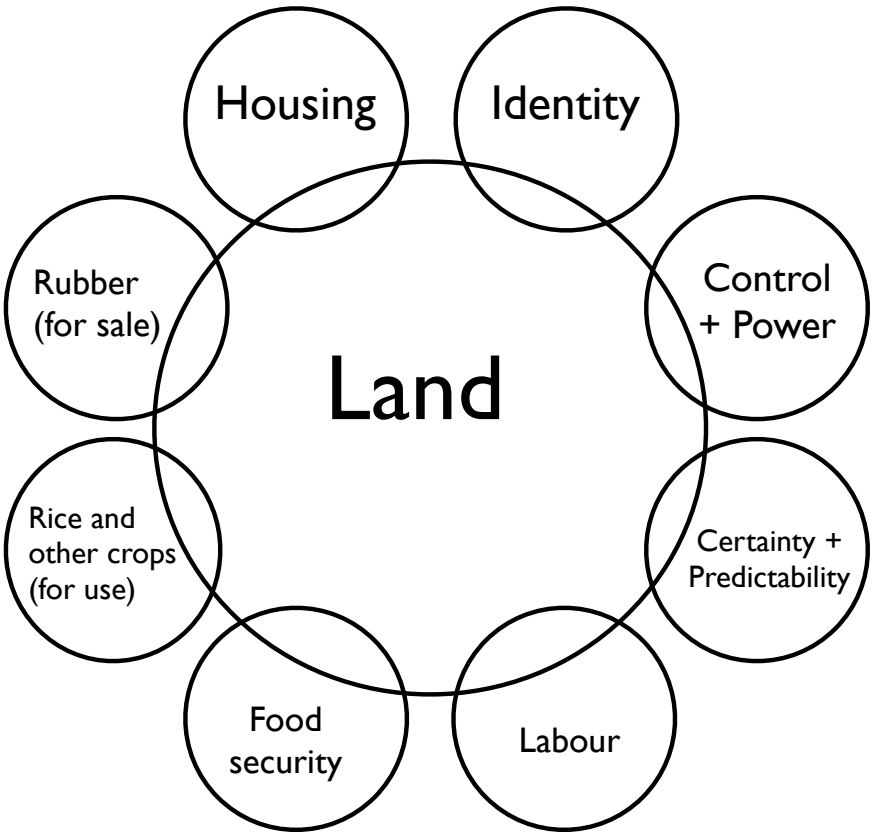
exposure to hazardous chemicals in palm oil cultivation as a cause of health problems among women workers, in particular pregnant women (21).

This section briefly outlined the real and potential environmental impacts of oil palm development. The women's accounts demonstrate that environmental impacts are not felt evenly across the district or within communities, but existing power relations result in disproportionate consequences for the poor and/or women.

Social concerns

The previous chapter emphasized differentiation within the sample of women protesters. But it also revealed a common connection between all of the women - the centrality of land in their lives and their dedication to defending it. Losing their land to PT SAM meant possibly: losing not only their preferred income-generating activity (rubber) but all forms of income; losing the ability to grow some or all of their own food; and damaging the culture of the community. They feared that these impacts would compromise their abilities to provide for their families, in the short and long-term. Beyond these possible material impacts on the women and their families, the women also feared the loss of something more intangible afforded to them by their current livelihoods, that is, the ability to decide what happens to their land and, thus, in their futures. Figure 6.1 illustrates the multiple consequences anticipated by the sample of women protesters - all of which are tied to land dispossession. Not all women anticipated each and every one of these consequences, but taken together the sample as a whole provides a wide range of possible repercussions.

Figure 6.1: Land as central to anticipated social impacts



Dispossession

Officially-speaking, new oil palm plantations are meant to be developed on 'empty' or 'idle' land, that is, land that is not already productive. In an interview with the Bupati of Sambas, he was adamant that oil palm plantations would only be developed on land that is not already used for rice or rubber. He stated:

> I tend to think that rice fields should not be disturbed [by cultivating of oil palm]. They must be maintained ... not on rice fields, no. In Sambas this is not allowed, otherwise there would be no more rice fields in Sambas ... palm has its specific regions ... do not disturb the rice fields. We are open to palm ... [but only] in the interior areas. In the forest, but not in the protected forest, not productive forest, but the forest that is allowed to have palm plantations. But I do not allow them to do this in rice field regions, it is not allowed. So there are specifications. This is palm, this is rice, this is rubber ... they have rubber plantations that cannot be disturbed.

In this case, in all of the communities (except Senujuh) there is little, if any, empty or 'idle' land available. As such, Hirni (Teluk Durian) said the location chosen for the plantation was 'inappropriate' for planting oil palm:

> The land they wanted to plant was owned by the people ... The location where the government wanted to plant wasn't appropriate ... Oil palm cannot enter because that land is already owned by the people. It is already a rubber field.

However, the fact that the PT SAM permit (a) encompassed these communities with little to no 'idle' land and (b) led to physically staking out villager's land (particularly their rubber plots) with wooden signs signified to the women protesters that the government either did not recognize their land as productive or belonging to them, or overlooked both those facts in favour of oil palm development. Identifying productive land as 'idle' or 'under-utilized' to facilitate agricultural investment and development is not uncommon practice (see Borras Jr and Franco 2010b; Li 2011; De Schutter 2011; White and Dasgupta 2010). Cotula et al. (2008) note:

> Growing evidence raises doubts about the concept of 'idle' land. In many cases, lands perceived to be 'idle', 'under-utilized', 'marginal' or 'abandoned' by government and large private operators provide a vital basis for the livelihoods of poor and vulnerable groups (22).

The women protesters expressed their concern that, due to the lack of empty land in the communities, the oil palm company would have to take over their productive land to develop the plantation. Though in theory not permitted, in reality examples abound of already cultivated or productive land being illegally included in oil palm concessions in Indonesia (Collins 2007). The women's fuzzy or customary (rather than formal or official) ownership of the land made them particularly vulnerable to losing their land[79]. As Sheil et al. (2009) find, "plantation developers exploit uncertain tenure ... power interests gain easy access to large areas of contested land" (40). The women protesters cited a range of grave knock-on effects from land dispossession, both material and intangible, from infringing on their land and destroying their crops.

[79] For discussions on the how communal and customary rights are treated by the state, see Afrizal (2007), Marti (2008) and Peluso et al. (2008).

Impact on housing

A few women felt particularly threatened due to the proximity of the proposed plantation to their houses. Lastri (Sebetaan) said she was motivated to protest because “from the proposed land to my house is only 150 meters.” Maziah (Sekuduk) said, “the [PT SAM] signs were close to my house. A couple of feet from the kitchen.” Similarly, Saraswati (Teluk Durian) said, “they want our kitchens to be destroyed.” Melati (Teluk Durian) said that the land beside her house did not have signs on it, but the proposed plantation road would inevitably split her land, hamper access to her garden, and infringe on her house and kitchen. These women mentioned not just the possible infringement on their homes but, signifying many of their roles in the household, their kitchens.

The consequence of the plantation’s proximity to these women’s homes led a few to believe they may be left homelessness. Hikmah (Sebetaan) said, “eventually if oil palm enters our village ... we [will be] tramps, will live under the bridge.” A woman in the FGD in Sebetaan posed the question, “are we to become vagrants on the side of the road? So always living on the side of the road?” While only a small proportion of women mentioned the impact on their houses and housing status the depth of these women’s fear was evident.

Impact on rubber crop

One of the most severe consequences anticipated by the women was the destruction of their crops. At least 12 women specifically mentioned their fear that their crops would be chopped or cut down to cultivate oil palm. Melati (Teluk Durian) explained why the rubber would have to be chopped down:

> Where is the empty land? ... if you really really want oil palm, chop down the rubber, [that is] how you will [be able to] to bring oil palm.

Some women used stronger terms to express their concern with the fate of their crops, using the terms demolish (*rombak*) or destroy (*hancur)*. Apart from the women who specifically mentioned cutting down their crops, many more hinted generally at the loss of their rubber. The women protesters questioned what they

would do and how they would survive without rubber, their primary source of income. Siti (Teluk Durian) said, “if we go to become oil palm, we kill our livelihoods. Sad.” Bethari (Sebetaan) said rubber was all they had, “for daily needs what would we do if there’s no rubber? There’s nothing else.” The anticipated loss of their rubber - their main source of income - left the women wondering how they would derive an income to provide for their daily needs.

As detailed in Chapter 5, the women credited their income from tapping and selling rubber for providing for their daily needs. Unsurprisingly, the most anticipated impact (by 24 women) of losing their rubber was food insecurity. Titin (Sebetaan) said:

> How would we find food for every day if the rubber trees were cut down ... what would we eat? Because the rubber trees are our only regular income.

Shariafie (Sebetaan) said simply, “rubber is to find food. If oil palm is grown, where will we find food.” Gender power relations result in threats like this to food security being shouldered disproportionately by women, not only in terms of the additional responsibility but with physical consequences. Previous research in Indonesia indicates that women are more likely to reduce their own food intake to conserve food for their children when food is scarce (Arif et al. 2010). As one women in the FGD in Sebetaan asked, “for women, for daily needs, what would we plant?” Their typical roles in the household would likely lead women to suffer disproportionately from losing the food security that accompanies their rubber crops.

The women were particularly concerned about the long timeframe required to cultivate oil palm over rubber. Women mentioned that it could take anywhere from four to ten years to derive income from oil palm. Wati (Teluk Durian) said:

> They say oil palm for ten years, before if can be [harvested]. They say, the term for oil palm takes long time to bring yields. It is not like this for rubber. Whereas for rubber, four years, five years, we can make income if rubber.

Murni and Melati (both Teluk Durian) asked what would happen to them in the period post-rubber and pre-oil palm yields. According to Murni:

> If it [rubber] is cut down, oil palm will for sure take not just a month or two months before it starts to yield results. It will be four years or five years in the future until harvest ... Where will we find food? But if they want to reimburse us for four years, five years with our food, then maybe we can.

> Maybe then we want it. But if not where will we find it? There is no other gardens.

Saraswati's (Teluk Durian) experience of cultivating oil palm may have influenced some of her neighbour's fears. Saraswati explained that while their oil palm grew in Subah they were able to support themselves due to rations and rubber income from Teluk Durian:

> *Saraswati:* Previously we were given rations, rice, sugar, everything to grow oil palm. It was a long time before it [oil palm] produced fruits. Six years before it produced.
> *Interviewer: At the time how did you get food?*
> *Saraswati:* From here. There are those who do rubber tapping here. Brought it there [to Subah], when we were working on the palm. Some were tapping. They were tapping. When it was produced it would be send there [to Subah], rice and other things, cigarettes. We worked there, husband and wife. Palm takes a long time to produce anything. What would we eat if they plant palm here? We would be abandoned with nothing to eat, sad, the point is we're sad to hear that palm wants to be planted here [in Teluk Durian]...
> *Interviewer: Who brought provisions to you there [in Subah]?*
> *Saraswati*: Family, uncles. Sent using a motorboat. It was difficult to eat at the time of [growing] oil palm. There was cassava, we ate cassava. Sad ... We suffered for a long time. If we weren't sent things from here, boil cassava. Sad if I remember that time.

Income from Saraswati's rubber plot helped to facilitate their transition to oil palm but this option would not be available to people in Teluk Durian who do not have another source of land.

Again and again, the women emphasized the day-to-day reliability of tapping rubber to obtain food. Maziah (Sekuduk) explained, "the rubber that is tapped brings profit every day for food." Many women contrasted that with the uncertain returns of oil palm production. Mahsuri (Teluk Durian) said, "if we can tap our rubber tree today then today we can buy food, we can. If there is oil palm, we cannot." The women were especially concerned with replacing the day-to-day predictability of their current livelihoods with the uncertain future of oil palm. Karima (Terikembang) said:

> Oil palm is not yet known. Maybe not guarantee the future of the children. By now we can also predict, our rubber garden that can guarantee the future of our children.

Karima was just one of at least ten women who mentioned how the uncertainty of oil palm could impact their children or grandchildren. Often the concerns related to food security. For example, Lusi (Sebetaan) said, “pity if the company enters ... what conditions to give our children food?” At least six women were worried they would not be able to send their children to school. According to one woman in the FGD in Sebetaan:

> If they take our land, how would we put our children through school, how would we eat? We wouldn’t have enough for schooling ... What a shame ... Our children would be uneducated. They wouldn’t know anything. And we wouldn’t have any money.

In Chapter 5, Melati credited rubber for being able to send eight children to school, including to university. Sari (Sekuduk) still had a child at university and questioned where she would get money to support their education if their land was taken. The gendered division of labour in their households and communities mean that these women tend to be disproportionately responsible for ensuring food security and raising future generations and thus have disproportionately more to lose or be concerned with. Following the discussion in Chapter 2 on the role of framing in legitimising mobilization (for example, Corcoran-Nantes 1993; Miraftab 2006), it is unsurprising that the women protesters emphasize their roles as mothers or grandmothers when discussing the considerations that led to protest.

Some of the women acknowledged that cultivating rubber did not guarantee food access. Yet, faced with the unknown of oil palm, they maintained that oil palm would ultimately be even worse. A woman from the FGD in Sebetaan said:

> If we want to eat it’s difficult. Even just to eat! How would we eat later? Even now we feel we don’t have enough. We don’t have enough now, and on top of that the government wants to take our land. What will we eat. Income from 25,000 Rps becomes only 10,000 Rps ... It’s hard to look for income. It’s so hard to get income day by day. How will we provide for our children if it’s taken? If it’s planted with palm, what will we do? ... We wouldn’t be able to plant food crops. Wouldn’t fulfill our daily needs. Not enough for one year.

Whether their current rubber-dependent livelihoods provided sufficient material benefits or not, the women protesters felt that the proposed plantation further compromised their ability to reproduce themselves and their families on a daily and generational basis.

The women's current livelihoods, which depend mostly on cultivating rubber, are difficult. While some women have enough land to subsist on rubber production alone, others struggle to complement it with other crops and other sources of income. Then why were the women protesters determined to protect their rubber crops specifically and their rubber-producing livelihoods more generally? This is not because they are resisting the influence of the market in their lives altogether. As established in Chapter 4, their history of cultivating rubber as a cash crop means these women have long been integrated into the market and intimately recognize the associated vulnerabilities and risks. Their rubber producing livelihoods may be difficult and result in lower returns than what is promised by oil palm, but at least women know what to expect and so perceive it to be of lower risk than oil palm.

This finding correlates with other studies which find that, as summarised by Dauvergne and Neville (2010), "low-income households allocate greater financial and labour resources to low-risk, low-return crops" (652). While Li (2011) cautions against the *assumption* that rural people will reject new products and labor regimes in favour of conservative, risk-averse strategies, in this case women were actually adverse to changing from what they already know, perceiving oil palm to be too much of a risk (over rubber), regardless of whether it had the potential to generate larger profits. Beyond the crop itself, the way in which oil palm would be managed and controlled in their communities (by the company) contrasted sharply with the way they themselves manage and control their rubber smallholdings, which also added to their feelings of risk and uncertainty. Defending not just their actual material land and crops, but their *right* to decide and control what happens on land they claim as their own will be investigated later in the chapter.

Impact on other crops and crop variety

The women also expressed fears about the future of their rice crop. Lastri (Sebetaan) asked, "how can we go to the paddyfields if our land is taken away? For sure we want to go to paddyfields, we want to grow rice." For the women who

rely on growing rice for their own consumption, losing their rice plots posed a direct threat to their food supply. One woman in the FGD in Piantus said:

> We defend ourselves for the places we have rice fields, cultivate fields, so that we have enough food day to day ... for our food here, even if we get a little bit of rice, we still eat. Praise God. We still eat rice ... It would've all been turned into palm plantations, how would we eat? How would we get rice.

The women were also concerned about their range of small garden crops. Several were worried generally about their vegetable gardens. Some also mentioned the potential loss of specific crops like coffee. Fitra (Sebetaan) said:

> We have rubber, coffee, bitter beans ... if our land is taken, what will we eat? We cannot eat ... Pity, pity for our garden. We also grow coffee. All grow coffee. Rubber also. Only just to the right bitter beans.

Hikmah (Sebetaan) also asks how losing her garden as well as rubber will impact her ability to obtain food:

> If our vegetable garden is empty, our rubber is empty, how can we eat. Eventually if oil palm enters our village, we eat what? ... What is it we can eat? There is no more hope for us.

The often simultaneous mention of losing rubber as well as rice, coffee and / or other garden crops demonstrated that the women had more than any one crop to lose. Many felt threatened by the possibility of losing crop variety itself. The women valued the diversity of their crops, particularly in the face of losing it to one monocrop plantation. Saleha (Sebetaan) said:

> What to do if they take our gardens, our land? Every day we work only on this. On our paddyfields, our rubber. Our vegetable gardens, our basic gardens. An assortment. Here there are no neglected crops, there is no empty land. There is not. It is all garden.

Ryani (Sebetaan) asked:

> However big the income from palm would be, if we had palm planted here, where would we plant chillies? Where would we plant cassava? Where would we plant coffee? ... We'd be happy to be given seeds, or coffee, or rubber, whatever type. The people would not be angry. But what came was oil palm. Wouldn't you be angry?

The women's concerns about losing their mix of crops (for sale *and* use) are not unfounded. According to the World Bank and IFC (2011), economies of scale in mills lead to monocrops that deprive local people of the "benefits derived from

mixed livelihood strategies" (20). The women's fear of losing not just individual crops but crop variety itself increased their perception of the risk associated with oil palm. Thus it was not just a fear of the oil palm crop, but of relying *only* on oil palm at the expense of their current mix of crops that allow them to mix purchasing and growing their own food. For the majority of women who grow some or most of their own food, supplemented by cash from rubber production, the introduction of oil palm would take away the 'safety net' of swidden cultivation, leaving them vulnerable to market fluctuation (Cramb et al. 2009, 323). The women's perceptions of risk are further confirmed by Dauvergne and Neville (2010) who find that a single-crop focus can "increase the risk for producers who give up diversified investment activities" (652).

Impact on relationship to land

The women protesters clearly rely on their land and crops for their material well-being. But their relationship with their land goes beyond the material benefits, to more intangible feelings. The women used the Indonesian term *sayang* to convey both the deep love they felt for their land and rubber crops and the consequent depth of pity or disappointment at their anticipated loss. Surya (Teluk Durian) said, "I feel *sayang* for the garden, especially the rubber garden they want to cut down. When that happens, *sayang*." Some women said that even if oil palm did bring profit in the end, they felt they would still miss growing rubber. Ratih (Sebetaan) said:

> Wanted to cut down the rubber trees. How do they want us to produce [get income] anymore. There is nothing. *If there is any other income, we still miss / regret [the rubber]* ... The principle of our daily livelihood is to give our children food from there [the rubber] ... It is our income. *Sayang* our rubber trees. [emphasis added]

Saraswati reported the highest daily income of all the women protesters due to her high income from oil palm. Yet she said she preferred to cultivate rubber over oil palm:

> It is better with rubber. It has already been 20 years over there, in Subah. But we still want to tap rubber here [in Teluk Durian] ... Palm is difficult. I already have it. Don't plant palm here [in Teluk Durian]. Rubber is better. To be honest. I already know. Even when we got to Subah, we bought rubber seeds. Preferred to plant rubber ... *Sayang* with the rubber garden. If you want to know. Sick to care for oil palm. Rubber is better. Rubber is from our ancestors it is that old. It still can give us yields. How. 1 kg, 15 kg. Pity to want to cut down our yields / income ... oil palm is a prickly thorn.

Saraswati said even though they had built a house and a life in Subah over the past twenty years, they still preferred to be near their rubber garden in Teluk Durian.

Saraswati mentioned a historical connection to rubber, which was also echoed by other women protesters. A women in the FGD in Piantus also shared her historical and spiritual relationship with the land:

> Strengthen our land from our ancestors. We have been given this and we must strengthen it ... our inheritance, our belongings from our ancestors for us. Not for the company. For us. Not to be wasted. Not for us to arbitrarily given to someone else ... That's why we love the land. We were given it by our ancestors. It was handed down to us, that's why we have to love it. We must love what is given to us by Allah. A gift from Allah. So many of Allah's riches were given to us. We accept it. We mustn't throw it away, wasting is not good ... Our ancestors taught us all these things. That's why we don't want it, why we reject palm. We don't want palm here.

Siska (Sekuduk) drew on her family's history with the land and the work they had put in to make the land productive, "we do not want [oil palm] because it [rubber] is business from our ancestors. When they planted long ago it was difficult, arduous." Finally, Melati (Teluk Durian) discussed how difficult it was for her and her husband to clear the land to establish their rubber garden in the first place:

> Our land that we had has been [will be] taken. We are die hard, we cut it down from wood, from forest, until we made it, there was irrigation. Until it was successful. Once it was successful, then they want to take what's ours.

After the struggle of cultivating rubber on their land in the first place, Melati was upset that an oil palm company may cut down all that she had worked so hard to cultivate.

The last few sections have explored the women's perspectives on their anticipated dispossession due to oil palm development. It has shown how the plantation

threatened their material possessions (like housing and crops) and well-being (food security), as well as more intangible elements of their livelihood, like certainty and reliability (over risk) and their relationship to the land. Following De Schutter (2011), recognizing the non-material elements is an attempt to bring in the "cultural significance of land" rather than "reduce land to its productive elements" or "treat it as a commodity, when it means social status and a lifeline for the poorest rural households" (274). While the currently precarious (and often insufficient) livelihoods of the women protesters may not make outward economic sense, the women were clearly defending the crops that they know and the safety net that their land provides. As Li (2011) puts it:

> When rural people mobilize collectively to resist eviction, or to reoccupy disputed land, or scramble to hold onto their tiny 'inefficient' plots, their desire is not necessarily to conserve an ancient way of life. More often, it is to back-stop economic strategies that involve family members seeking work far and wide ... even a tiny patch of land is a crucial safety net (295).

Impact on labour

The proposed oil palm plantation not only threatened their current livelihoods, but challenged their identities as farmers. Almost all of the women told us, first and foremost, they were *petani* (farmers) even those who went on to describe non-farm income sources. Murni (Teluk Durian) stated, "we are not *pegawai* [employees], not *wiraswasta* [entrepreneurs]. We are only farmers." Many of the women said they fought to protect their identities as farmers, particularly small-scale farmers working day to day on their own land, against becoming hired labour for an oil palm plantation, which they anticipated if the company entered their respective communities and took their land. Siska (Sekuduk) said, "[if] oil palm enters the farmer dies .. Live the farmer." Melati (Teluk Durian) expressed her disbelief that her land would be taken and she could be expected to work for the company:

> How could we take on hired work? Meanwhile the land is our land. Why should we be the ones taking the wage from the company? It's impossible.

Though proponents of oil palm development insist that oil palm can provide local villagers with new opportunities for wage labour, many women protesters

expressed their desire to remain small-scale farmers rather than become wage labourers.

If they did lose their land and were thus forced to turn to work for the proposed plantation, the women worried the wages would be too low. Melati (Teluk Durian) said the wages would be lower than she makes from rubber tapping:

> From rubber tapping I get 20,000 Rps for half a day ... We're already really comfortable working just half a day. If we tap twice a day, we can get food for two days. That's our work. If palm happens, one day [income is] 20,000 Rps, what could we eat ... 20,000 Rps per day is not enough.

Women conveyed their understanding of what it meant to sacrifice their current work as farmers on their own land (where they themselves profit) to become hired labour for an oil palm company (where the company benefits and profits). For example, Sari (Sekuduk) said the wages from the company would ultimately be lower than their income from rubber because "it only benefits the company alone."

From her personal experience, Saraswati (Teluk Durian) said the actual labour involved with oil palm was difficult and dangerous. She compared the work of rubber with oil palm:

> *Saraswati:* Preferred to plant rubber. The work [of oil palm] is painful, torturous.
> *Interviewer: What is so torturous?*
> *Saraswati:* Because it's heavy, because of the spikes. If we tap [rubber] it's fine, even singing, its fun. For this, Allah [palm], we pant and puff as we carry it ... Difficult. It's strong people who want it. We have had palm fall on us. Swollen, swollen, really big. Couldn't walk. I was lifted up by a man. I wanted to kick it with my boots, I couldn't walk for one week. Because my husband said "wait, wait" because he was sad to take it. Far and down hill. I kicked it. And it got my foot. I couldn't walk for one week. My foot was all red.

Other women were skeptical there would be any, let alone sufficient, new jobs to support them if they lost their land and crops. Jamilah (Sebetaan) said, "there is no work ... Later there will not be a salary. Nobody will hire us later. What will we eat if palm comes in?" Sari (Sekuduk) recalled what she had heard about other villagers' experience with an oil palm plantation in a nearby sub-district, "indeed at first they were comfortable getting a job to plant seeds. But after that there is no more." Leviana (Sekuduk) also speculated on future job insecurity due to oil palm:

> Later oil palm will be cultivated by a businessman. Later a businessman will come. What are the terms to come to our village. Eventually we will later become *coolies* [day labourers] on our own land. Eventually later they will bring salaried workers.

As discussed in Chapter 5, gender relations, age and health condition labour opportunities outside the household and off the land. Even if oil palm did create new jobs, these would not be evenly spread across the population. Women in these communities would face particular difficulties in accessing jobs, let alone permanent or well-renumerated jobs. Saraswati provides insight into why the actual labour involved in oil palm may disadvantage women. She said:

> My husband was capable of doing the hard work there [in Subah], I was here tapping. If they had some, sent there ... we tapped here to send [things] to my husband in Subah. Palm is difficult.

In their study of an existing oil palm plantation in a nearby district in West Kalimantan, Julia and White (2011) confirm the gendered nature of plantation labour. Of the three types of plantation labour they identify - fixed (contracted) labour, daily casual labour and extra unpaid labour - the fixed jobs with the company are “very much the men’s space” (18). They find that women only tend to work as daily labourers, doing hazardous tasks such as spraying and fertilizing. It is also almost exclusively women who (illegally) scavenge oil palm fruits that fall out of the bunch in order to make ends meet.

A few women were also concerned that age and health could limit their opportunities to gain employment. Melati (Teluk Durian) said:

> Maybe Allah will give me a fortune if there is palm, maybe I’ll eat too. But the story can already show that my body is old and I’m no longer able to work as a hired worker for a wage. Those who work as hired workers are the young ones, the strong ones. No one old like this wants to do it.

Mahsuri (Teluk Durian) speculated that health problems could interfere with receiving a stable wage, “each time we worked we’d only get 20,000 Rps per day. And that’s if we’re healthy. If we are sick how would we eat, for that day?”

In sum, women protesters were not willing to give up their identities or self-generated profits as independent farmers to become wage labour for the oil palm company, even if those opportunities were to exist in the first place. Further,

gender relations, age and health would almost certainly limit future job prospects for women in this sample, resulting in further differentiation within the community. Li (2010) finds that oil palm plantations "absorb little labour," employing only one worker per ten hectares (S74), and providing significantly less labour opportunities than smallholder plots (also see Pye 2010). Because the labour that is incorporated do so on "adverse terms," they tend to suffer from temporary contracts and dismal wages, among other disadvantages (Li 2011, 287). Like the women in this sample, Li questions who really benefits (and loses) from the investor-friendly model that uses captive labour to cultivate oil palm.

Impact on community

There was also a concern that an oil palm development would negatively influence the culture of the community, in particular encouraging consumerism and promiscuity. Mardiana (Senujuh) explained that waged work on a plantation results in an undesirable consumer culture. She says, "the principle of the company is only profit, so with its activities it encourages spending money. Afraid what will happen to the youth [in the village]." She also fears the 'entertainment', in the form of cafes, that accompany oil palm development and encourage promiscuity. This was also echoed by a woman in the FGD in Piantus who had experience with oil palm before:

> If palm comes in, the workers for example are dependent on relationships / sex ... free sex ... it's the most destructive ... If palm comes, it is possible that the people here could be destroyed completely, our young children will have extraordinarily free (sexual) relations.

Again, Julia and White (2010) confirm these women's fears, finding that cafes where the "staff also engage in commercial sex with customers" (24) are common in areas with big monocrop plantations. These cafes lead to sexually transmitted diseases such as Gonorrhea and family conflict. They cite a local woman:

> If a man wants to go to a cafe, he will just get the salary and spend it all by himself. Then how can the wife and children at home eat? So there is conflict at home, if he arrives from the cafe and hears the wife's complaint, then the wife will get punched and kicked for having no food at home. (Julia and White 2010, 24-25)

The disproportionate impact on women and gender in affected communities is clear, not only for the women who work at these cafes but for the women whose husbands spend their salaries at the cafes[80].

The expansion of oil palm often often leads to increased conflict within the community as well. Saraswati (Teluk Durian) explained how conflict emerged with the oil palm company in Subah. Despite promises by the company to divide the planted land the community, they delayed this and took the profit first. In response, the frustrated villagers (all men) attacked the company office and eventually received their claim. Saraswati made it clear that she did not want any more conflicts of this kind in Subah and certainly not in Teluk Durian. Saraswati's experience of conflict with an oil palm company is not unique. Drawing from Julia and White (2011), various studies have shown a 'large gap' between what is promised to local people and actual experience on plantations in Indonesia, often triggering "vertical and horizontal conflicts; community vs the company, government and military, as well as inter-community and intra-community conflicts" (3). Furthermore, Saraswati's experience revealed how only men were involved in this conflict but it is worth considering if women are also able to express their discontent when issues occur in plantation areas.

Land rights, control and power

In addition to the material consequences of oil palm development, the women feared the uncertainty of a future dictated by others. While the sample of women protesters could hardly be considered a powerful group, their current relations with their land and labour allowed them a degree of agency. They were able to decide what was planted on their land and how. They were also largely in control of how many hours they worked, though certainly household power dynamics must also be taken into account. As such, when threatened with dispossession, several women expressed their concern with losing not just the material land and crops but the control and power they have to make decisions over these resources as well.

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[80] See Marti 2008 for more on the reported consequences on community well-being and 'morality'.

At least 26 women in the sample mentioned the implications that the proposed oil palm plantation had for their *hak*, or rights. Most discussed how the plantation threatened not only their land or property rights, but their right to decide what happened on their land and in their communities. The women believed that the land they had cleared, made productive and used every day to grow their crops was their land, regardless of whether their 'ownership' was recognized at local/ customary or state/official levels. They believed that because the land was theirs, they had the right to decide what happens to or on the land. Whether it was defending the choice of their day-to-day crops or the long-term future of the land, the women clearly already felt ownership over decisions concerning their land. However, the actions of the government and PT SAM to agree to initial land permits and physically stake out their land with wooden signs infringed on both the land itself and their right to decide. The women used the terms *merampas* (stolen) or *diambil* (taken) to describe what they feared was happening to their land or property rights. For example, Yana (Teluk Durian) gave the following reason for protesting:

> To defend our property rights that will be stolen by PT SAM … the feeling when PT SAM will enter [makes me] so angry, because our rights will be taken.

One woman in the FGD in Sebetaan gave this reason for protesting against the oil palm development:

> Actually, it's not that we don't want palm. We just want to defend the rights to our land, that's all ... If the land is taken by the company, it means they have the right. That's why we don't want it.

Despite considering it to be their land, the women were not consulted or considered in the land permit process. Mahsuri (Teluk Durian) describes how she first learned about the proposed oil palm development:

> The government came. Previously we went to a meeting in Sepandan at the primary school there. But he [the government representative] didn't do the right thing, he didn't ask. The community wasn't asked whether or not they wanted it. He just said 'there'll be palm oil'. But we were not asked, 'ladies and gentlemen, do you want palm or not?'. That was never asked. Then straight to the government who said a sign had already been made in the forest. He did in fact come with us. We went. But we were never asked whether we wanted it or not. They just put the signs up straight away.

Worse, the women felt the company was taking their land in an overtly secretive or non-transparent manner. According to Siska (Sekuduk):

> Their gardens, which were given red signs. There are already signs. We were going to go tap enough to go home. Why is this in the garden? Done secretly ... Tomorrow we go to tap and already there is a sign there. It is PT SAM, that is what it says on it. Then we were upset with it all. Asked each other when going to tap rubber. What is this sign, we said. It says there were people here, a sign from oil palm here. An oil palm company ... When people put the signs up we do not know. Maybe at night. Do not know. Secretly. Do not ask permission with the head of the village, no. They did not ask permission.

Hirni (Teluk Durian) also said the signs were erected without consulting the people, infringing on their rights to what they own and on their decisions: “our right to fight for this. What we own must be fought for. It must not be taken by force.” For these women, the way in which the government and oil palm company operated provoked serious concern not only for their rights to the land but also their rights to decide the future of the land.

If the land was taken, the women were worried about being subject to the control of the government or the oil palm company rather than being in control of key matters themselves. For example, Nursanti (Sebetaan) said:

> If palm oil came in, we would have to follow the company’s rules. We’d be getting a wage. But like what we have now, we own it ourselves. This is our produce. We are the ones that decide what to do [with the land]. Like if we want to make rice fields. If we want to make a rice field, we make one. If we want to grow rubber, we do that. What if other people control the land? What about that? We’ll have to follow their rules. For now, it’s up to us, there are no rules we have to follow.

Siska (Sekuduk) said:

> We are not willing for us here to be under the control of the government on our land here. So our yield / income is from only there ... we absolutely do not want to be under the control of the government. In order to be converted to oil palm.

Fitra (Sebetaan) said:

> Because we don't want to give our land to be controlled. Because we own a little bit of land. [If palm came] we'd be controlled, that'd be terrible. That's why we didn't want to do it.

Women were clearly scared that losing their land to the government and the company meant losing control over key decisions in their lives.

In addition, the women's current command of their land allowed them to be largely in control of their labour (though this is mediated by household-level gender relations). As described earlier, the women feared that losing their land to the oil palm plantation would change their status from farmers, who are in control of their own labour and the fruits of their labour, to wage labourers subjected to company rules and lower wages. Saleha (Sebetaan) said she wanted to defend their rights as farmers to work on their land:

> I defend our rights as farmers. Our work here. How not to feel heartache. Hate. What to do if they take our gardens, our land? Every day we work only on this.

Ryani (Sebetaan) gives insight into her desire to not be under the control of the proposed oil palm company:

> The important thing is we love our land and are worried it'd be taken. Even though we produce only a little bit, we still love it. We do not want to become coolies [day labourers]. We still want to, [use] our own muscles want to work. Even though we produce little by little, we still, still sure we don't want to be influenced like that.

Though their current livelihoods were difficult, at least they were in control of their work.

Being forced into a wage labour market laden with gender bias would not only compromise the current power they derive from deciding their own labour, but may serve to exacerbate existing gender inequalities and further disempower women in their households and communities. Though participation in the labour market is sometimes thought to help women to secure financial and, thus, social autonomy, Gunewardena's (2010) study of women's incorporation into capital-intensive sugar plantations in Sri Lanka shows that it can instead result in "reduced autonomy and decision-making power, increased subsistence insecurity, and social and economic dependence on males" (374). Due to wage differentials between men and women workers, differential placement in the hierarchy of agricultural labor and women's reduced decision-making (as compared to subsistence farming),

women's higher participation in agricultural labour markets actually lead to their further disempowerment.

While many women only hinted at matters of decision-making and control, a few women also directly mentioned the term *kuasa*, 'power', as being at stake. For example, Nurul (Sebetaan) said:

> We are scared it [our land] is taken. Aware, already taken by the government we cannot again *berkuasa* [be powerful, masterful]. What about our daily livelihood? … Anyway, very disappointing for our land. If it is already taken by the government, difficult. Even though now it is difficult. How much more if it [our land] is taken later.

Mardiana (Senujuh) provides her perspective on the danger of having their land and, consequently, decision-making power taken over by the proposed oil palm plantation:

> A concern with there being palm is that the right or sovereignty of the people will be destroyed. So because with the existence of palm, the people will already be in a palm environment, in the company's environment. So the people will be regulated by the company. So the people's sovereignty, the community's sovereignty, will be tugged at. Previously the people were free to collect, if they wanted to work there, if they wanted to pass by the region. So with the coming of the company, the company's regulations would have to be followed closely, if we go into the company's area, we have to report. Every time we go in or out, it's compulsory to report. So where is the people's freedom now? ... our area to be controlled by company people? And indeed this is the consequence. That it is the company that is powerful. And so the people no longer have power ... Independence of the community is lost with foreign culture, this is what is feared. Worried.

These viewpoints reveal the women's fear that the oil palm development would signal a significant transfer of control and decision-making power to the company and / or government.

Mardiana (Senujuh) blames the large-scale nature of an oil palm plantation for leading to control over key decisions being transferred from the community to the company. She said:

> Not rejecting palm. But rejecting the system. Because palm is a plant too ... we respect it as well because its a plant. So we accept palm ... It's not palm that we reject, but the system and management. To continue it is indeed not just palm, but the name of a large-scale plantation that is not accepted. Because large plantations will hurt many parties. Even though they promise prosperity ... Because large-scale is only controlled by a few people. So the vast territory is controlled by only a few people. That is the reason to reject [palm] ... So do not accept it because the community's rights to utilize, manage and use land as it was used by generations past, now changes functions. It is no longer the community who manage and use it, but the community there only become characters / actors. Characters below it, if it is indeed already controlled on a large-scale.

Mardiana's perspective is backed up in part by the recent World Bank and IFC report (2011) which found that large monocrop plantations tend not just to deprive people of their mixed livelihood strategies, but can cause the communities to "lose the autonomy and self-sufficiency associated with traditional subsistence practices" (20). Potter (2008) also finds that by reducing communities to labourers or smallholder out-growers, oil palm expansion can restrict local people's capacity for independent decision-making (1).

In many ways, having control over their land provides the women with some degree of agency or decision-making power over daily decisions related to their livelihood, like what crops to plant and how much to work. But, as will be explored in the following chapter, their ability to exert or exercise influence or decision-making power at any scale beyond their plot is limited and could be further compromised by the introduction of oil palm. Julia and White (2011) find that when an oil palm planation was established in a nearby sub-district, women's rights to make decisions over their land or community were undermined. The oil palm company only consulted with community leaders and household heads, all men, who then decided to allow the plantation. Women did not receive knowledge about the proposed plantation nor did they have a way to voice their opinion on it: "the voice of the men was considered to be the unanimous voice of the villagers" (11). Gendered norms of leadership and meeting participation meant that women were excluded from the decisions that led to the oil palm development in their community and which has since exacerbated gender inequalities, 'extending' the patriarchal system of the state and community and 'barring' women from participation in formal decision-making (Julia and White 2011, 37).

As previously mentioned, several women identified themselves as the 'little people', or in positions of relative poverty and disempowerment. Lastri (Sebetaan) said, "we are the little people that are tread on." However, this section has shown that women's current relationship with the land affords them some degree of decision-making power. As such, when the government (in giving the permits) and the company (in staking out the land) started to infringe on their land, it was an affront to these women's rights to the land and to any control and decision-making power they have on that land, let alone to their livelihoods and futures. In effect, women were just as much concerned about losing the material benefits derived from land as losing the "effective access to, control over, and use of land," what Borras Jr and Franco (2010b) refer to as 'land sovereignty' (34).

When the women spoke about their rights they talked about them being stolen or taken. But they also discussed protecting (*mempertahankan*), defending (*membela*), claiming (*menuntut*) and fighting for (*perjuangkan, merebut*) their rights, not only to their land but to make decisions about their land. In doing so, the women made it clear that they did not accept the existing infringement on their land and their rights passively. Rather, for the breadth and depth of the reasons documented here, the women turned to protest for the first time to assert their right to the land.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the various motivations leading to women's unprecedented participation in the Sambas protest in June 2008. It has demonstrated the breadth of women's motives, including both environmental and social, and tried to go beyond the anticipated material repercussions to explore the more intangible matters of rights, control and power that the women spoke of defending. The secondary literature helped to frame the investigation into the range of potential consequences due to oil palm expansion in Sambas (Arrighi et al. 2010; Borras Jr et al. 2007; Borras Jr and Franco 201a, 2010b; Li 2011; Walker 2008), and highlight in particular how gender matters 'all the way through' the

multi-scalar dynamics and impacts of land dispossession due to oil palm expansion in Sambas (Hawkins and Ojeda 2011; Moeckli and Braun 2001).

Differentation (as revealed in the previous chapter) means that the range of possible consequences discussed would not be evenly experienced in these communities or even within the sample of women protesters. However it can be said that, in general, dominant gender relations will almost certainly lead women to suffer disproportionately from future oil palm development (with those women with less land and capital even more vulnerable). Due to the typical gendered division of labour in their households and communities, the women interviewed tend to be the ones responsible for working the land, growing crops for sale and subsistence, ensuring food security and raising future generations - all of which could be compromised by future oil palm development. The women protesters postulated that a new oil palm development could lead them to suffer especially from: polluted water; infringements on housing; cutting down current crops which could threaten reproduction on a daily (food insecurity) and generational (children's educational prospects) basis; a lack of new labour opportunities for women; cultural changes in the community; and losing the control and power they currently have on their land or in their communities. The threat of oil palm expansion not only unveils the dominant existing gender inequalities in these communities and how these work to produce differential consequences for women - the changing landscape also threatens to further exacerbate gender inequalities. Following again the concept of mutually constituted and dynamic 'gendered agrarian landscapes', oil palm development will inevitable remake existing gender relations, possibly exacerbating gender inequalities and diminishing women's positions further.

Analysis in this chapter was also informed by, and builds on, research in the field of contentious politics concerned with the role of identity in shaping protest motivation. Throughout the interviews, women protesters used their identity as farmers (rather than wage labourers) to justify their decision to protest. They also drew from their gendered positions in society, as mothers or grandmothers, to legitimize concerns about the future of their families and communities due to oil palm expansion and thus justify their decision to protest (Beckwith 1996;

Corcoran-Nantes 1993; Silvey 2003). Many of the women protesters chose to mobilize these gendered roles in protest motivation even though by doing so they risk reinforcing the unequal gendered positions that tend to exclude them from politics in the first place (Einwohner et al. 2000). While on the surface it may appear that these these women were mobilizing only for the sake of 'practical' gender interests (Molyneux 1984), Ferree and Mueller (2003) remind us that there is not such a clear distinction between 'practical' and 'strategic' gender interests. The women's words clearly show how gender relations infuse protest motivation in Sambas and as such there is always the potential for a seemingly non-gendered struggle over land to simultaneously be about struggles over gender itself (also Moeckli and Braun 2001; Nightingale 2006).

Chapter 7:
Women, gender and political opportunity in Sambas

Introduction

The previous chapter established that women stand to suffer disproportionately from oil palm plantation development. But having motivations does not automatically result in political action. As Agarwal (2000) has noted, having a stake in an issue is not a "sufficient condition" for catalyzing action. Due to gender-specific constraints related to political action, there is a disjunction between women's interests and their ability to act on them (300). As discussed in Chapter 2, gendered political opportunities condition if women act and through what political channel, whether formal / institutional, informal / non-institutional or some combination of these. In this case, women participated in the informal sphere, using a demonstration (considered a relatively 'confrontational' tactic of protest) to put pressure on state officials (Taylor and Van Dyke 2003). Considering that these women in Sambas are largely apolitical, it may seem surprising that they chose to engage with this "novel, dramatic, unorthodox and noninstitutionalized" (263) form of political expression. But perhaps it is precisely because they are marginalized from 'normal', institutional or formal political spaces that they felt they had to engage with unconventional or informal channels of politics like protest to make their demands to those in power. Drawing from previous contributions by Agarwal (2000, 2001), Hart (1991) and others, this chapter emphasizes the interrelationship between formal and informal spaces of politics, recognizing that women's engagement with informal or protest politics cannot be understood in

isolation but in how it relates to, and is produced by, participation (or non-participation) in formal politics.

This chapter will start by exploring how women are underrepresented or marginalized in formal political decision-making processes and public affairs in Sambas. This means that women are rarely, if ever, part of the formal political processes that lead to the establishment of oil palm plantations in the first place. This study also shows that they tend to be excluded or marginalized from the formal spaces of negotiation that attempt to counter or overturn such developments. Having established the 'push' factors away from engaging with formal political processes for these women, the second half of the chapter will investigate the 'pull' factors towards participating in the informal political sphere. This case study shows that certain unique features of protest may diminish typical barriers to women's participation in formal political affairs. However, this is not to claim that informal or non-institutional spaces of politics like protest are a silver bullet for increasing women's participation in politics. While relatively new to Indonesia, informal spaces of politics are grafted upon the same gender relations that produce marginalization in more traditional or formal politics and can hardly be considered empowering spaces in and of themselves. In actuality, the case study shows that these women decided to participate not because of the mechanisms of protest itself, but because they were specifically invited or encouraged to do so by key actors. This demonstrates that new political spaces are not in and of themselves empowering, but that actors have a role in opening new spaces of political participation and influence to otherwise apolitical women. In the process, key actors and women participants alike re-shape gendered political opportunities.

Women in formal politics in Indonesia

Women are underrepresented in formal political processes in Indonesia. Researchers have pointed to the role of Suharto's New Order in enforcing gender relations that served to disadvantage women in the public sphere in general and formal politics more specifically (Saptari 2000; Satriyo 2003). Satriyo (2003) finds that during that period, "structural barriers (such as party regulations) preventing

women from entering local political institutions worked hand in hand with patriarchal values to discourage women from taking up public positions" (219). Despite signs of progress since, including the introduction of a gender quota, new opportunities provided by decentralisation and the election of Indonesia's first woman president, Cattleya (2010) finds that the formal political sphere is still "not conducive to women's participation" (2). Women have made "modest" gains (The Asia Foundation et al. 2006, 55), but a range of political, socioeconomic and cultural barriers[81] continue to prevent women from participating equally and meaningfully in formal politics today.

While Indonesian women as a whole face gender-specific barriers to political participation, significant differentiation amongst women in Indonesia also means that some women face deeper challenges to formal political participation than others. Blackburn (2004) highlights how socioeconomic status impacts the realization of women's citizenship rights, finding that elite women have been the main beneficiaries of democratic changes, while most women continue to be "unaware of their rights or unable to exercise them" (222). Cattleya (2010) also finds that "the more women are working outside the house and the higher the proportion of women reaching higher education, the more likely that they will participate in politics (2). Geographical position relative to the key centers of formal decision-making power, Jakarta or Java island, also impact women's likelihood to participate in formal politics. That said, little research has been done on this. Blackburn (2004) calls for research on the "diversity" of women's interests and organisations in regions outside Java, "particularly those in remote areas" (225). This case study attempts to investigate the barriers to women's participation in formal politics in rural communities not only outside the dominant centers of decision-making, but also with women of low socioeconomic status.

The following sections will explore women's representation and participation in formal politics both in Sambas district generally and specifically in the villages of

[81] Martyn (2005) and Cattleya (2010) list the following barriers: lower education and literacy rates, poverty and unemployment, lack of adequate financial resources, family and domestic responsibilities, political party structures, masculine standards in politics and deference to male political opinion, women's hesitance toward 'dirty' / corrupt / money politics and women's lack of political experience, among others.

the women protesters. Whether in terms of government representation, electoral politics (political party involvement and voting) or state-led decision-making programs, it appears that rural women in Sambas have a small, often non-existent role in formal political and decision-making processes.

Women in formal politics in Sambas

This section will reveal women's participation in formal politics in Sambas district and the three affected sub-districts. Despite being underrepresented at the Indonesian state-level, women have even lower rates of representation at the provincial or district levels, whether in respective Houses of Representatives or in leadership positions (i.e.. state-level cabinet members versus local governors, district or village heads). As table 7.1 demonstrates, this trend is particularly pronounced in West Kalimantan and Sambas where women are significantly better represented in Houses across Indonesia than in the West Kalimantan or Sambas House of Representatives.

Table 7.1: Women's representation in politics in Indonesia (2010)

Institution	Number of women (out of total)	Women as percentage of total population
Houses of Representatives		
Indonesia - House of Representatives (*DPR RI*)	101 (out of 560)	18.0%
Indonesia - All Provincial Houses of Representatives (*DPR Provinsi*)	288 (out of 2008)	14.3%
West Kalimantan - Provincial House of Representatives (*DPR Provinsi*)	4 (out of 55)	7.3%
Sambas - District House of Representatives (*DPR Kabupaten*)*	3 (out of 40)	7.5%
Leadership		
Cabinet members (Indonesia)	5 (out of 34)	14.7%
Governors (Provincial)	1 (out of 33)	3.0%
Mayors / Bupatis (District)	10 (out of 440)	2.3%
Village Heads (Village)	unavailable	3.9%

Source: UNDP Indonesia 2010 (except for *)
*Latest data from period 2004-2009 (BPS Kalimantan Barat 2009).

In Indonesia as a whole, women are increasingly well-represented in the public sector. As table 7.2 shows, women accounted for 43.6 percent of total civil servants in Indonesia. At the district level in Sambas, however, representation of females in the civil service is lower and their proportion has slightly decreased. Both at the Indonesian state-level and at Sambas district-level, women are largely absent from executive and managerial positions within the civil service (see UNDP Indonesia 2010). In Sambas, only two of 59 civil servants in the top echelon are women.

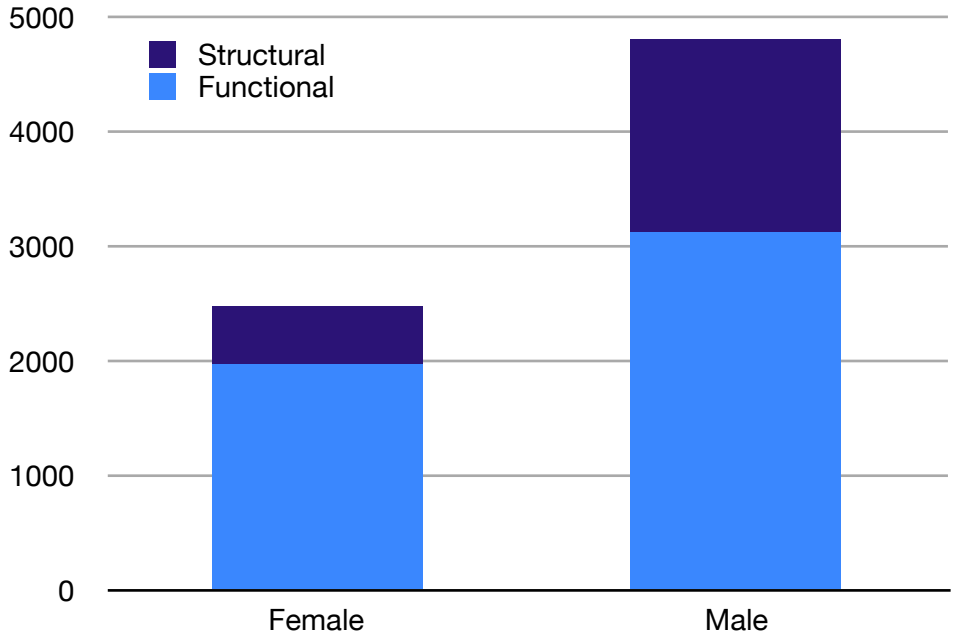
Table 7.2: Representation of female civil servants in Indonesia and Sambas

	Indonesia	Sambas[1]
Number of female civil servants, 2007 (as percentage of total civil servants)	 43.6%[3]	2480 34%
Change in female civil servants, 2003-2007 (as percentage of total civil servants)	+3.1%[3]	-0.5%
Civil service hierarchy		
Females in echelon 1 (as percentage of total echelon)	8.7% (2009)[2]	3.3% (2007)
Females in echelon 2 (as percentage of total echelon)	44.98% (2009)[2]	37.7% (2007)
Females in echelon 3 (as percentage of total echelon)	46.78% (2009)[2]	34.9% (2007)
Females in echelon 4 (as percentage of total echelon)	48.07% (2009)[2]	25.3% (2007)
Functional positions		
Number of females in functional positions (as percentage of total functional positions) (as percentage of total female civil servants)	 n/a n/a	1967 38.7% 79.3%
Females serving as teachers, 2007 (as percentage of total teachers) (as percentage of total female civil servants)	 n/a n/a	1691 37.0% 68.2%
Females serving in Health Centers, 2007 (as percentage of total Health Centers) (as percentage of total female civil servants)	 n/a n/a	276 53.5% 11.1%
Number of males in functional positions (as percentage of total functional positions) (as percentage of total male civil servants)	n/a	3120 61.3% 64.9%

Sources: [1]BPS Kabupaten Sambas 2008. [2]UNDP Indonesia 2010. [3]BKN 2010

Furthermore, almost 80 percent of Sambas's female civil servants occupy 'functional positions', working as teachers and community health workers. This means only 500 or so women are in 'structural positions', that is, mainly managerial[82]. While functional positions also account for the majority of male civil servants in Sambas they account for a smaller proportion than females, leaving almost 1,700 men in structural or managerial positions (see figure 7.1).

Figure 7.1: Proportion of structural vs functional civil servants according to gender (2007)

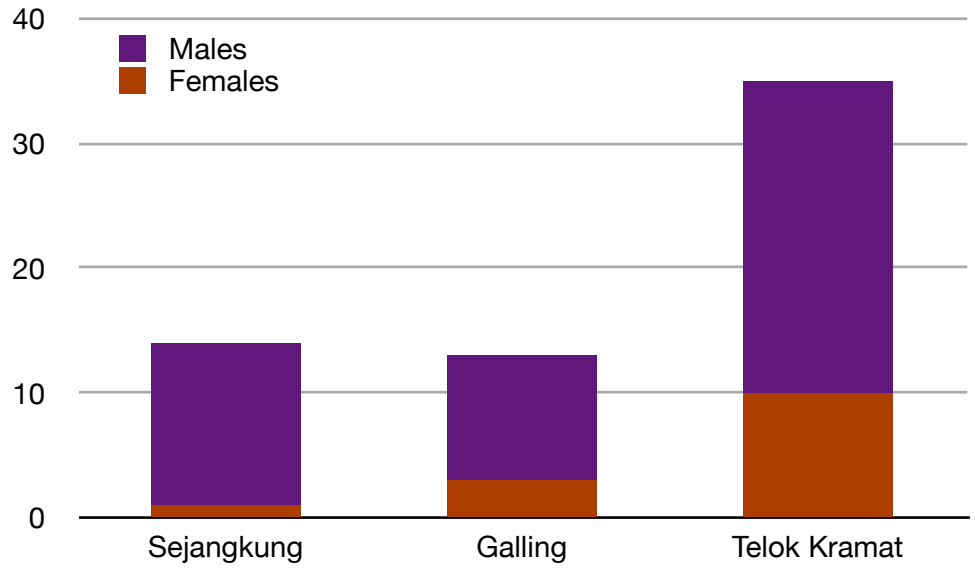


Source: BPS Kabupaten Sambas 2008

At the sub-district level within Sambas, women are also poorly represented. Figure 7.2 displays the low proportion of female civil servants in the sub-districts relevant to this research. As civil servants are responsible for the leadership of sub-districts in Indonesia, these figures signify a lack of women's leadership in the affected sub-districts.

[82] For an explanation of the difference between 'functional' and 'structural' civil servants, see Filmer and Lindauer 2001, 201.

Figure 7.2: Proportion of male versus female civil servants in affected sub-districts (2007)



Source: BPS Kabupaten Sambas 2008

This sub-section has demonstrated that at district and sub-district levels in Sambas, women participate less than men in formal political structures, even less than at the nation-state level. They also tend to be underrepresented in leadership and managerial positions. In terms of the specific case study, this means that women are rarely, if ever, in the positions of power that decide where or how to establish oil palm plantations. This is not to say that a woman in a formal decision-making position would automatically behave differently from men, particularly when it comes to so-called 'women's issues'[83] or the disproportionate consequences of oil palm plantations on rural women. The leadership of Indonesia's first women president, Megawati, is indication enough of this as her leadership "showed no interest in promoting women or their concerns" (Blackburn 2004, 227). UNDP Indonesia (2010) acknowledges that it is not enough to just have more women legislators: "the descriptive participation of women in formal political structures and government will not automatically lead to substantive representation" (33). While focusing mainly on the numbers of women in politics and government here, it must be noted that even if women were to be

[83] Not that there is no one singular or universal definition of 'women's interests'. See discussion in Ferree and Mueller (2003) on the political struggle over defining women's interests.

proportionately or sufficiently represented, this does not automatically mean women leaders would speak on behalf of all or even the majority of women. That said, it is useful to understand how the lack of women in formal decision-making positions means that crucial decisions affecting the future of communities across Sambas, like the ones related to oil palm development in this case study, are made almost exclusively by men.

Women in formal politics at community level

As discussed in Chapter 1, the process of decentralisation has attempted to bring governance closer to the people. As such, new laws have attempted to change the ways people engage with formal or institutional politics at the community level. In order to understand women's participation in formal politics at the community level then, this section will consider their engagement not only with the government positions and electoral politics (as elaborated above) but also with the state-led programs designed to promote wider participation in decision-making processes. Programs already introduced in local communities in Sambas include:

a) National Program for Community Empowerment (PNPM*)*, a participatory planning program in which local communities initiate and decide on funding proposals to meet village needs.
b) Multi-Stakeholder Consultation Forum for Development Planning (Musrenbang*)*, which is the government's "principal instrument" for public consultations from the community to district levels to "reach collective consensus on development priorities and budgets" (USAID and LGSP 2007, 1-2).
c) Allocation of Village Funds (ADD), which concerns budget allocation in villages as part of the above Musrenbang process.

While it is thought that decentralisation "offers women more spaces to be politically active, closer to home" (Blackburn 2004, 228), this has not been well-investigated. Previous research on the relationship between decentralisation and gender in Indonesia has mostly focused on the role of decentralisation in gender discrimination and disempowerment due to the revival of customary laws (Brenner 2007; Henley and Davidson 2008; Satriyo 2003). There has been considerably

less attention given to if and how women engage in the recently changed formal or institutional political institutions at the community level (though see The Asia Foundation et al. 2006; Siagian et al. 2005). The following sub-section will use interviews with the sample of women protesters from Sambas to attempt to understand this better.

Electoral politics

During fieldwork in the five communities, we came across only one woman in Teluk Durian who served as a representative in any kind of government body. Norhadiyati was a representative of the Teluk Durian village government body (BPD). Among the women protesters, none occupied a position in the government apparatus, whether as representatives or civil servants. Only Leviana (Sekuduk) mentioned having once considered putting herself forward as a candidate for the village BPD. That said, women protesters did mention having husbands or male relatives in political positions. For example, Sari (Sekuduk) said her husband had served on the BPD and Wati's (Teluk Durian) father was the head of the neighborhood (RT).

When asked about their involvement in politics or government, several women protesters said they did not know anything or or had never participated. Bethari's (Sebetaan) comment - "I do not know anything about politics" - was representative of many of the women interviewed. Four of the women protesters did mention involvement with political parties but three of these said they accept and wear political party t-shirts because they are free. Nurfitri (Sebetaan) said she had attended a political rally to see what it was like but just watched. Only Risa (Sebetaan) claimed to be a member of a political party and said she attended at least ten meetings before the presidential election in 2009. Risa said it was in her interest to join the party in order to support a male candidate from Sebetaan:

> We want to support Mr Pazan who comes from Sebetaan ... If he becomes a member of the council, it will be easy to contact him if there are problems in the village, and ask for his help.

Risa said it was her first time joining a political party because it was the first time people had invited her along. She explains, “previously [I] still had small children so people didn’t want to invite me along.”

Though almost all of the women protesters were not involved in party politics, every single women protester said they regularly voted in national and local elections. Many treated it as an obvious, even given, fact of life, that they vote at every election. Some were even adamant about exercising their right to vote. For example, Yana (Teluk Durian) said that she did not attend village meetings because her brother went on her behalf. But when asked if that applied to voting, she was defensive of her right to vote, saying that during elections her brother could not represent her views and she had to go on her own to vote.

Decentralisation programs

A small number of women protesters also reported participating in the state-led decision-making programs. Six of the women protesters said they had participated in PNPM. Four of the women were from Sekuduk. Leviana said she ‘always’ makes proposals for PNPM. Both her and Sari said they have acted as village representatives for PNPM at sub-district level meetings. Siska said she started by attending PNPM meetings, then became secretary and is now the leader of a PNPM group in Sekuduk. In the other villages, Bethari (Sebetaan) said she had also acted as a PNPM village representative, while Seruwati (Teluk Durian) had presented information about her local health center for a PNPM workshop. While participation in PNPM was the most popular, two women said they had attended meetings for Musrenbang and one for ADD.

Other women protesters were asked specifically if they had participated in these programs. Three women had heard of PNPM before but none had participated. None had heard of musrenbang. Yayu (Teluk Durian) said she thought her father attended musrenbang, but she did not know what happened at the meetings.

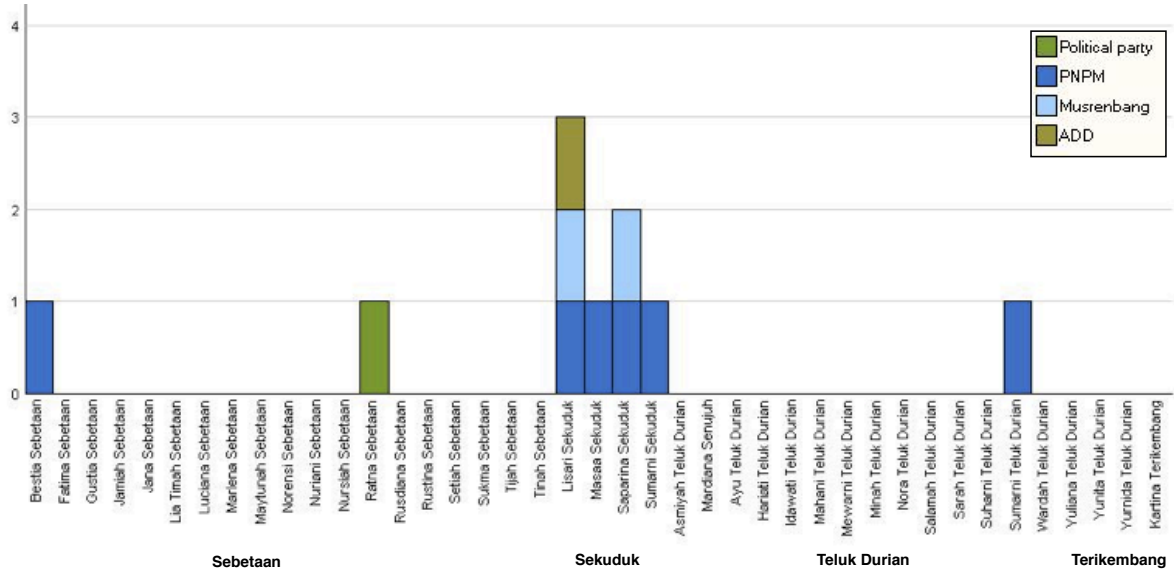
Hikmah (Sebetaan) said she had never heard of musrenbang at all and wondered if it is because the meetings were for men only:

> Maybe only men know about this? Because maybe its for men's work, like to make a bridge. So men just attend the meeting.

Summary

Figure 7.3 shows how, apart from voting, almost all of the women protesters do not participate in formal political and decision-making processes at all. Of the few who do, they are mostly concentrated in the community of Sekuduk. Leviana and Sari (both Sekuduk) are particularly involved in formal community-level decision-making processes. Certainly the sample of women protesters interviewed are not representative of all women in all villages in Sambas, however their experiences provide some insight into the relationship between rural women in Sambas and formal politics. Whether in terms of government representation, electoral politics or state-led decision-making processes, it appears that rural women in Sambas are largely excluded from or marginalized from formal political and decision-making processes.

Figure 7.3: Women protesters' participation in formal political processes



Increased opportunities for participation in formal politics at the community level does not automatically lead to increased participation by women. Among this sample of women, the lack of knowledge about or participation in these decision-making processes suggests that not all members of a community have equal access to seemingly participatory institutions. While the Asia Foundation et al. (2006) has found that in some cases state-led decision-making programs did lead to “opportunities for greater involvement by citizens, including women, resulting in more gender responsive budgets” (xii), they also discovered that when women’s groups are invited to these meetings, “their presence is often a mere formality” (38). This suggests that these programs have not reached all areas of the country evenly or, if they have, certainly not all members in a community evenly.

Just because more formal decision-making processes are now occurring at more local levels does not automatically make them more accessible to all members of a community, including or especially women. Ito’s (2011) critique of decentralisation in Indonesia does not consider gender, but it does highlight the failure of the decentralisation agenda to account for the influence of power relations in regulating social, political and economic relations *within* civil society at the community-level. As long as the underlying power relations remain unaffected, decentralisation fails to deliver on its democratic promise and actually legitimates a profoundly antidemocratic politic. Building from Ito’s analysis, I argue that a failure to account for *gender* power relations specifically presents a further barrier to the goal of widespread citizen engagement in formal decision-making. Understanding the way in which gender relations shape men and women’s differential participation in public life at the community level may help to explain why - despite the new decentralisation laws - women continue to be excluded or marginalized from formal political processes, even or especially at the most local levels. As such, the following section will attempt to go beyond formal politics to consider how gender power relations condition if and how women protesters participate in public affairs in their communities more generally.

Beyond formal politics

Researchers have pointed to the role of Suharto's New Order programs in gendering the public and private spheres, for producing a "clear distinction between the male household head as the representative and provider of the family, and the female housewife and mother as the husband's supporter, the children's nurturer and the society's guardian of morals and culture" (Saptari 2000, 18). Though the New Order ended over a decade ago, these embedded cultural values continue to present significant barriers to women's participation in all public life. Not addressing the gender relations underlying the decentralisation agenda produces what Agarwal (2001) calls "participatory exclusions," or exclusions within seemingly participatory institutions. The following section will draw on Agarwal (2000, 2001), Campbell (1996) and Nightingale (2002) to better understand how gendered norms result in women's marginal participation in the public sphere.

Women protesters were asked if they participate in any village groups or meetings outside of the household. The most common group mentioned (by almost half the women) was their local Council of the National Forum for Islamic Study Groups (BKMT), a non-governmental organisation of Islamic study circles with millions of members throughout Indonesia (mostly women). The next most commonly mentioned group was their local chapter of the state-sponsored group PKK, an organisation started during the New Order to implement training for women around health, hygiene and family planning. Apart from these two major groups, smaller numbers of women also mentioned participating in Arisan (a rotating credit savings scheme), *Posyandu* or *Puskesmas* (community-based health centers, targeted at mothers and babies), Gemawan (a non-governmental organisation which has initiated local women's empowerment groups in Sambas), and / or GAPOKTAN (a government-led farmer's group). The aims of these women-centric groups and the wider expectations of women's attendance at them are informed by cultural stereotypes of women's roles in their communities. Elmhirst (2011b) notes how membership in the PKK group, for example, reflects a "powerful ideology of domesticity and citizenry" (175-176). Women's desire to join these certain groups and what each group actually does is conditioned by - and often reinforces -

gendered power relations. The role of the NGO Gemawan is a notable exception, which will be discussed later.

These gender relations can also be seen in what kinds of meetings women attend, what they do at meetings and if they are even present in meetings at all. For example, half of the women protesters said they did attend meetings in the village. But of these 21 women, six of them said the meetings they were invited to or attended related only to social events, such as weddings, celebrations (i,e. Independence Day) or youth activities for the village and they were invited to cook, serve and/or attend these events. The other 15 women said they also attended meetings related to key village issues, such as development, roads, budgets, school, and so on (herein referred to as 'village meetings'). But the ways in which the women participate in these village meetings is gendered.

Agarwal (2001) provides a useful typology for understanding the range of ways women participate in a village meeting, from 'nominal' participation to 'interactive (empowering)' participation. Of the sample of women protesters who attend village meetings, six (of 15) report participating nominally or passively, saying they only listen during meetings and do not give their opinions. The other nine said they will express their opinion, some only if they are asked ('consultative' participation) though Leviana (Sekuduk) said she 'always' expresses her opinion, thus being one of the only women in the sample nearing 'interactive' participation.

Agarwal explains how gendered rules, norms, perceptions and personal and household endowments and attributes determine different levels of participation, especially in mixed-gender groups. While it is not possible to consider all of these factors here, the gendered norms around speaking up or opposing men and gendered perceptions (both men and women) on women's capabilities and opinions that Agarwal found were also emphasized by the women in Sambas. Lusi (Sebetaan) said even if she disagrees with what is being said at the meeting she does not express her opinion but hopes somebody else will say it. Surya (Teluk Durian) said that she just listens because she does not know anything. Andini (Teluk Durian) told us she never talks during meetings because she feels scared

that people will ignore her advice. Saraswati (Teluk Durian) said she only listens at village meetings where there are men, but will speak at women-only meetings. These perspectives help to shed light on the gender dynamics that limit women's full participation in mixed-gender meetings in the relevant communities in Sambas.

Gender norms and perceptions also condition whether women attend village meetings at all. 26 (of 41) women said they do not attend village meetings at all. Invitations were integral to attendance - women emphasized how essential it was to receive an invitation to a village meeting in order to attend. The fact that the majority of the women do not attend meetings speak to the likelihood that women are just not invited. This is due to the widespread notion that public spaces are more for men, that men *should* be the ones going to meetings, not women. Siti (Teluk Durian) said she is not invited to meetings because she is too young, and her father goes on behalf of her family (her mother also does not attend). Yana (Teluk Durian) said she does not need to go to village meetings because her brother goes to represent her views. Karima (Terikembang) said only her husband attended the many meetings in her village: "it is for my husband only ... women are not needed." Risa (Sebetaan) said it is mostly men who attend meetings about the village school, but she sometimes goes if her husband cannot attend. The idea that men are the primary meeting-goers or the 'public' face of the household is not unique to these communities in Sambas. Agarwal (2000) also encountered the assumption that women's interests can or should be represented by male household heads, which reflected the wider perceptions about women's capabilities and place in society (303. Also Campbell 1996).

Another common reason for not attending village meetings - even if invited - was that men go to these meetings. Jamilah (Sebetaan) said that while she always attends meetings with women, she does not attend mixed-gender meetings like village meetings because men are present. While Jamilah did not clarify what it was about men being present that stopped her from attending, Agarwal (2000) found that women often hesitate to attend mixed-gender meetings due to aggressive male behaviour and/or social norms that "disapprove" of women in public spaces with substantial male attendance (2000, 302). The gendering of

household responsibilities and private/domestic spaces also impacts the level of women's involvement in the public sphere. Hikmah (Sebetaan) said she is busy working in her fields all day so has very little time to attend meetings. Karima (Terikembang) said she does not attend meetings because her children are still young and she is afraid they will disturb the meeting. Though Sari (Sekuduk) said she does go to meetings, she will miss one if her child is sick. Again, Agarwal finds that women's primary responsibility for domestic work limits their ability to attend meetings, particularly if they have young children, and that "male-managed groups seldom take these constraints into account" (ibid, 301).

The final reason for not attending village meetings was feeling that they were not capable of participating because they did not have sufficient education. Mlathi (Sebetaan) said she does not join any meetings because she did not attend school (and implied that she did not have a legitimate place at meetings). Similarly, Nurfitri (Sebetaan) said she does not go to meetings because you have to read and write and she cannot do either. Leviana (Sekuduk) said that older women in her village cannot read and write and thus do not know what is being discussed at meetings. Agarwal points out how personal attributes like education level and self-confidence, which women tend to experience particular disadvantage, may not only colour perceptions about women's abilities (including by the women themselves) but also limit their ability to actively participate in mixed-gender meetings (also Campbell 1996).

Clearly, the sample of women remain largely outside of or marginal to public affairs due to a variety of gendered norms, perceptions and attributes. A small proportion of women actually attend village meetings and an even smaller proportion take an active role in them. Though it is unclear what proportion of women protesters ascribe to gendered norms around who *should* attend village meetings and what they should do there, in reality men continue to dominate village meetings in Sambas (in attendance, leadership and active participation) and, thus, the key decisions in rural communities that impact both the men and women who live there. Even though decentralisation laws and programs are equally accessible to all members of the community in theory, in reality gender relations produce

significant ‘participatory exclusions’ for women in particular[84]. While this section has largely focused on the factors affecting women’s ability to participate, it must also be acknowledged that there is a ‘clear’ difference, as Nightingale (2002) points out, between voicing an opinion and actually changing or influencing decisions. Even for the few women who do manage to participate in meetings, gender relations also certainly affect how much (or how little) they exert influence or ‘social power’.

That said, unequal gender relations are not a static or unchangeable fact of life, nor do all women experience gender power relations evenly. Nightingale (2002) emphasizes how gender intersects with other power relations (i.e. caste) to produce uneven levels of social power among women within a community. In this study there was an attempt to identify potentially significant differences between the women protesters who actively participate, passively participate or do not participate in meetings at all. However, within this sample, there did not appear to be any particular feature (such as age, education level, income, land size, and such factors that may affect social standing) that determined participation or active participation. There did, however, appear to be a link between active participation and being from Sekuduk community. It is worth considering why active participation is located there more than in other communities.

As the earlier section found, there are a few women in the sample who do participate in formal politics. They are exceptions not only due to their participation in public life, including formal politics, but in their belief that women have as much of a right as men to be in the public sphere. These women were mostly concentrated in the community of Sekuduk, where all of the women reported actively participating in public affairs. While in the other communities, men are considered the primary meeting-goers, in Sekuduk, women felt both men *and* women should attend. Siska said it was important that her and her husband attend

[84] Julia and White (2011) have a similar finding in a nearby district: “although the women may be allowed to participate, village meetings and leadership positions are still very much considered men’s world, and the women tend also to share this perception. They will participate in formal meetings only when their husbands are unable to attend or if they are the Head of Family” (12).

meetings together if they are both invited. Similarly, Leviana was clear about the importance of attending meetings even if her husband was also going:

> If there is a meeting we are invited to we must go ... Don't need men only to go, and women to not go. I never feel like that. We have to join in. With this we have the authority and the community can also believe us that we can lead ... If it is me, I have to go.

The women in Sekuduk were also some of the most active at meetings. Leviana said it was not enough for women to "only listen from the back," but to actually know what is happening and to take part. She said that women are scared to express their opinions during village meetings but that should not stop them:

> Scared of being wrong. But we shouldn't be like that. We have the right to speak. Wrong or right, the important thing is what we say, the others can give their responses. If it's correct, go ahead, if it's wrong, what's wrong? I feel, i don't want to be silent. Whatever is on my heart, I say it all. If there is a man who disagrees, says he wants to say I'm wrong, where am i wrong? Leave him to speak first. After that we can give our response. It shouldn't be men who are considered right all the time.

Both Leviana and Siska said they also sometimes take on secretarial roles at meetings.

So why are women apparently more active - or *feel* they should be active - in Sekuduk? The women told us that it was due to the village head supporting women's involvement, specifically encouraging women to attend village meetings including those related to formal political or decentralisation processes. The role of village authorities in encouraging women to attend was also mentioned by Seruwati (Teluk Durian) who said that because the head of the sub-village chooses her to attend meetings, she goes (even though she does not feel clever enough). Leviana also credited the NGO Gemawan for setting up a women's group in Sekuduk:

> We encouraged our female friends, told them how they could move forward with us in the village, how they could speak, could do anything because they were helped by Gemawan, Kak Laily [Executive Director of Gemawan]. Before I couldn't do anything either. I was scared. But now we know the legal process, and we speak up. If we're right, no matter where we are, no matter that we are women, we become a support for the community. They said that if there is any need to send village representatives, we will be the ones sent. So people know that we are able to express ourselves.

Though not based in Sekuduk, Mardiana (Senujuh) was the other women who said her experiences with Gemawan helped encourage her to express herself in public:

> *Mardiana*: If in a meeting, if we have an opinion, we try to convey our opinions. Because we have the right to put forth opinions, proposals, ideas. So we try to communicate them as well.
> *Interviewer: You do not feel intimidated or feel ignored by the men, or not scared to express your views?*
> *Mardiana:* Sometimes I do feel nervous about talking about that issue. But if we are always nervous, scared, nervous, scared, it means we don't, ya after awhile we will always we scared. But we try to have confidence even though we are nervous. But we keep trying to make ourselves have confidence to convey our opinions. The issue of the impact is something to worry about later, the important thing is that we try.

While these few women's active participation in meetings are exceptional in a context where, overall, women are largely excluded from or marginal to the public sphere, their perspectives demonstrate two things. One, that there are 'cracks' in the wider gender norms and perceptions around public - and political - participation by women, and two, that these cracks are produced and encouraged by people, whether by village authorities or influential NGOs[85]. The existing gender relations that condition women's exclusion or marginalization in the public sphere are not immutable but, in some communities and among some women, show signs of negotiation by key authorities and/or by the women themselves.

Political opportunities for resistance

The first half of this chapter has found that women in Sambas tend to be underrepresented or marginalized in formal politics and public affairs in Sambas generally. This means that women are rarely, if ever, part of the formal political processes that lead to the establishment of oil palm plantations in the first place. Recognizing the range of reasons for these women to reject oil palm development, the rest of this chapter will consider what political opportunities, formal and informal, women had to defend their land, livelihoods and communities.

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[85] Also see Komarudin et al. (2008) on the role of organisations in encouraging women's confidence and active participation in meetings.

Formal political opportunities

Upon receiving information about the proposed oil palm plantation, local community leaders (all men) attempted to resolve the issue through conventional means in typical formal political spaces, that is, via meetings and hearings with political authorities at the village and district levels[86]. Only ten (of 42) women reported attending one of these events. Of the ten, most went to oil palm-related meetings in their communities. Only two went to one of the many hearings at the House of Representatives in Sambas. Only one of the women went to a series of pre-protest meetings and hearings. This was Mardiana (Senujuh), whose previous involvement with an oil palm development in her village (PT WSP) and with the NGO Gemawan encouraged her to become the village representative of the peasant organisation STSD and attend pre-protest meetings and hearings. Apart from Mardiana's active involvement and leadership, the rest of the women were notably not included. Despite having what could be considered 'sufficient' motivation to reject oil palm, the meetings and hearings did not seem to offer women opportunities to take political action against the development.

Several women said they did not go to them because they were only meant for men. Women like Maziah (Sekuduk) said her husband went so she did not. Ryani (Sebetaan) said only her husband was invited to the first meetings in the village where "the men heard the information." Later on in the process, Ryani did eventually attend one of the hearings in Sambas but said she was the exception, that it was almost all men there: "only a few of the people who went to the council office were women." While Melati (Teluk Durian) did attend the meeting in her village with the Bupati, she was clear that it was only men who spoke to the Bupati: "the men here talked with the Bupati." Lusi (Sebetaan) said she did not go to the hearings because it mostly meant for men:

> Hearing in the Office of Representatives, at that time often men. So not for us to be concerned with. We go to the protest.

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[86] These were grassroots or 'invented' political spaces initiatives (rather than state-led or 'invited' political spaces) that occured in the typical spaces of doing 'formal' politics, which is why I label them 'formal' political spaces rather than 'institutional' political spaces (see more on 'invented' and 'invited' spaces in Miraftab 2006).

In this quotation, Lusi reveals that certain political spaces - like those involving the House of Representatives - are more the ‘concern’ of men, whereas protest seems to be more inclusive.

Considering how the formal political sphere largely excludes or marginalizes women, it is hardly surprising that the pre-protest meetings and hearings, that were held in the manner of conventional or typical formal politics, also largely excluded women. For the most part, women were either excluded from the meetings (or not actively included) by the male organizers or felt themselves that it was inappropriate for them to attend. For the few women who did attend, they report only listening while the men spoke. In another case of threatened dispossession in Sumatra, Ramadhanti (2011) also finds that in grassroots resistance meetings, men dominate the meetings and women rarely attend or, if they do, are not asked to speak. This discussion shows that it is not only in the formal political processes that lead to the establishment of oil palm plantations but also in the formal spaces of politics that attempt to counter or overturn such developments that women are excluded or marginalized.

Is there a relationship between their exclusion from the formal political sphere and these women’s eventual engagement with participation in informal politics? Agarwal (2000) finds that while there is a ‘dearth’ of women in formal decision-making bodies (related to forest protection) in India, women are noticeably more present in informal groups and in ‘agitational’ collective action (300). But why? Hart (1991) suggests that women agricultural labourers are more likely to engage in overt political action than men because they are more peripheral to formal power structures. Similarly, Ferree and Mueller (2003) argue that because women are excluded or disadvantaged on ‘men’s’ terrain (spaces of formal or institutional politics), they are more likely to organize outside of this. Clearly, exclusion from formal politics provides a kind of ‘push’ factor for women to engage in more unconventional or informal politics. Because women in these communities in Sambas lacked access to or influence over formal political channels, they had few political opportunities other than informal politics (in this case, a demonstration) to defend their land.

Informal political opportunities

As already discussed, informal or contentious politics have flourished in Indonesia since Reformasi. While Reformasi may have only brought modest or even questionable advances for women's participation in formal politics, there is a general consensus that it has definitely led to an increase in women's involvement in informal politics (Blackburn 2004; Robinson 2009). However, the relevant literature almost exclusively focuses on the women's movement, women's organisations and gender-based issues, leaving out accounts and analysis of why women may choose to participate in mixed-gender politics around non-gender direct issues (such as oil palm development). In the following I will attempt to consider how informal political opportunities emerged in Sambas to encourage women's participation. I argue that the unique nature of protest helps to diminish or mediate some of the gendered barriers to participation explored earlier.

One barrier was feeling a lack of legitimacy due to low education and literacy levels. But perceived intellectual or educational barriers are not as significant in a protest as in a meeting. Also, protests tend to be less time-consuming and so women do not have to sacrifice or compromise their household responsibilities to the same extent in order to participate. Although the women who attended the protest said it was difficult to leave their household duties for the protest, it was only for one day. Some even reported completing their tasks first before joining in the protest and a few brought their children along with them. Agarwal (2000) also supports this, finding that women may be more able to participate in demonstrations rather than regular groups because protests usually "require a more concentrated and occasional commitment of time than required by ... groups ... that hold regular meetings at inconvenient times" (302). Attending a demonstration is a relatively low risk and low effort action in terms of time and energy (McAdam 1986, as cited in Taylor and Van Dyke 2003), thus making it more feasible for women to participate than the series of meetings and hearings that preceded the protest.

One of the main gendered barriers to women's participation in the public sphere was that men should be the primary meeting-goers or the sole 'public' face of the household. However in regards to protest, many people expressed the opposite viewpoint, stressing the importance of women attending the protest *in addition to* men; that men could not go in place of or rather than women in protest. Like many of the protesters, Wati (Teluk Durian) said she does not attend village meetings because her father represents her there. However, when it came to the protest she said it was 'important' to go as well as the men. Interviewees (women and men, protesters and non-protesters alike) were clear that one of the key elements to making protest a success was involving as many people as possible, demonstrating to all concerned the sheer number of people (regardless of gender) who rejected the oil palm development. As such, women felt encouraged to go in order to bolster numbers in a way without parallel in the formal political realm.

While unique features of protest may have helped to diminish the gendered barriers to participation in formal politics, they certainly did not eliminate them. The following sub-section will use accounts by protesters (both men and women), women non-protesters and other observers to investigate the multiple barriers to protest participation and consider if and how these overlap with barriers to participation in formal politics.

Barriers to participation

While protest offers a new space of political participation in Sambas, it does not come free of the gender power relations that shape women's participation in the public sphere, including in formal politics. This may explain why, despite the participation of women in the Sambas protest, women composed a relatively small proportion of protesters overall and there were far more women in those communities who did not attend the protest as those who did.

Though unique features of protest may help to diminish some of the gendered barriers to participation, they still exist. For example, one of the most commonly cited reasons for non-attendance was that women could not leave their household

responsibilities for the day, whether in terms of taking care of the household, fields or children. While some felt they could not leave their duties, others reported being told they could not leave by their husband. Women also did not attend due to a lack (or perceived lack) of capability. The act of protesting itself, which required a lot of walking and standing in the sun, was seen to be a particularly physical challenge that was not appropriate for women or older people who are generally weaker. One older woman in Piantus supported the protest but could not attend because she physically could not walk far enough. While in formal politics or meetings, perceived intellectual or educational barriers were a concern, in protest physical barriers (i,e. inability to walk) appear to be more significant.

Several people said that women had more difficulty than men actually going to the protest. Even for women who wanted to attend, men were prioritized over women in the trucks that were organized to take protesters to Sambas. According to Melati (Teluk Durian), if there were more trucks everybody would have gone to Sambas but as they were limited men went instead. Many people went independently on their motorcycles but this transport option largely excluded women (as few women can drive motorcycles and few if any have have their own motorcycles). This prioritizing of men in transport to the protest in Sambas speaks to a wider belief that was expressed that, as in formal politics, men *should* be the ones attending protest (not women). Some people said to us that women did not attend the protest because they do not need to since their husbands, brothers or fathers represent them at the protest. One man in Terikembang (where only one woman was known to have attended the protest) said in fact it was better for men to go rather than women because if women attend instead of or in addition to the men then children will want to go as well. Generally-speaking many people said that women did not attend the protest because of Sambas tradition where men are the ones who participate in public affairs, not women.

Others said that women did not attend because they felt scared, of clashing with the police or the government and of being arrested or imprisoned. These fears were informed partly by portrayals of violent protests on television and by reports of police intimidation prior to the protest. Aside from these specific threats, people

also spoke of the wider culture of submission produced by Indonesia's history of repression. In general, these villagers are used to adhering to the government even if they do not agree with their decisions; for most villagers actions which directly question the government like protest are considered too extreme, even 'anarchist'. When asked why she was the only protester to attend the protest from her community, Mardiana (Senujuh) explained:

> When we wanted to have a hearing we would often have one, get together, speak with our friends about things. But if our friends hear the word "demo," they do not dare to do that. Because that word, we need permission to do it. Request permission to the government, wait for a license from the government again. The culture here is indeed still one of adherence among the community. The culture is if the government speaks, they will be obedient. Submissive. So even though they already know that what has actually happened is the fault of the government, the community is still scared to demo. What happens is they are not brave because of earlier. Culture. If already it is government that discusses, government that has a program, government that has laws. They just go along with it, that's all.

The confrontational nature of protest deterred community members, especially women, from joining.

This section demonstrates that there are significant gendered barriers to protest participation, barriers that deterred many more women from participating in the Sambas protest than who actually did. While the unique nature of protest may help to diminish some of the typical gendered barriers to participation, the gender relations that produce marginalization in formal political spaces also conditions these informal political spaces. While relatively new, the spaces of informal politics such as protest are hardly empowering in and of themselves. Rather, individuals have a key role in both opening up spaces of informal political participation and deciding to partake in them.

Why women participate

A protest event is produced not only by structural factors discussed above, but by individual actors (Silvey 2003). In this case, women decided to participate not because of the mechanisms of protest itself, but because they were specifically invited to do so by key actors.

As explored earlier, a typical barrier to women participating in the public sphere was lacking an invitation. In formal politics more generally as well as in the meetings around oil palm, women said they did not participate because they had not been invited to do so. In contrast, the majority of women mention being specifically invited to join the protest in order to enhance the number of protesters. For example, Siti (Teluk Durian) said, “invited to participate so it is busy ... were given orders to make it crowded.” Hikmah (Sebetaan) said once she was invited, she felt that she had to go, “invited by my friend to join. If I do not join them it is bad also. Everybody is going, so I go also.”

The women protesters said the NGO Gemawan were instrumental in including women in the protest. Titin (Sebetaan) said, “all the women went together to Sambas, because Bang Tomo [Gemawan] said the women should go to Sambas to demand our rights, so they went.” Also, Ryani (Sebetaan) said:

> Don’t agree with palm. So what should we do? Bang Tomo always comes here, Bang Tomo, Bang Syahrial, Bang Fajri, do you know them? [Our] friends from Gemawan ... How can we [women] find a way to be invited, if we want to demo? We want to fight, and so how do we demonstrate? Want to demonstrate, want to know how we can reject palm. They [Gemawan] agreed with the men that us women were already ready, want to go to the protest.

Leviana (Sekuduk) explained how Gemawan suggested that women join the protest in her community as well:

> At that time some villages [wanted] a demonstration. So us women because curious. Finally, we also joined in the demonstration. At that time there was also a suggestion from Gemawan. They said, do the women want to make progress. Whereas usually women are only in the back, listening, listening, and listening. Now is the time to go forward. We see the reality, what a demo actually is. Rather than we only watch on TV.

By specifically inviting women, Gemawan and the rest of the protest organizers opened up the opportunity of informal political action to these women.

While informal political opportunities are not empowering in and of themselves, this particular case shows how specific encouragement by protest organizers help to open up protest as a new political opportunity for women. In addition to this, individual women also had to decide to join. Considering the multiple barriers to

protest participation in these communities, deciding to protest was hardly easy or automatic. Women protesters found various ways to explain or justify why they made the unprecedented decision to participate.

The overwhelming majority (38 of 42 women) made it clear that they chose to attend the protest of their own accord, out of their own conscience or because they felt it was right. For example, Seruwati (Teluk Durian) said she joined the protest "because of our own conscience ... from the depths of our hearts." Melati (Teluk Durian) said it was a "problem of our souls." That said, a few women said they were forced to attend the protest, in particular by family members. Karima (Terikembang) said she attended because she was following her husband's wishes:

> My husband says to go, I go. If he says no, then no ... Because the head said we were going [to the protest], we go.

There was also more subtle pressure to attend. Nurfitri (Sebetaan) was made to feel guilty about not attending, saying "people said if we do not go later our land will be taken. It means we do not care, they say, if we do not go. Similarly, Nursanti (Sebetaan) conveyed her understanding that she had to attend or she would lose her land:

> It is like if we do not go, it is like we give our land to those people ... If we do not go it is like we agree ... so we went.

Despite these few accounts of women feeling forced or pressured to attend, almost all said they were not unduly influenced to attend and did so of their own accord.

The women protesters said their deep anger, fear or sadness about losing their land and their right to decide drove them to protest. They said it made them feel enthusiastic, strong and/or brave. Risa (Sebetaan) remembered how she felt upon hearing the news of the proposed plantation:

> It meant we became not scared to speak with the village head. The feeling was we dared to do anything. We said what the situation was, we were brave.

It made women feel like the men and, like the men, capable of taking political action. Ryani (Sebetaan) said she had to demonstrate because she felt "like the

men ... I also feel how the men feel. If the men are angry, the women are also angry." Wati (Teluk Durian) also said that regardless of man or woman, they have to defend their land:

> People, basically, they feel of one heart, to make it [the protest] crowded. I like it. Men, women, both want to defend it, the same.

Risa (Sebetaan) said she felt so strongly about the issue that she would not lose, even though she was fighting men: "we will not give up. Even though they are mostly men, and we are women, we will not lose."

Though nine of the women said they were initially scared to protest, many more (15 women) said they were far more scared by what they perceived as the alternative - losing their land. Women said they did not feel scared because they knew they were in the right, even if family members tried to tell them not to go. Maziah (Sekuduk) said her mother was scared on her behalf:

> I am not scared, Mom, I said to her. I am ready to go to the protest ... [My mother] was scared. 'Later what will happen?' 'I am ready. My husband is also going', I said to her. I'm not scared. How will it be if our land is taken, Mom? How will we go tap rubber, I said to her. Only then she was silenced. Didn't pay attention / interfere again.

Both Saraswati and Melati (Teluk Durian) said they were so angry or upset about losing their land that they were not only brave enough to go to the protest, but were willing to go to jail or die for it.

A fair number (11 women) also said they wanted to attend out of curiosity. Despite having seen protests on television, they did not know what it was like to actually see it in real-life or try participating in it. Sari (Sekuduk) said:

> A protest had never happened here. There are those seen only on TV. So what is it like to protest directly? Like that? If on TV, almost every night we see on the news. So it is like that. So, go. I want to see it also. Only want to know how it is ... I want to know how a real protest is ... Just want to see what the atmosphere of a protest is like first-hand. Just curious.

The fact that the protest was unprecedented may have served as a barrier to some would-be protesters. But for these women, the novelty of it actually contributed to their desire to participate. This is fairly common as Whittier (2003)

finds that ‘neophyte activists’ do not need previous experience with protest but can easily conceptualize of them due to media depictions.

The women protesters used the failure of (mostly men’s) conventional or formal negotiations with public officials to justify their decision to engage with protest. Lusi (Sebetaan) said that the men’s efforts to convince the Bupati to overturn the decision had failed, with Lastri (Sebetaan) hinting that the ‘gentle’ nature of meetings and hearings would not put on appropriate pressure to solve the problem:

> It cannot be done in a gentle way. Are not given a decision. Always go to the council offices [DPR]. They do not care, they do not notice. So that is why [protest].

Sari (Sekuduk) also said that the meetings and hearings would not draw sufficient attention to the matter:

> If it is not so big, if we just relax only, resist subtly, then maybe people assume that it is not important. ‘People don’t care’, like that.

As previously described, women protesters often described themselves as the ‘little’ people, feeling like the ones making decisions about the land, whether the Bupati, legislators or the company, just did not care about them or listen to them. The failure of the meetings and hearings to convince the Bupati to withdraw the permit proved this. In so doing, it justified the use of more ‘confrontational’ tactics like protest to force the authorities to pay attention to their demands.

Several women stressed that while they had hoped to solve the matter with more ‘gentle’ tactics, they were eventually forced to take the unprecedented measure of protest to put pressure on the Bupati. According to Hirni (Teluk Durian), “going through a peaceful path does not bring results.” Similarly, Athiah (Teluk Durian) said, “with a peaceful way we cannot. But with protest we can be heard.” Melati (Teluk Durian) explains:

> When there was no kerosene, we didn’t demonstrate. Have we ever demonstrated? No, never. Petrol prices went up, I said, did we ever demo, I said to him. All the expensive things, rice, did we ever demo? But for rubber, we would dare to die. It would be better if we were killed rather than our rubber.

Yana (Teluk Durian) said that they had never even considered protesting for other issues before:

> If we have a problem with [price of] basic foodstuffs, problem with kerosene, gasoline or other goods rising, we have never protested. Whatever it is, we have never before protested. When our rights were taken away by the Bupati we were very angry.

Yana makes it clear that when it came to their land, the community had to try a tactic (protest) they had never tried before. Similarly, Mardiana (Senujuh) said:

> [Protest] is the path when all the other paths have come to a dead end. Ya we are forced to demonstrate. Because other factors were not paid attention to, with hearings, conveying our opinion, they didn't care about that, so we were forced to get together.

The unsuccessful attempts to pressure the Bupati in the lead-up to the protest caused women to lose faith in 'gentle' tactics. As such, women often repeated that they felt forced to protest as a matter of last resort. As Meyer and Reyes (2010) emphasize, protest emerges not just from having grievances but from the 'belief' that the situation can be changed; from the perception that a political opportunity (like this protest) will make an impact.

The space of protest is hardly an empowering space in and of itself. In this case, individuals (protest organizers) acted to specifically invite or encourage women to participate, thus serving to open up the space of protest to women in an unprecedented way. Individual women also had to make the decision to join the protest, which was not easy or automatic. It required, as many mentioned, individual qualities like bravery, enthusiasm and strength, even curiosity and feeling they had no other means of affecting change. The actions of both protest organizers and women protesters alike show that while gender power relations often act as barriers to participation in the public sphere these may be modified or negotiated to change perceived opportunities around women's political participation. Like discussed earlier in the chapter, these actions show that there are 'cracks' in the wider gender norms around women's public participation and that these cracks are produced and encouraged by individuals.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how perceived consequences and motivation to protest (as established in the previous chapter) is not a sufficient condition for taking political action, especially for women. It also depends on having political opportunities to take action. The secondary literature provided valuable insights into how 'political opportunity structure,' especially gendered political opportunities, shape women's decisions to participate in protest (Beckwith 2001; McCammon et al. 2001; Zemlinskaya 2010). The Sambas case demonstrates how, when women are excluded or marginalized from state decision-making processes, they may be pushed to engage in more unconventional politics such as protest on crucial matters such as the future of their land. I argue here that exclusion from institutional processes and spaces facilitate participation in protest politics instead (Agarwal 2000, 2001; Ferree and Mueller 2003; Hart 1991).

That said, protest politics should not, by comparison, be considered a silver bullet for facilitating women's involvement in politics. While demonstrations seem to offer a feasible means of political engagement for rural women in Sambas due to being relatively low risk and low effort (McAdam 1986, as cited in Taylor and Van Dyke 2003), this research shows how barriers to participation are still prevalent. Far from seeing political spaces as empowering in and of themselves, then, this chapter highlights the role of actors in opening up new opportunities for otherwise apolitical women. In doing so, this study goes beyond just the structural factors and conditions that produce political opportunities to consider the role of individual actors in opening or changing political opportunities (Campbell 1996; Silvey 2003).

This evidence of changing political opportunities for women in Sambas indicates that, despite the dominant gender order, gender relations are being negotiated. For some protesters and organizers at least, there are alternative ideas about the real and potential role of women in politics. These new political opportunities may also set in motion wider transformations to future gender relations. The possible consequences of changing political opportunities for women and gender relations will be further explored in the following chapter.

Chapter 8:
Women, gender and protest in Sambas

Introduction

The previous chapter explored how protest may diminish typical barriers of participation for women in Sambas, but found that entry into this type of politics can also be imbued with the same gender power relations that exclude or marginalize women from the public sphere more generally. Having established the ways in which gender affects protest emergence, this chapter will investigate if and how gender relations shape, and are shaped by, protest dynamics and outcomes.

The first half of the chapter will explore various dimensions of women's protest activity, taking into consideration leadership and position at the protest. It will also contrast protest activities seen as less controversial, such as screaming or bringing props, with those that were seen by some to be inappropriate, like aggression or violence. While protest offered a group of rural women in Sambas an unprecedented means of political participation and influence, existing gender norms meant that their actual experiences of protesting were not free from restriction. As such, protest can be seen to be simultaneously empowering *and* disempowering for women as certain gender norms are challenged or transformed while others are reproduced or reinforced.

Following this, the second half of the chapter will look at protest outcomes, specifically the implications of this one protest for its stated goals, the status of protest, the future of women's participation in protest, and on gender relations. The

women interviewed generally celebrated the fact that they had defended their land and rubber crops and had successfully participated in such a large, peaceful protest. This potentially has an impact on wider societal conceptions of the role and influence of protest and on the possibility of women's future involvement with protest. Finally, this chapter will consider the potential implications of women's participation in protest for gender power relations in Sambas.

Dynamics

Leadership

The leaders and spokespeople at the protest were almost exclusively men. Whether in their capacities as representatives of the NGO Gemawan, the peasant organisation STSD or various state institutions (or some combination), these protest leaders were key to the meetings leading up to the protest, in disseminating information about oil palm expansion, and in organizing the actual protest. On the actual day of protest, they were the actors generally deemed to be the most legitimate to organize the crowd and to deliver speeches from the top of the truck outside the Bupati's office. Leviana (Sekuduk) made it clear that it was men rather than women who spoke on the day saying, "we did not get on top of the truck. Only ones doing like this is the men who speak."

That said, there was one woman who delivered a speech to the crowd concerning PT SAM. As discussed in Chapter 7, Mardiana (Senujuh) was the only woman in the sample who actively helped to organize the protest with STSD and she had an opportunity to deliver a speech on the day (figure 8.1). This was how she described that experience:

> *Mardiana:* I was given an opportunity to give a speech by the masses, our friends ... So I felt as if I was also being respected in giving the speeches. Ya it really made my heart race. Because thousands of people. I was given my chance to give a speech. It is a real sense of, what, ya? Proud, yes ... to be given the opportunity to express my opinion ...
> *Interviewer: Were you not scared to speak in front of the busy crowd?*
> *Mardiana*: No, only if we look at that busy mass below, we are as if, how to say it? We were on top of a guide truck so we felt… Difficult to imagine.

> What did I feel? The problem is I've never experienced anything like that before.

Over the course of the protest, there was one other woman aside from Mardiana who spoke from the top of the truck. However as she was associated with PT HTI rather than PT SAM there were no other details provided about her role during the interviews.

Figure 8.1: Mardiana delivering her speech at the protest (June 24 2008)

Source: Nova (Sambas)

Mardiana's involvement in protest leadership varies from the many of the other women protesters who downplayed or minimized their role in the protest saying, for example, they were only there to passively increase numbers. Like many of the women, Nanang (Teluk Durian) said, "we only go to make it more crowded." Several women remarked on the size of the crowd, estimating anything from 3,000

to 10,000 protesters on the day. Some of the women specifically noted the presence of women. According to a woman from the FGD in Sambas, all types of people joined the protest, including women:

> Lots of women. Busy, even the old people also join. Those already humpbacked even join .. crowded, crowded with women. Men and women, old.

Melati (Teluk Durian) made a point to say that it was “not just the men,” that there were women too. The women protesters spoke about the women from their own villages, as well as from other villages and sub-districts. Several women mentioned the strong turn-out by women from Jawai sub-district in particular. While the women’s presence at the protest may have not equalled the men’s, it did contribute to the unprecedented size of the protest crowd let alone to the unprecedented appearance of women in politics of any kind.

When asked what they did at the protest, the women often said they did ‘nothing’ (*tidak apa-apa*), that they just listened to the leaders or watched rather than actively participated. When pressed further, they insisted they just followed the actions of other people, such as their friends or protest leaders. Mlathi (Sebetaan) provided a typical answer, saying: “follow people, like that. It was nothing / no big deal. We only follow others.” Many women said they followed or joined in with their friends, like Ryani (Sebetaan) who said, “if invited by friends, want to join. Friends screamed as well. Friends sang, sang also. Where our friends are we’ll go.” Apart from following their friends, some women also said they followed protest leaders. Murni (Teluk Durian) said, “we depend on the leader. No screaming by ourselves. If the leader speaks, just follow along.”

While some women discussed their presence and thus contribution to the protest as vital to the success of the protest, there were some women who portrayed their role as supporting or secondary to the ‘actual’ protesters. Seruwati (Teluk Durian) insinuated that women had to play a supporting role because they are not capable of protesting in the way that men can:

> As women we don’t have the power/strength to join in the demonstration, hopefully we can emancipate our own desires, supporting, encouraging [the actual protesters].

Indri (Teluk Durian) said she only went to the protest to deliver food and water to her family and neighbors who were protesting. She ended up staying to protest, saying her role expanded from delivering food to also giving 'spirit' or strength to the protesters. Despite being at the protest for most of the day, she still portrayed herself as only supporting the protesters rather than being a protester herself.

Indri was not the only woman who discussed her role in preparing or bringing food to the protest. Food was a key part of most of the women protesters' accounts of the day. A majority of women mentioned preparing, packing and carrying packets of rice or other provisions like water and cakes, having been told to be ready to stay in Sambas for a long time, even overnight. Saraswati (Teluk Durian) said they even brought raw ingredients and cooking equipment because they were prepared to stay until the issue was resolved:

> We had brought fire wood, pots, rice ... If it wasn't sorted out we were going to cook here. We had brought big pots. Brought one sack of rice. Brought firewood.

Food was a key concern, whether in preparing, carrying it with them or in using it to prove their preparedness to stay in Sambas until the issue was resolved. The responsibility of providing food for the 'actual' protesters even provided an entry-point to the protest for Indri, and may have for other women protesters as well. This demonstrates how, even within a newly empowering space of politics for women, existing gender roles around the preparation and delivery of food are very much present, even conditioning entry into these new political spaces.

Previous research has found that women in mixed-gender movements tend to be excluded from leadership and are given stereotypically feminine roles (Fonow 1998; Roth and Horan 2001; Taylor and van Dyke 2003; Zemlinskaya 2010). In some ways, this is supported by the experiences of some women in the Sambas protest, women who tended to downplay or minimize their role in the protest, sometimes conceiving of it as secondary to the 'actual' protesters (men). While the NGO Gemawan made a point of including women in the protest, there seemed to be little consideration of how dominant gender norms affected the ways in which women actually participated in the protest. As such, the way that these women perceived of their role in the protest reflects and reproduces traditional gender

relations that often exclude women from other types of politics and public affairs in general.

This should not, however, overshadow the fact that women were present at the protest at all and that many participated in new ways that are not possible in other political spaces. Furthermore, some women took on very powerful roles at the protest, such as Mardiana who organized, spoke and led alongside men protesters. Despite the dominant gender norms that are reproduced in certain ways for some women at protest, this indicates that these gender norms are being challenged and even changed.

Position at the protest

Women protesters provided their physical position at the protest, whether at the back, middle or front, along with various reasons or explanations for those positions. Some of these reasons can be attributed to existing gender norms which condition the women's movements at the protest.

At least ten women reported standing at the back of the protest. This may have been due to the gendering of certain spaces of protest. Leviana (Sekuduk) revealed how fear may have kept some of the women away from the front of the protest, hinting that the front was more of the men's space:

> Us women were not brave to go to the front, the problem is those in the front were generally men. We were only in the back.

Nurfitri (Sebetaan) also discussed how certain spaces at the protest were more appropriate for men or women:

> The women joined together. Because we didn't get together with the men. No, we separated ... There were some who went with the men. But we were in one group with women. We didn't join with the men.

These women's views speak to larger ideas of where men and women belong during a protest due to existing gender relations. There seemed to be an assumption among some of the women that men tended to - and *should* - be at the front of the protest and women in the back.

The gender norms around physical positions at protest expressed by some, however, were not so obvious for other women protesters. For example, Saraswati (Teluk Durian) said her and her new friend wanted her to go to the front (thus hinting that she did not believe that the front was only for men), but eventually decided not to because she was worried her husband would not approve:

> Made friends with a person from Jawai [sub-district] at the time. Hey let's go in, they said. I want to go. Sweating a lot ... I want to be invited like that, I like it. I did not eat, I did not drink. Because I felt so enthusiastic. 'Do not want to be in the back', he is always advising me. 'Where's Saraswati?' He was looking for me. 'Why do you keep getting lost?' he said. 'Why are you at the back?' ... 'Come on, let's go up there', someone said to me. But I was worried my husband would be mad.

There may have been other reasons for some women staying in the back of the protest that are due to their gendered responsibilities. Sari (Sekuduk) said she stayed at the back of the protest because she arrived late. She said she could not go to the protest earlier in the car like her husband did as she had housework to take care of first:

> *Sari:* I was not with the group that took the car. I took the motorcycle with my younger sister. So I was far in the back. ...
> *Interviewer: Why did you not go together with your husband in the car?*
> *Sari:* Actually, I had my child. And there were other reasons just then. We were at home. That's why we went last.
> *Interviewer: Was there work to do at home?*
> *Sari:* Yes. I wasn't sure whether to go or not. When I finished all of it [work], I called my little sister who happened to be free also. Let's go sis, I said. Ya. My little sister also was finished in her house ...
> *Interviewer: You did not go to the front?*
> *Sari:* No. Actually the place was already full. The thing is if you want to break through to the front I suppose certain to be sick. Actually we went late, not with a group. At the end, far in the back. If want to infiltrate to the front it feels like probably not able to.

Sari's account demonstrates how gendered responsibilities, such as household work and childcare, impact on how and when women go to the protest (late) and how that affects their position in the protest, relative to the her husband who arrived early and were more likely to be in the middle or front of the protest.

Siska (Sekuduk) also explained how arriving late resulted in her staying at the back of the protest, while her husband and other men who went earlier were at the

front of the protest. Siska's position at the protest was further affected due to having her child with her at the protest:

> The biggest [child] was brought, so stayed in the back [of the protest]. Anyway because at the time the children were free. If I want to leave them behind, they will not like it ... This is why I brought the youngest. The oldest was left behind with his grandmother ... Just silent in the back.

For Siska, the women's position at the back of the protest meant just watching and staying quiet during the protest, rather than actively participating:

> I was quiet in the back. Only watching. There were people already singing. Others already holding banners, those making lots of noise. I did not play around. I was not noisy. We women feel just like that ... The Bupati was suddenly in front. We were far back there. Most of us from here were at the back. Those that went up to the front were about 20 women ... Those who remained silent were at the back.

Siska reveals how for some of the women, their physical position at the back of the protest may have produced more marginal participation in protest activities.

Though there seemed to be a large contingency of women who stayed together in the back of the protest, not all of the women protesters were positioned in the back. At least four reported being in the middle or the front of the protest, closer to the truck where speeches were being made. There was, of course, Mardiana (Senujuh) who took a leadership role at the front. A few others also mentioned approaching the front where the men were because they were invited there by their friends. Nurfitri (Sebetaan) said:

> We also got closer, joined with the men. But not really. Befriended four or five friends. Not even dare to approach by ourselves. Invited by friends.

This indicates that despite some conceptions of which spaces men and women belong to at a protest, the divisions are not clear-cut or all-ecompassing. There were women in the middle or front of the protest and men in the back. For example, Karima (Terikembang) reported that both her and her husband were in the back together.

Generally it appears that women protesters tended towards the back of the protest. The reasons provided for staying at the back provide valuable insights into the ways that existing gender norms or household responsibilities affect what

spaces women occupy at a protest, which may or may not then restrict their protest activity. In the case of Siska, her position at the back of the protest meant staying quiet, rather than actively participating. The gender norms dictating that women should be at the back of the protest, however, were not ascribed to by all the protesters, as evidenced by either the women who went to the front or their friends that encouraged them to do so. Again this shows that while existing gender roles may condition some activities for some women at the protest (thus reproducing these gender norms), protest may also act as a space for other people to start to challenge women's place (literally and figuratively) in politics.

Screaming, chanting and singing

Whether in the front or back, a significant majority of women protesters told us they were vocal at the protest, through screaming, chanting and/or singing. It was the most commonly cited protest action, with at least 31 of the women protesters saying they took part (see figure 8.2). At least four said they screamed so much that their throats hurt or their voices went hoarse. Saraswati (Teluk Durian) said:

> After that I started coughing, didn't have any voice left. Because of the shouting at the demo. I like demos like that.

Women said they followed the lead of their friends or the protest leaders.

When asked if they remembered what they screamed about, the women mentioned eight different - though related - topics. The most common was the Bupati. Siska (Sekuduk) said they heckled the Bupati, with others mentioning calling him stupid or a liar. Risa (Sebetaan) chanted as though she was still at the protest:

> We shouted curses at the Bupati. We said 'the Bupati is bad!' because he stabbed us in the back ... 'The Bupati is a liar, the Bupati is evil, the Bupati is a thief.'

At least three also mention teasing the Bupati by calling him by his nickname, a play on his name that translates literally to 'owl'[87]. They also screamed about rejecting or defeating oil palm and protecting their land and demanded the Bupati

[87] According to my interpreter, the local people in Sambas make fun of the Bupati's name (Burhanudin) which shortens to Burhan and so sounds like '*burung hantu*', literally 'owl' in English.

withdraw PT SAM's permit. Six women protesters said they also screamed about protecting farmers, their rubber crop or both. Wati (Teluk Durian) remembered shouting, "[If] oil palm enters, farmers die ... Live farmers," while Siti (Teluk Durian) shouted,"improve rubber farming." Sari (Sekuduk) screamed, "do not kill our livelihoods." The last topic women recalled screaming about was their rights. Saleha (Sebetaan) said they vocalized their disagreement with oil palm because they want to protect their rights. Sari (Sekuduk) shouted, "do not steal our rights ... protect our rights."

Figure 8.2: Woman screaming during the protest (June 24 2008)

Source: Nova (Sambas)

While most women protesters seemed to be comfortable with their role in screaming during the protest, particularly when following others' lead in doing so, there were also women who said they were remained silent at the protest at least

in part because they believed it was men's, not women's, role to scream loudly or at all. Nurfitri (Sebetaan) said the women did scream, but not as loud as the men or as people from Jawai sub-district:

> It was just us women we weren't that loud. We wanted to go along with our male friend. People from near Jawai were the loud ones.

Six of the women protesters said they did not join in screaming at all. Fitra (Sebetaan) revealed how age and gender deterred her from screaming, saying "I felt shy also because I am already old. It [screaming] was the men." Age does seem to be a factor, as the average age of non-screamers (43 years) was higher than the sample as a whole (36.3 years). That said, another older woman said the shouting made her "feel like a little kid even though I'm old" (Saraswati, Teluk Durian). Furthermore, it seems that for older women like Fitra, screaming is more associated with the men than women. One of the oldest women, Mlathi (Sebetaan) did not scream because she also thought that screaming was for the men, saying "no [not scream]. Because I joined the women. Ya, maybe it is for the men."

Banners and props

Approximately half of the women protesters said they carried banners, flags or other visual props during the protest (figure 8.3). Melati (Teluk Durian) discussed the meaning of her banner and the all-night effort of making it:

> It [the banner] said '*Innalillahi wa innna ilaihi roji'un*' ['We belong to Allah and to Him we shall return'[88]] .. if our rubber trees are cut down ... We didn't sleep making that ... All night people painted that, in the house.

Mahsuri said they made hundreds of signboards in Teluk Durian to bring along. Hirni (Teluk Durian) mentioned carrying a sign saying 'Destroy PT SAM'. In Sekuduk, Leviana said they the women made a banner together. A few women also reported carrying Indonesian flags during the protest.

[88] Approximate translation. This Islamic phrase tends to be used when people hear of or experience sickness or death (Basri 2010, 184).

Figure 8.3: Women carrying banners and props at the protest (June 24 2008)

Source: Nova (Sambas)

The women wore certain accessories for symbolic reasons, as well as identification. Women from Sebetaan mention wearing triangle farmer hats as a "sign that we are farmers" (Ryani, Sebetaan). A woman from the FGD in Piantus said she was also willing to wear the triangle hats, even though she thought they were 'ugly', to defend their land. Wati (Teluk Durian) said that instead of hats, people from Teluk Durian brought sarongs or scarves. Melati (Teluk Durian) explained their purpose:

> The symbol that we were from Durian was that we wore those scarves. The symbols were different, some used plastic, some wore certain material, all sorts of things. From other kecamatan. So we knew who were our people, who were from Jawai and so on ... Everyone had their own thing.

Only a few women said they wore head or wrist bands which had the name of the peasant organisation 'STSD' on them. Nurul (Sebetaan) said she wore one, just like the head band in the film 'Rambo'. Hirni (Teluk Durian) said that she did not wear a head band because they were only for the men.

The women also brought props to the protest to symbolize either the livelihoods they sought to protect or the anticipated consequences of oil palm. Nursanti (Sebetaan) explained why women brought rubber trees or rice plants with them:

> Some people took other things with them, parts of rice plants, other things. [To show] that we can grow things here. This is our produce. If it is replaced with palm oil, we won't have anything.

People from Teluk Durian brought along a casket. Mahsuri (Teluk Durian) said, “the casket is an example of if oil palm comes, we will die and be carried in a casket.”

There were six women who explicitly said they did not carry banners at the protest and, again, this was gendered. Hikmah (Sebetaan) said it was the leaders who carried them (not her). Ratih (Sebetaan) said while some communities like Jawai brought many banners, “we women did not bring anything.” Also, Maziah (Sekuduk) said men were the ones that carried the banners, not the women:

> It was already crowded with people carrying, [so] didn’t bring. Follow only. Already there are those that brought them. Busy. But it was the men, I was [with] the women. Also tiring to do it the men said.

Men may have been more responsible for carrying the banners because they tended to go to the protest earlier in cars. Siska (Sekuduk) said that only people who took the car carried banners, and Yuriza (Teluk Durian) said those who went in the car (mostly men) took the banners and there was no room for her in the car. According to most of the women who did not carry banners, the banners were the domain of the men, whether because they were the leaders or because they had priority in the cars which transported the banners.

Keeping the peace

Many of the women protesters’ first response was that they did ‘nothing’ at the protest. When pressed further, it was clear that what they meant was not that they did nothing at all but that what they did do was ‘good’. For most of the women protesters, ‘good’ was establishing and maintaining a peaceful protest, the importance of which they stressed throughout the interviews. Many wanted to distance themselves from any kind of protest activity that could be considered

troublesome or violent, and emphasized the contrast between their peaceful protest and violent protest depicted in the media. Establishing their protest activities as peaceful was crucial to these women who discussed how it affected recruitment and the legitimacy of their message.

From the start, the organizers made it clear they intended to have a peaceful protest, a factor that certainly influenced otherwise wary women to attend. Women said the organizers told them not to bring anything that could be used as weapons, even small knives. They were instead encouraged to bring items like sarongs, which Hirni (Teluk Durian) commented was a symbol of peaceful protest. Leviana (Sekuduk) said that planning was important in preventing a 'bad' or violent protest, like the ones they commonly see reported in the media:

> It is not like protests that end up in a brawl, unplanned. The style of the protest is planned, we do not want attacks, don't want this, like that.

Bethari (Sebetaan) also discussed how they planned a peaceful protest:

> We wanted to go to the peaceful demonstration and had been told not to destroy anything. We weren't to destroy anything. The name is *Serikat Tani Serumpun Damai* [Peaceful Farmer's Union]. Don't be violent because we come with peace and good [intentions] and in a calm way.

Emphasizing the peaceful nature of the protest may have been a key factor in convincing people to attend in the first place.

That said, many of the women protesters said they were worried that the protest could be violent or chaotic. Ratih (Sebetaan) said she was scared that protesters would go berserk or run amuck, while Wati (Teluk Durian) said she was concerned it could turn into a riot or chaos. Wati said she felt sad at the prospect of violence:

> We do not go to fight. We go, the way we go is good ... we prayed most before, hope that it goes smoothly there [at the protest]. I felt sad, what if something happens there, I don't know what, fighting or something.

In contrast to their fears, at least 20 of the women emphasized how orderly and peaceful the protest ended up being. Yana (Teluk Durian) said that despite the protest being the largest in Sambas, it was also the "safest." According to Fitra (Sebetaan):

> Nothing rough. There wasn't even one flower that was ruined because of us ... We did not play dirty, no playing with weapons or anything, no.

Most women said they were relieved and proud that the protest ended up largely peaceful.

However, the protest was not entirely peaceful throughout. The women spoke about aggressive or violent elements they noticed or encountered, particularly as the afternoon progressed and the Bupati still had not arrived. By late afternoon, the crowds were tense and angry. Siti (Teluk Durian) said she saw people throwing things and was worried it would escalate. Nurfitri (Sebetaan) said people were chanting for the Bupati to come out and when he did, he was trembling. Risa (Sebetaan) described the atmosphere:

> The Bupati took the microphone and was shaking because he was scared. He read a decree while shaking. That he would withdraw the license. He said to the people. This is understandable, because there were thousands of people ... If the Bupati slipped even a little bit, he would die. Even though there were lots of police, could not hold back. People were climbing on the roof of the Bupati's office. If by 4 o'clock the Bupati did not come, people were going to destroy the Bupati's office. We even wanted to stay over night. When the Bupati came out, we became more excited. Because we hate him.

Lastri (Sebetaan) also said she thought that if they had not been given a decision, the crowds may have ended up destroying the Bupati's office. Mardiana (Senujuh) said she felt pity for the Bupati facing the angry crowds, but that he brought it on himself and must be held accountable for his actions.

Several women protesters were careful to distance themselves individually or collectively from any kind of violent elements at the protest. Sari (Sekuduk) physically separated herself from the protest, going to the market:

> I felt fear rising. Scared it will become a fight or something. So went straight to the market. Did not stay until it ended ... because people were already pushing and shoving each other.

Other women stayed at the protest but were clear they were not part of any aggressive action, like Nurul (Sebetaan) who said, "did not throw things, there were people that were throwing, there were. Ya, but not me. I was screaming, not making trouble." Some women not only distanced their own individual actions, but defended the conduct of their friends and village against that of more aggressive protesters. Ratih (Sebetaan) said, "our friends were not the ones that were

breaking things. Peaceful, those from our village, peaceful." A few women also distanced women as a whole from the aggressive or violent behaviour displayed by men. For example, Nanang (Teluk Durian) distanced her group of younger women from the more violent actions of men at the protest:

> We just paid attention to those throwing things, just watched. That's all. Us and the young ones. The others were older. Throwing things, shouting ... The older ones and the men [did something] different. Just the women joined together, we joined with the women.

Some of the women said they even had a role as peacekeepers. Yuriza (Teluk Durian) said she convinced another protester to remain calm and peaceful during the protest:

> At the time there was a friend from Jawai [sub-district] that wanted to throw things at the Bupati. When the Bupati arrived, we were still calm, calm. Soon. Later our land will not be taken, we said. So he became calm.

Melati (Teluk Durian) seemed to provide a motherly tone to convince people to not engage in bad or violent behaviour:

> If people wanted to go into the Bupati's house, they weren't to ruin anything. But there were still people who did that. The people from Jawai really wanted to do that. I said 'don't'. I pulled on their pants and told them not to. 'Child, don't do that. We want to have a good demo. Not doing criminal things. [If we do that] the Bupati won't care about us. Let's listen to the Bupati first. Then I'll go up, this woman. You do so later'. I said that to them.

In many of the women's accounts of the protest the importance of peaceful protest was emphasized. They tended to distanced themselves, their friends or even women in general from any violent elements that were present. Some even discussed taking an active role in keeping the peace.

This is not to say that a commitment to non-violence was advocated only by women (for example, the mostly men protest organizers were clear about their intention for peaceful protest). Nor can it be said that all the women at the protest - or even within the sample - did not affiliate with violent ideas of people. Indeed, there were a handful of women protesters who said they had considered being violent at the protest.

A few women, like Lusi and Nurfitri (both Sebetaan), said that during the protest they had felt like throwing things or even pushing the Bupati. Lusi said she had not, however, felt brave enough to do it. Yana (Teluk Durian) said that the protest made her feel so angry that she almost started to throw stones, but managed to restrain her emotions. Risa (Sebetaan) expressed a desire to fight the Bupati but said she was not allowed:

> We were enthusiastic and there was no more fear in our thoughts. If we could meet with the Bupati, the feeling is that we'd want to hit him. If someone asked us to fight, we would fight because we were offended. ... When the Bupati came out at the end, I felt I wanted to break his neck I was so mad. If I would do magic, I would make something bad happen to him ... We wanted to throw things at the Bupati, but we weren't allowed to. We wanted to throw the mints in our mouths.

Saraswati (Teluk Durian) said her fury at the Bupati made her consider being destructive alongside the men, even if it would then result in her going to prison or dying:

> I wanted to kill the Bupati, want. I was not scared of going to jail ... I have already fought with the men ... I didn't want to eat at all. That's how angry I was. But if someone faced us, I don't know what would've happened. Fight. We would hit them in the head ... I felt I wanted to chase him [the Bupati]. Felt I wanted to get up there too. We were infuriated. Felt infuriated. Felt we really wanted to. There was no fear. Wanted to feel this way. Because we weren't afraid of dying. No problem if imprisoned. Because the rice in prison is nice. If we could we would've destroyed, if we could. Luckily we weren't allowed.

Other women, such as Mahsuri (Teluk Durian), said she hated the Bupati so much she felt like they wanted to kill him. Ryani (Sebetaan) provides perhaps the most shocking and violent description of what she considered doing during the protest:

> Increasingly angry, if our friends invited us to rip it, for example to eat the Bupati, I'd want to, raw. Indeed. Over the top feeling, ferocious feeling. Felt ferocious, felt want to rip it apart like an animal. Rip it apart, want to. Want to take part also with friends who are more offended ... Felt so angry. Felt that if I was invited onto the stage I would go up there too. The Bupati would be pulled, pounced on, I felt. Felt so furious, that was our feeling. Eat him raw our friends said they'd want to: 'cut off the Bupati's ear… cut it off, cut it off…' We wanted to withdraw everything. Wanted to have that withdrawn, the company's signature on the agreement with the Bupati.

Despite these accounts, none of the women protesters reported actually engaging in any kind of aggressive or violent activity during the protest.

As established in Chapter 2, non-violence tends to be affiliated with women's movements and women in mixed-gender movements (Beckwith 2002; Patch 2008; Turner and Brownhill 2005; Ukeje 2004). While the majority of women in this sample did tend to distance themselves from violent elements at the protest, this does not necessarily indicate a clear association between women, gender and peaceful protest. Not only because of the way some women discussed their desire or comfort with aggression or violence, at least hypothetically, but because the protest (which included both men and women participants) in general was peaceful.

Summary

This section has attempted to explore the various and varied activities of women in protest. Underlying all of the women's accounts are power relations that dictate what they feel they are capable of, what is appropriate in the space of protest and what they ended up doing or not doing at the protest relative to existing or changing gender norms. Despite being a new unconventional political space, protest is certainly not free from the existing gender relations that permeate the lives and environments of the women protesters. When joining a protest, then, women participate not separately from those relations, meaning that they bring the same household and child-rearing responsibilities, the same roles and expectations and even a notion of what is good or appropriate for women as opposed to men. For certain women and certain protest activities, the experience of protesting may thus reproduce and reinforce existing gender norms.

That said, the diversity of protest involvement among the sample of women, from how they participate in leadership to where they stand in the protest to what activities they engage with, demonstrate that there is not one set of gender norms that dictate women's role at protest. It instead indicates that gender relations are not pre-determined or always adhered to, but in the process of changing. Perhaps the new political space of protest, which is already progressive in that it includes both men and women, provides the forum for dominant gender norms to be further challenged, even transformed. In this way, protest can be seen to be

simultaneously empowering *and* disempowering as certain gender norms are being challenged or transformed while others are reproduced or reinforced.

Outcomes

On stated goals

On June 24 2008, after a long day of protest, the Bupati announced that he was withdrawing the decision he made in 2006 to give PT SAM a Location License and a Plantation Business Permit to develop an oil palm plantation[89]. With this announcement, the protest came to a close and the majority of protesters returned home feeling that the main goal of the protest had been achieved. However, the story of PT SAM and oil pam did not end there. Following the Bupati's announcement, PT SAM filed a lawsuit against the Bupati to retain the permits for that area and eventually won in court. As of interviews conducted in December 2009, PT SAM retained the permit to the land. However, this did not seem to be widely known among women protesters. 40 (of 41) women said they thought the protest was largely a success, despite some uncertainties. Some said it was a success because the Bupati had given in to their demands, not realizing that the Bupati's decision was later overturned. For others, the sign that the company had not returned was a sign of success regardless of the status of the permit. This sub-section will focus on whether and to what extent women protesters felt they achieved the main goal of the protest, which was to defend their land from oil palm plantation development.

For the women who were convinced of the success of the protest, they said they felt happy, relieved, calm and/or safe. Aside from the Bupati taking away the permit, the continued presence of their rubber trees and their ability to go tap rubber was repeatedly given as a sign of success. Titin (Sebetaan) said she thought it was a success because the wooden stakes were taken down:

[89] See the Bupati's signed agreement in Appendices E and F.

> I don't feel scared anymore, I feel calm. Because people have said there are no longer people putting up signs on the rubber plantation. The signs on the rubber plantations have been taken down.

A few said they assumed the issue was resolved because they had not heard any more talk about oil palm since the protest. Ratih (Sebetaan) said:

> Now there is no more information about oil palm. If there was information on oil palm, then the emotions will start, the thoughts will start, will be scared again ... Now still happy thoughts. There are no more worries.

However, not all women felt uncategorically happy or relieved. While 40 women said they felt the protest was a success, a significant proportion of those also expressed a degree of uncertainty. Six said they thought it was successful but were not absolutely certain, and ten felt it was a success at the time but were worried that oil palm may still pose a threat in the future. Risa (Sebetaan) said that when she asked one of the protest organizers if the problem was really over, he said it was hopefully over. Yet, she said she still felt unsure:

> He answered, 'hopefully that problem has already been withdrawn'. But I feel like things haven't finished yet. I still doubt ... not really sure.

A lot of women said that even though the company did not appear to be a problem in their communities at the moment, they were still scared that the company would come back. Nurul (Sebetaan) described her anxiety:

> Still not calm, not sure if there is another problem ... Don't know if oil palm will enter again. Hopefully not. Frightened it will enter again.

Some women said they still felt uneasy about their future in general, like Titin (Sebetaan) who said, "we don't know what will happen in the future."

Several women provided specific justifications for their continued concern over PT SAM and / or oil palm. One reason was hearing about related meetings and hearings after the protest which indicated to them the issue was not over. For example, Siska (Sekuduk) said:

> After the protest, people were busy with meetings like the head of the village and others, discussing the oil palm issue. Even until they go to Pontianak or everywhere. We do not know the issues in those meetings. Since the end of the protest, the head of the village and others are busy. Talking about the problem of oil palm, solving it in order to defend our land here.

While several women mention hearing about post-protest meetings, few were aware of PT SAM's lawsuit and even fewer were actively involved post-protest.

Another common reason for their continued concern of their land was their distrust of the Bupati. Lusi (Sebetaan) said that even though the Bupati signed to withdraw the permit, she felt she could not believe him or trust him. Since the PT SAM permit process had been so secretive in the first place, a few were worried it could easily be re-instated in secret again. Nurfitri (Sebetaan) said she was still suspicious, adding, "not sure what is going on with the company. Do we know? They want to open it secretly only." Similarly, Lastri (Sebetaan) said, she was "scared that a company will enter again silently. The community is not given information." Several women said that because the Bupati had already lied to them about oil palm development, there was a risk he could lie to them in the future. Yana (Teluk Durian) said they only felt 'temporary relief' and thought the company would return "because we are always lied to." Because the precedent of lying to the communities had already been set by the Bupati and others in power, Lastri (Sebetaan) said that they - the 'little people' - could not afford to become complacent:

> It has already been withdrawn, there is a letter, stamped, already withdrawn. But not yet sure if it is fulfilled. We cannot be negligent. We have to remember, never forget. We have to remember, even though he already signed the letter. Who knows when we are being lied to. The bosses / superiors can do that. We are the little people so they can say, it is like this, like this, like this.

For these women, a distrust of the Bupati, the company and superiors in general led to their continued concern about the future of their land.

Even if they believed that the protest had been successful in withdrawing the permit of PT SAM, several women said they remained concerned about the threat of oil palm in general, possibly even from another company. Nurfitri (Sebetaan) speculated that after the permit is withdrawn, "someone else could come along and do something different." Tri (Sebetaan) also commented:

> There is still a question mark ... At first it is PT SAM, who knows if they change their name ... There is another one [company] coming in, I heard that, already scared that oil palm wants to enter.

At least three women mention how the general encroachment of oil palm in nearby areas informs their worries that Sebetaan will be subsumed by oil palm as well. Risa said:

> Until now I don't feel at peace ... There are still cases of people planting palm seeds. I don't feel sure that this has all finished. How could I be sure, when the news from people who have land in Sajingan, Sendoyan, Batu Layar [nearby villages], they have the seeds there. In Sajingan they have already planted palm ... [Land] has already been irrigated using heavy machinery, paths/roads have already been made for palm. How can we not doubt.

Though almost all of the women protesters said the protest was successful at meeting their main goal of protest, there were also a significant number who continued to be worried about the future of their land.

Apart from this main goal of resisting oil palm expansion, protest organizers and participants had secondary goals such as mobilizing significant numbers of people and conducting the protest peacefully. The majority of women protesters felt more certain about their success in meeting both of these secondary goals, even those who were uncertain about the status of their main goal. Mardiana (Senujuh) said that the fact that they were able to mobilize so many people in an unprecedented protest should be considered a success in and of itself:

> Despite the result actually it was a success that there was a demo, that there was unity, that there was togetherness. That's the evidence - that we were solid, lots of us.

Similarly, Hirni (Teluk Durian) said she felt proud that they were able to mobilize, despite challenges:

> I feel proud that as farmers we were able to unite ourselves even though we were confronted with intimidation, pressure.

Several women also proudly mentioned the sense of solidarity among the crowd of protesters. Hirni (Teluk Durian) described it as a feeling of brotherhood and Wati (Teluk Durian) said it was like being family or related to others. Some women mentioned the benefits of interacting with people from other villages and sub-districts during the protest. Bethari (Sebetaan) said she liked meeting new people and talking about their rubber and rice fields. Melati (Teluk Durian) also shared

information and empathized with other women protesters, particularly those from Jawai sub-district:

> Of course the people there are upset. Not in the forest. Like us here with rubber used to provide daily food. That's what has upset them as well. So we spoke about the problems with the company there. We discussed things, so these are our efforts, with women.

She noted how protesters from different villages all ate together at the protest. Not all women said they met new people at the protest. Many women said they just kept to themselves and their friends from their village. However, without the medium of the protest, it is unlikely that women like Bethari and Melati would have had such an opportunity to meet and discuss their lives and crops with people from other villages and sub-districts.

The sheer scale of the protest was unprecedented. At least 25 women commented on how busy or crowded the protest. Leviana (Sekuduk) said, "crowded. We had never seen so many people like that." Nurul (Sebetaan) said that onlookers were "amazed" at the size of the crowd, while Melati (Teluk Durian) said that the protest was "extraordinary" and that the head of the sub-district said it was "over the top." Most said the size of the crowd was the reason they enjoyed the protest (though a few mentioned that the size of the crowd scared them). Yana (Teluk Durian) was proud of having participated in such a large protest:

> I like it because all the citizens of Sambas, all join. Approximately 1,000 people, no that's wrong, 10,000. Approximately 10,000. Essentially of the protests in Kalimantan, the demo in Sambas was the most crowded, the most active.

Many women felt that the size of the protest was key to achieving their protest aims, for example Maziah (Sekuduk) who said:

> If we want to go by ourselves to the office we cannot if there is no crowd. We must gather everybody, the whole community. So that we can join together. If we are not united, we cannot do it. Like in the village, if we are not united we cannot defend our land, we cannot. If we want it ourselves, we cannot.

The women's feelings that the size of the crowd led to 'success' is confirmed by other studies that show how influential protest size is to increasing disruptive potential, capturing media attention and following the "logic of democratic

principles by demonstrating a strong surge of public and electoral support" (Taylor and Van Dyke 2003). Furthermore, for individual participants, such a large crowd can provide an "exhilarating and empowering experience" (ibid).

For many of the women, the protest could also be considered a success because it was carried out in an organized, peaceful manner. Even though she was worried beforehand that a riot may erupt, Wati (Teluk Durian) said the protest was 'safe' and "went as planned." Melati (Teluk Durian) said that because they behaved in a 'good', 'sincere' and 'right' way, that "even the police who were inside, in the office, everyone came out under the sun and were happy." Melati was proud that their protest was so 'good' that even the police were happy. Similarly, a woman from the FGD in Sebetaan said their participation garnered the support of the police, saying "the police spoke to us like this. They said number one. Brave women. [The police were] with us, with us when we demonstrate."

Beyond whether the main goal of the protest - to protect their land from oil palm development - was met in the short- or long-term, the women protesters felt they met their secondary goals. The fact that there was a protest at all, let alone one of its size and conduct, was a matter of pride for most of the women interviewed and the reason why almost all consider the protest to have been a success.

On protest

This section will look at how participating in the protest influenced women's perceptions of the effectiveness of the protest tactic in both expressing their views and influencing politics. Klandermans (2003) introduces expression as a goal of protest in itself, giving dignity through struggle and moral expression. Given these women's marginalization in the public sphere and virtual absence from state-led political processes, the potential of this new channel of politics for allowing women political access and influence is worth considering.

As previously described, these women are largely excluded or marginalized from state-led political positions or decision-making processes. Even in the meetings

and hearings leading up to the protest, women were largely absent. Clearly, it is not because these women lacked the desire to resist oil palm. Through protest, however, they were able to directly access and engage with decision-makers and decision-making spaces, most for the first time. Seruwati (Teluk Durian) said that participating in the protest felt hard but it provided a direct way to for her to fight for her rights, for the first time:

> As long as I have lived to this age of 34 years, that was the first time. I've seen it happen before on TV but I've never seen women do it. How they do it. Such a long journey from the DPR [House of Representatives] building to the Bupati's office. It felt so hard. I feel that throughout my life I've wanted to fight for our rights, be strong and so on.

Women protesters made it clear they would not have had the opportunity to frequent the spaces of decision-making, to interact with decision-makers or to express their objection to oil palm in any capacity other than protest.

Many said that they had never been to the House of Representatives or the Bupati's office in Sambas before the protest. Risa (Sebetaan) described how the protest changed that:

> When we were at the council office [House of Representatives], someone asked, 'Have you ever been to the council office?'. I answered, 'Never, this is my first time going to the council office'. The person asked again, 'Why did you join the demo?'. I answered, 'Because we want to defend our land, Sir!'

Risa appeared proud to have gone to the House of Representatives directly for the first time to make her demands heard. For most of the women protesters, the protest provided their only means of being close to the spaces responsible for making the key decisions that affect their lives.

The women also said the protest provided a unique opportunity to express their views in the presence of the Bupati. Siti (Teluk Durian) described her interaction with the Bupati at the protest:

> We argue with the Bupati. We want to express our opinion. For example, the Bupati, it is like this, we want to defend our land, for example ... Because [in the protest] we as the people, we can express our opinions to the government openly.

Hirni (Teluk Durian) said that expressing their demands to the Bupati was a success in and of itself: “our struggle was a success to tell the Bupati our demands.” Other women also described expressing themselves during the protest. Sari (Sekuduk) said “our desires can be released. To reject it ... the Bupati is directly attending at that time,” while Leviana (Sekuduk) said, “with that protest, we can feel fulfilled. We can convey whatever it is, whatever we want to convey.” For these women and others, the protest provided their first opportunity to express their demands directly to the Bupati and more generally in the public sphere.

In addition to providing a new channel for expressing themselves, the protest was also considered an effective means of influencing decision-making. Many women protesters said in general they feel that the ones making the decisions, whether the Bupati, the House of Representatives or the company, do not acknowledge them, that they were just the ‘little’ people. However, according to Athiah (Teluk Durian), “with protest, we can be heard.” Women like Nanang (Teluk Durian) believed there was a clear link between protesting and achieving their desired results:

> In that one day, people asked to withdraw that permit, directly the Bupati withdrew the permit. So directly happens. Already signature on that letter, by the Bupati.

Leviana (Sekuduk) also said that after they go to the office that ‘directly’ there is a result. For Risa (Sebetaan), the Bupati’s action to cancel palm mean that he ‘respected’ the people who demonstrated. Mardiana (Senujuh) accorded the size of the protest for its success, saying “with a certain mass, with a strong resolve, the Bupati can indeed carry out the desires of the people themselves.” Several women thought that if they had not protested the issue would still be unresolved or worse, their rubber would already have been chopped down.

As noted in the previous chapter, prior to the protest, women had lost faith in the capacity of ‘gentle’ tactics to pressure the Bupati or gain the authorities’ attention. In contrast, protest provided an effective means of being heard and pressuring the Bupati. Nursanti (Sebetaan) said she did not think there was any way but protest for ‘ordinary’ people to express their opinions to the government:

> It is like we are not powerful like this, we cannot make it as ordinary society ... It feels like there is no other way. Maybe by ourselves or just a few of us, then maybe he [the Bupati] does not believe us. Maybe if there is a loud voice, then he will believe, that we do not want our area to be planted with oil palm. It is better with a protest.

While protest may in fact be a more effective way in general for communities like these to not only gain the attention of political authorities but to influence their decisions, it must also be remembered that for the majority of women interviewed it was also their only forum to epxress themselves.

The protest offered women protesters an unprecedented way of expressing their views in the public sphere. Further, the Bupati's recognition and response to their demands allowed them an unprecedented level of political influence. This illicits two questions. First, what implications could this have for the future of protest in Sambas? Previous research has shown that successful protests may diffuse across space, time and groups, influencing the emergence and tactical repertoire of other movements (Meyer and Whittier 1994; Taylor and Van Dyke 2003; Whittier 2003). The women's participation in the protest clearly affected their own conceptions of the effectiveness of protest, but it may also have contributed to changing wider societal perceptions of what is possible and achievable through unconventional means of political engagement such as protest. In a context where opposition to oil palm is rarely successful[90], this one protest in Sambas is identified as a rare success. Perhaps it will inspire - or already has inspired - subsequent protest?

Second, what implications could this protest have for women's future participation in protest? The initial opening of protest to women (as discussed in the previous chapter) seems to have been reinforced by the protest itself, making the protest form more open to women's participation than it was previously. While it has been revealed that the gender dynamics of protest were not particularly empowering for women, protest is nevertheless perceived in these communities as an open political opportunity for women, at least in relation to institutional political

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[90] Citing Purwana's (2006) observation that farmer opposition in West Kalimantan 'always' fails, Potter (2008) also finds little evidence that civil society is strong enough to protect farmers in the region (15).

opportunities. While protest may hold the potential to offer women a means of political participation and influence in the future, the next section will investigate whether the sample of women protesters would choose to participate again.

On the individual

Past research on women in contentious politics has gone beyond impact on stated goals to also consider the impact of social movements on the people who participate in them. This sub-section will consider how their experience with protest may or may not lead women to engage in protest again in the future.

The majority of women protesters (22 women) specifically mentioned liking the protest, while only five women said they disliked it[91]. Many of the reasons for liking the protest have already been explored, for example, liking the size and solidarity of the crowd, the immediate results (the Bupati withdrawing the land permit), and what it felt like to participate in the protest (the enthusiasm, screaming and meeting new people, to name a few). For some women, this positive experience of protest informed their desire to participate again. Mahsuri (Teluk Durian) said, "I like the protest, I love it. I feel I want to once more. If they still want to take it [land], We still want to do it once again." Ryani (Sebetaan) also said she liked to protest and was willing to again: "if there is another problem, anything that's not right, I'm capable of demonstrating again. I want to."

Almost all of the women protesters said they would protest again (36 of 39 women). Of these, ten women said they would definitely protest, regardless of whether other people joined or if it concerned topics other than land or oil palm. However, for the majority of women protesters their participation was conditional. Seven of the women said they would only protest again if others from their community did and there was a large crowd. Maziah (Sekuduk) said:

> According to the community whatever that is like. Then I want to join as well. If I hear from the community that it is not good to protest, I do not want to join. I hear everything from the Sekuduk community. I do not want if on my own. We are all unanimous so want to join the protest.

[91] The remaining protesters did not mention one way or the other.

For Karima (Terikembang), future participation relied on her husband's approval: "if my husband gives me permission to go, even if my husband doesn't go, I go. If permission is given. If it is not given, I don't go."

While most of the women protesters said they would only protest again to defend their land, six of the women protesters said they would consider demonstrating for other issues as well. Siska (Sekuduk) said she would join a protest for issues around food, gasoline and education. Lusi (Sebetaan) said, "if it is a problem with the Bupati, society, land rights, any rights, I want to join ... if everybody assembles I want to join, ya join." Lastri (Sebetaan) said she wanted to protest about other issues, however also seemed to also be critical of using protest to solve any little problem:

> Besides palm oil? There's lots of things I'd like to demonstrate about, lots. Development problems like roads, education. Lots of things I'd like to demonstrate about. Other things? Those people who give out aid/ assistance. There is no responsibility/accountability to the people. We aren't satisfied. It's just that the people don't want things to be like that. They don't want to [have to] demonstrate. Lots of things that they want to make trouble with. We're lucky to still be living here. If we were in the city, there would be demonstrations all the time. Never ending. Any little problem leads to a demonstration. But the people here just accept things as they are.

While Lastri was clear about her own desire to protest, she seemed to have conflicting opinions on when it was appropriate to protest and where.

Lastri's critique of protest was often repeated throughout the interviews. While many women protesters said they liked protest and were willing to protest again, most were cautious about turning to protest on a regular basis or in light of any or all problems they were facing. At least 11 of the protesters said they would only protest for certain issues, emphasizing only issues relevant to their communities and their land. Mahsuri (Teluk Durian) said:

> If it is still a problem with oil palm, I want to join. Other problems, no. Leave other problems alone. The problem of rubber being cheap, rice expensive or whatever. Essentially no, essentially no. Suit yourself. Gratitude that the government takes care of us. Thank god we are given food that is cheap by the government ... There are people who do not have oil, want to protest this, gas do not have, whatever to protest, we do not want to at all. It is only the problem of oil palm that we want to protest for. Basically whatever

> protest of people we do not want. Leave alone employee wages, we do not want to protest. Only oil palm, one problem that's it.

Also, Melati (Teluk Durian) said:

> If I was asked to demonstrate for some problem or other, we're going to demo, I wouldn't want to. Honestly ... 'Let's demo, because of price of rubber was very low'. 'Up to you', I say. I don't want to. But for this [palm] I wanted to ... If it's that problem, we'd protest. But not for other things. For this plantation issue, still enthusiastic.

While participating in the protest may have encouraged women to join future protests, a significant proportion of these women said they were only willing to protest again for certain issues.

Several women protesters also emphasized that protest remained a last resort for them, and they would only consider participating in future protests if all other paths had been exhausted and there was no other option. Women called for problems to be first solved with meetings, negotiations or by building consensus rather than protest. Leviana (Sekuduk) said:

> Actually if there is another way, we do not need to protest. If it can be negotiated instead. But if it is that they are not willing to negotiate then the only way is to protest to solve the problem.

As one of the few women to have participated in the meetings and hearings before the protest, Mardiana (Senujuh) agreed that in theory negotiation is better but that if those do not work then they could be forced to demonstrate:

> Actually, it can be done through negotiation ... if the negotiation is followed properly, if the rules are followed, it feels better if we use that system ... At hearings we can sit with relevant parties to be able to solve problems together. That's where we sit at a table together to deal with the problem. But openness as well. Demonstrating is the last option. If indeed discussions to reach an agreement do not succeed and negotiations also do not work. Forced to demonstrate.

Many women protesters made it clear that they had felt forced to protest in this one instance but preferred to solve problems through less confrontational means like meetings and negotiations.

The decision to protest again was also conditioned by varying levels of fear surrounding protest. In this way, there was disagreement in the sample; some

women had eliminated their fear of protest while others said they were still scared. Mahsuri (Teluk Durian) said prior to the protest she thought they may be shot at, but when she participated she realized it was safe. Ratih, Nurfitri and Lusi (all Sebetaan) also said that participating in the protest eliminated their fear of protest. Lusi said it made her feel brave enough to confront authorities like the Bupati:

> It is like we hate and are angry with him [the Bupati]. I don't feel scared anymore with authority [lit: people above]. We are such a large crowd, so joining, going to the front again. To see the Bupati look scared.

Nursanti (Sebetaan) also said she was not afraid anymore to turn to protest to keep the Bupati accountable:

> If someone violates it again, we'll demonstrate again. That's how I feel, never scared. Because that's our right. We are the residents.

However, Nursanti added she would only join in protest again if it was done 'correctly' (that is, not violently). There was still a perception among Nursanti and other women that protest is a more confrontational way to solve problems or influence decision-making and they emphasized how their future participation relied on protests remaining peaceful. Fitra (Sebetaan) said she wanted to participate again but was critical of the propensity of protest to cause destruction:

> If there is a problem, I want. I want again because it is so sad with our land ... Actually we do not want to go to protest. We want to go peacefully. If protest there is destruction. I feel I want peace.

Siti (Teluk Durian) had similar reservations about future protests getting out of control, saying, "the problem with protests is that it can become anarchist. So I am also scared." While Nursanti and Fitra said they were willing to participate in protests in the future, for Siti the threat that protests could become anarchist was enough to deter her from participating in future protests. She was one of four women who said they were not willing to protest again. The other three said they found protesting too tiring or difficult and did not want to do it again.

As explored in Chapter 2, research has shown how experience in contentious politics may empower women to participate in further grassroots activism (Borland and Sutton 2007; Drogus and Stewart-Gambino 2005), though others reveal the opposite (Adams 2002; Aguilar and Chenard in Téllez 2008). In this study, despite the majority of women saying they were willing to protest again, almost all of the

women had yet to participate in another protest. At the time of interview, one and a half years following the protest, only one of the women protesters had actually participated in another protest. Mardiana (Senujuh) said she had attended a few protests in the provincial capital, Pontianak, to fight for the right of farmers on behalf of STSD and in solidarity with other farmer's organisations in West Kalimantan. Discussions with Mardiana and men protesters reveal that there have been protests at district and provincial-level on similar issues since, though perhaps not directly related to the communities in question. Women protesters may not have seen these issues as relevant to them or their communities and, if so, it is difficult to evaluate if this sample of women would indeed protest again if the conditions were right[92]. However, it may also be that these women have been overlooked or excluded from further actions.

Meyer and Reyes (2010) list a range of factors that may influence and facilitate individuals to take subsequent action, including carrying commitments and capacities to effect change and developing organizational and personal connections. While this sub-section explored how the sample of women protesters do generally carry the *commitment* to greater or lesser degrees, their *capacities* to act upon their enthusiasm for protest are lacking considerably, whether in terms of financial resources or due to the responsibilities that tie them to their households and communities (with its associated gendered dimensions). Relatedly, these women also tend to lack the organizational and personal connections that could lead to more frequent inclusion in protest actions. As Meyer and Reyes (2010) note, "social networks provide a mechanism for recruitment" to movements (224). Though these women were invited or encouraged to protest one time in one place, they do not have the social ties and networks that lend easily to movement recruitment and are almost certainly overlooked or excluded much more than they are included in contentious politics. In light of these barriers, the lack of subsequent protest or engagement by these women protesters should not be seen as either a matter of chance or of individual choice but as also inevitably influenced and produced by gender relations.

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[92] See Giugni (2007) for more on the methodological problems related to timing for understanding the biographical consequences of social movements.

On gender relations

The women in this protest were explicitly concerned with the non-gender direct goal of defending their land, rather than gender-specific concerns. However, as this study has shown, gender power relations inevitably influence every stage of protest participation. While traditional gender roles and expectations in Sambas may sometimes be reproduced at various stages of protest, there are also possibilities for existing gender relations to change and be re-negotiated. Following Ferree and Mueller (2003), this account emphasizes gender relations as variable aspects of contentious politics rather than 'stable' or 'natural' facts. It leaves open the possibility that, even in non-gender direct movements like this one, women's participation may enhance their ability to recognize existing gender relations as oppressive and in need of change and empower them to challenge limitations on their roles and lives (also see Wilson 2008).

As the women protesters in this study show, previous political experience or existing political networks are not required to participate in a protest. Rather, as revealed in the previous chapter, women may end up deciding to protest because they lack entry to other political spaces and protest is the only avenue available to voice their opinions. The fact that women participated in a protest at all, no matter how their experiences were influenced by existing gender relations, shows that there are cracks, that there are people in Sambas (both men and women) who already ascribe to different gendered norms and perceptions of women's capabilities and place in politics. Furthermore, through participating in the Sambas protest, these women are helping to re-define the role of women in political processes in Sambas - if even that their participation changes their own perspectives of what women are capable of. While participating in one protest cannot be credited with transforming the gender relations that tend to exclude women from politics, their participation may help to change perceptions - held by the women themselves and by wider society - of women's role in public affairs. In the course of the interviews, a few women revealed their hopes for women and women's rights. Mardiana (Senujuh) said she was committed to continuing the struggle for women, and Lastri (Sebetaan) said that women as a whole must

advance. When asked if she was willing to protest on issues other than land, Leviana (Sekuduk) said:

> I want. If that means to defend human rights, especially for us as women. We must. Who else would defend it if it is not us women.

While it is not clear whether these women's participation in the protest specifically helped to inform these perspectives, it may be that the protest partly encouraged these women to feel more empowered to participate in politics as women and even on behalf of women. Not that the process of transforming gender relations is automatic or linear. Over the course of the research, it was clear that both men and women battle with and embody multiple and contradictory gender norms and possibilities simultaneously.

Despite gender power relations that lead to the exclusion of women from public affairs and state-led politics in Sambas, there are indeed signs of change and negotiation. This provides some kind of hope that a different kind of political landscape - one in which women participate in equal and meaningful ways - is possible. Where state-led political reform processes do not seem to have significantly transformed the political landscape for women, perhaps opportunities in grassroots politics such as protest can sow the seeds to allow, encourage and empower women to start to participate in the public sphere full-stop. But first, the role of women and gender must be fully acknowledged and addressed in the dynamics of protest. This case study demonstrates that gender is present at every stage of political mobilization, regardless of whether women mobilize along gender lines. Among other things, gender relations produce opportunities for women to participate in protest, condition how women participate in protest and affect possibilities for women to participate in the future.

Conclusion

This chapter has investigated the ways in which a sample of women participated in a large protest in Sambas and considered the potential implications this may have not just on the stated goals of the protest, but for the future of the protest tactic, individual women’s political participation and on existing gender relations in

Sambas. It has found that protest can be simultaneously empowering and disempowering for women in Sambas. On the one hand, protest offered this group of women an unprecedented means of political participation and influence and in so doing served to challenge gender norms around women's political participation, now and into the future. Yet, the way some women actually participated in the protest could be seen to reinforce the traditional gender norms that exclude women from other spheres of politics.

Despite being a new unconventional political space, protest is not free from gender relations. This should hardly be surprising for, as previous research emphasizes, all struggles are inevitably shaped by gender relations. By investigating women's protest activities, this thesis attempts to contribute empirical evidence to previous research on how gender relations shape a range of women's protest activity in mixed-gender movements (Beckwith 2002' Fonow 1998; Patch 2008' Roth and Horan 2001; Taylor and Van Dyke 2003; Turner and Brownhill 2005; Ukeje 2004; Zemlinskaya 2010), particularly those around rural struggles (Afiff et al. 2005; Agarwal 1994; Barcellos and Ferreira 2008; Campbell 1996; Wright and Wolford 2003).

In terms of the outcome of this protest, this thesis was informed by, and contributes to, understandings of social movement outcomes from the contentious politics literature. the women generally celebrated the fact that they had defended their land and rubber crops from the proposed development and had successfully participated in such a large, peaceful protest. Their feelings that the size of the crowd led to success reflects studies this field that link protest size with effectiveness in achieving intended social and political change (Taylor and Van Dyke 2003). Following research studies which document how successful movements diffuse across space, time and groups, influencing the emergence and tactical repertoire of other movements (Meyer and Whittier 1994; Taylor and Van Dyke 2003; Whittier 2003) and changing the political opportunity structure for women (Borland and Sutton 2007; Campbell 1996; Tripp 2003), this study found that the perceived effectiveness of this protest potentially has an impact on wider societal conceptions of the role and influence of protest and on the possibility of

women's future involvement with protest. This research also attempts to contribute to the debate in the literature on whether protest participation results in further protest participation (Borland and Sutton 2007; Drogus and Stewart-Gambino 2005) or not (Adams 2002; Aguilar and Chenard in Téllez 2008). The study found that the majority of women were willing to protest again yet had not since. Despite having experienced one opportunity of protest, their lack of subsequent protest needs to be understood by their relatively marginal position within activist networks. Thus, they may have the commitment but not the capacity to participate in future movements (Meyer and Reyes 2010).

Finally, this chapter not only considered how gender power relations shape and condition every stage of political mobilization but attempted to point out the 'cracks' in the existing gender order at every stage. Both men and women's conceptions of women's capacities and place in politics are open to change and negotiation. By highlighting the possibility that gender relations may be shaped by and through protest, this thesis acknowledges insights from secondary literature that gender relations are not stable or natural facts but socially constructed and, thus, open to change (Ferree and Mueller 2003; Nightingale 2006). Despite existing gender power relations that have tended to exclude women from political spaces throughout Sambas, the success of women in protest may not only be a sign of changing gender relations but also a catalyst of transformation. Perhaps the very inclusion of women in protest starts to sow the seeds of increased political participation and influence for these and other women in Sambas.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

Introduction

Rural people all over the world are being forced off their land by contemporary processes of dispossession (Araghi 2009; Li 2010; De Schutter 2011; Walker 2008; White and Dasgupta 2010; Zagema 2011). The rapid expansion of the oil palm crop, driven by rising global demand for both food and biofuel, is a notorious contributor to these political-economic processes that separate agrarian producers from their land. Already the world's largest producer of the crop, Indonesia leads the push for dispossession via oil palm with far-reaching and fast-paced expansion plans driven by economic liberalisation and private capital. These plans continue in spite of the well-documented environmental and social consequences of oil palm development, which are suffered most by the vulnerable populations dispossessed of their land (Arrighi et al. 2010; Borras Jr and Franco 2010a, 2010b; Borras Jr et al. 2007; Li 2011). But rural populations in Indonesia and elsewhere are not accepting infringements on their land passively. As oil palm plantations expand and spread so have instances of oil-palm related protest and resistance.

In the array of research studies and popular accounts of oil palm expansion and resistance in Indonesia, the role of women and gender are obscured. By providing a rare gender-disaggregated analysis of oil palm expansion and resistance, this thesis provides a unique and vital contribution to shore up gaps in the literature. Following from Julia and White (2011), this case study has found that the way oil

palm is expanding in Indonesia results in disproportionate consequences for women, threatening to exacerbate gender-specific vulnerabilities and inequalities. The implications for rural women (and by extension, households, communities and future generations) are grave. Further, this case study has revealed that women do participate in oil-palm related protests and that existing gender relations inevitably shape and are shaped by all stages and facets of protest.

This final chapter brings together analyses from preceding chapters to answer the research aims and questions posed in Chapter 1. It will then consider hte broader impliacti

Contributions to the literature

The goal of the thesis was to answer the following overarching research question:

How do gender relations shape women's participation in protest in the context of oil palm plantation expansion in Sambas district, Indonesia?

Recognizing the multiple dimensions involved in answering this question, the thesis posed a series of sub-questions. This section will summarize the findings related to each sub-question to shed light on the main question posed above.

a) Are oil palm plantations expanding in Sambas district and how?

Chapter 4 looked at the context of oil palm plantation expansion in Sambas. It showed that interest in oil palm expansion has recently soared in the district, with current proposals accounting for 225,000 hectares of land for large-scale oil palm plantations, almost one-third of the district's total land area. Even if only a portion of the proposals submitted were accepted, these plans would signify a massive change in the agricultural landscape. Oil palm would transform not only what types of plantation crops dominate in Sambas, but also how the crops are produced. In contrast to the current dominant crop rubber, which is exclusively produced by

smallholders, oil palm would result in a shift towards large-scale monocrop plantations driven by private sector investment.

This chapter also considered the mechanisms through which oil palm is being introduced in Sambas district. Due to recent political-economic reforms in Indonesia, the role of the state has changed from directly financing or closely managing oil palm plantations to facilitating large-scale private capital to do so. The decentralisation of governance and fiscal matters has given local districts like Sambas significant incentive to encourage large investments, even in the face of known company violations and complaints. When complaints leveled against the plantation plans of one company (PT SAM) went unanswered this resulted in an unprecedented protest to push the head of the district to revoke the company's permit.

This sub-question was framed by, and contributes to, literature on contemporary processes of dispossession and land-grabbing (especially around agrofuels), deriving mostly from agrarian political economy (Borras Jr et al. 2010; Gerber 2010, 2011; Gerber and Veuthey 2010; Li 2011; DeSchutter 2011; Walker 2008). In recognizing the multi-scalar mechanisms behind dispossession in Sambas, the findings confirm research in this field which explain how neoliberal processes and policies from the global to the local scales produce dispossession in the world today (Araghi 2009; Li 2010; White and Dasgupta 2010). Identifying the ways in which customary or unofficial land ownership and access facilitate dispossession in Sambas support findings in other parts of Indonesia (Colchester 2011; Collins 2007; Siagian and Komarudin 2008) and around the world (Borras Jr and Franco 2010b; Cotula et al. 2008).

b) How do social relations produce, and are produced by, the current agrarian landscape in Sambas?

This thesis provided a detailed and nuanced account of the lives, livelihoods and environments of the women protesters in Sambas in order to consider how social relations produce, and are produced by, the current agrarian landscape. It used a

gender lens to consider who owns or accesses land, what they do with their land (i.e. choosing between crops for use versus sale), who is responsible for working on the land and with what crops, and who tends to engage in non-agricultural work. In doing so this study revealed how, due to existing gender relations in Sambas, women's relationship with the land is particularly tenuous, women tend to be primarily responsible for household agricultural production and food security, and women are often disadvantaged when it comes to diversifying household livelihood strategies beyond small-scale agricultural production. The unequal social relations in rural Sambas thus produces a gendered agrarian landscape which simultaneously produces and reproduces gender inequalities.

The thesis revealed how prevalent and multifaceted rural poverty is in Sambas, demonstrating the diverse and uneven ways that rural men and women derive incomes, from within their rural environments and outside of them (and how the flows of people and capital link various locations). This analysis showed how some communities prosper while others struggle, even within a relatively small geographical area in Sambas district. Within the sample of women protesters, differentiation was noted in terms of land size, land use, incomes and rates of poverty, among others. This thesis therefore demonstrates not only how gender relations contribute to differentiation, but how gender intersects with other axes of social differentiation (such as class) to disaggregate amongst a group of rural women in Sambas.

Insights from the secondary literature (agrarian political economy and feminist political ecology) provided the analytical tools that helped this thesis to identify the unequal and intersecting social relations that produce poverty and differentiation between rural communities, within rural communities and even amongst a group of rural women in Sambas (Bernstein 2008; Bernstein and Byres 2001; Carr 2008). This study confirms previous contributions that emphasize the ways in which rural differentiation is produced along multiple axes and how, in the context of oil palm expansion, differentiation is likely to condition and inform changing social relations *and* landscapes (Dauvergne and Neville 2010; Pye 2010). The analysis

emphasizes how social relations and landscapes are mutually constituted and dynamic (Nightingale 2006).

c) What are the gendered consequences of proposed oil palm plantation development in Sambas and how does this inform protest motivation?

The multiple axes of rural differentiation mean that oil palm expansion will not be evenly experienced between communities, within communities or even within the sample of women protesters. For example, those with less land and capital are more vulnerable when faced with the possibility of losing their land. Also, gendered power relations will almost certainly lead to disproportionate consequences for certain community members, especially women, during such a transition. In addition to the existing relations that tend to make women particularly vulnerable in rural Sambas, the introduction of certain configurations of power surrounding oil palm threaten to exacerbate these gender inequalities.

The thesis focused on the gendered motivations leading to the women's participation in protest, including environmental and social motives and going beyond the material to include more intangible reasons such as defending rights, control and power. The sample of women protesters postulated that a new oil palm development could lead them to suffer especially from: polluted water; infringements on housing; cutting down current crops which could threaten reproduction on a daily (food insecurity) and generational (children's educational prospects) basis; a lack of new labour opportunities for women; cultural changes in the community; and losing the control and power they currently have on their land or in their communities. Certainly not all women anticipated each and every one of these consequences, but taken together this study identified the multiple ways that women stand to suffer disproportionately from oil palm expansion in Sambas. These gendered consequences were used by the women protesters to legitimate or justify their decision to turn to protest to defend their land.

The secondary literature helped to frame the investigation into the range of potential consequences due to oil palm expansion in Sambas, as well as inform

how these consequences were mobilized by the sample of women protesters to justify protest participation. Agrarian political economy provided insights into the consequences of dispossession for vulnerable populations (Arrighi et al. 2010; Borras Jr et al. 2007; Borras Jr and Franco 201a, 2010b; Li 2011; Walker 2008), while feminist political ecology helped to understand how gender matters 'all the way through' the multi-scalar dynamics and impacts of land dispossession due to oil palm expansion in Sambas (Hawkins and Ojeda 2011; Moeckli and Braun 2001).

This thesis was also informed by, and builds on, research in the field of contentious politics that is concerned with the role of identity in shaping protest motivation. Women protesters used their identity as farmers (rather than wage labourers) to justify their decision to protest. They also drew from their gendered positions in society, as mothers or grandmothers, to legitimize concerns about the future of their families and communities due to oil palm expansion and thus justify their decision to protest (Beckwith 1996; Corcoran-Nantes 1993; Silvey 2003). Many of the women protesters chose to mobilize these gendered roles in protest motivation even though by doing so they risked reinforcing the unequal gendered positions that tend to exclude them from politics in the first place (Einwohner et al. 2000). This may makes it appear that these women are mobilizing only for the sake of 'practical' gender interests (Molyneux 1984). However Ferree and Mueller (2003) remind us that there is not such a clear distinction between 'practical' and 'strategic' gender interests. This sub-question clearly shows how gender relations infuse protest motivation in Sambas and as such there is always the potential for this seemingly non-gendered struggle over land to simultaneously be about struggles over gender itself (also Moeckli and Braun 2001; Nightingale 2006).

d) How are political opportunities in Sambas gendered and with what consequence?

This thesis revealed how protest motivation is not a sufficient condition for taking political action, especially for women. It also depends on having political opportunities to take action. These political opportunities, whether formal or

informal, are shaped by underlying gender power relations that condition if and how women participate in the public sphere. Despite recent attempts to involve women in formal politics and decision-making in Indonesia, the failure to adequately address underlying gender relations continues to produce exclusion and marginalization for women in formal politics in Sambas. Whether in the formal political processes that lead to the establishment of oil palm plantations or in the formal spaces of politics that attempt to counter or overturn such developments, women are excluded or marginalized. This, I argue, provides a 'push' factor for women to engage in more unconventional or informal politics, particularly on crucial matters like land, thus leading to protest participation for a group of otherwise apolitical women.

Informal politics should not, however, be considered a silver bullet for facilitating women's involvement in politics. While unique features of protest may diminish typical barriers of participation for women, the informal political sphere is also imbued with the gender power relations that exclude or marginalize women in the public sphere more generally, with women facing significant barriers to participation relative to men. Thus, far from seeing political spaces as empowering in and of themselves, this research established the role of actors in opening up new political opportunities for otherwise apolitical women. In Sambas, the protest organizers invited women to protest and the women themselves made the difficult decision to participate. It is not, then, the political spaces in and of themselves that marginalize or empower women, but the way in which people engage with them that open or close down possibilities for participation.

These findings were informed by, and contribute to, the fields of feminist political ecology and contentious politics. Contentious politics provided valuable understandings of 'political opportunity structure,' especially how gendered political opportunities shape women's participation in protest (Beckwith 2001; McCammon et al. 2001; Zemlinskaya 2010). However, this study reveals the need to go beyond just the structural factors and conditions that produce political opportunities to consider the role of individual actors in opening or changing political opportunities (Campbell 1996; Silvey 2003). This thesis also contributes to

explanations of women's participation in politics, recognizing that women's engagement with informal or protest politics cannot be understood in isolation but in how it relates to, and is produced by, participation (or non-participation) in formal politics. It also sheds light on the nature of the relationship by arguing that exclusion from formal politics may facilitate or produce participation in informal or protest politics (Agarwal 2000, 2001; Ferree and Mueller 2003; Hart 1991). While demonstrations seem to offer a feasible means of political engagement for rural women in Sambas due to being relatively low risk and low effort (McAdam 1986, as cited in Taylor and Van Dyke 2003), this research shows how barriers to participation are still prevalent (Campbell 1996).

By investigating if and how rural women participate in and outside formal politics in Sambas, this thesis emphasizes the role of women and gender in political-economic reform processes and programs in Indonesia. This provides an empirical contribution to literature on the role of women and gender in Indonesia: in formal politics (Cattleya 2010, The Asia Foundation et al. 2006, UNDP Indonesia); in state-led decentralisation programs (Blackburn 2004; Ito 2011; Siagian et al. 2005); and in informal politics (Martyn 2005; Robinson 2009), particularly outside Jakarta (Blackburn 2004).

e) How do gender relations condition women's activities at a protest?

This thesis explored various dimensions of women's protest activity, taking into consideration issues of leadership and physical position in the protest. It contrasted protest activities seen as more appropriate for women, such as screaming or bringing props, with those that were more inappropriate, like aggression or violence. In general women downplayed or minimized their role at the protest, often distancing themselves physically and figuratively from central protest activity, which was more closely associated with male activity. Underlying all of the women's accounts were the power relations that dictate what they feel they are capable of, what is appropriate in that kind of setting and what they ended up doing or not doing at the protest relative to the men. This shows that in spite of providing a new channel of political participation for otherwise apolitical women,

women participate in protest not as brand-new empowered beings separate from their daily lives, but as women with the same household and child-rearing responsibilities, with the same roles and expectations, with the same sense of what is good or appropriate for women as opposed to men. Thus, protest serves to reflect and reproduce - rather than transform - the underlying gender relations that exclude women from other political and public spaces as well.

This research study has attempted to draw critical attention to the space of protest itself. Despite being a new unconventional political space ostensibly opening up opportunities for otherwise apolitical women, it is not free from restrictive gender relations. This should hardly be surprising for, as previous research deriving from both feminist political ecology and contentious politics emphasize, all struggles are inevitably shaped by gender relations. Observations of women's minimal or gendered role at the Sambas protest support other studies which find that women in mixed-gender movements tend to be excluded from leadership and/or are given stereotypically feminine roles (Fonow 1998; Roth and Horan 2001; Taylor and Van Dyke 2003; Zemlinskaya 2010). This study also confirms previous contributions that affiliate women and gender in social movements with non-violent tactics (Beckwith 2002; Patch 2008, Turner and Brownhill 2005; Ukeje 2004). This research thus counters other case studies which find evidence of women's leadership or decision-making role in direct action (Barcellos and Ferreira 2008; Campbell 1996) and/or women's militancy in rural struggles (Afiff et al. 2005; Agarwal 1994; Wright and Wolford 2003).

f) How do women and gender shape, and are shaped by, protest outcomes?

This thesis explored how women protesters perceived of protest outcomes, in particular the real and potential implications of the protest on the (a) stated goals of the protest, (b) the future of the protest tactic, (c) individual women's political participation and (d) on existing gender relations in Sambas.

The women protesters felt that the protest more or less achieved its stated goals. While the actual status of the company's permit to their land was fuzzy, the women

generally celebrated the fact that they had defended their land and rubber crops against oil palm expansion. Apart from their main goal of resisting oil palm expansion, protest organizers and participants had secondary goals such as mobilizing significant numbers of people and conducting the protest peacefully. The majority of women protesters felt more certain about their success in meeting both of these secondary goals. The perceived effectiveness of the protest may potentially have an impact on wider societal conceptions of the role and influence of protest and on the possibility of women's future involvement with protest. Though the majority of women said they were willing to protest again, their lack of subsequent protest needs to be understood by their relatively marginal position within activist networks. Despite having experienced one opportunity in the informal political sphere, this marginal position may exclude them from subsequent activism.

Finally, this thesis attempted to go beyond understanding how gender shapes protest outcomes to considering how the shaping, reproducing or even transformation of gender relations during and through protest may also be an outcome of protest. Interview data show that there are 'cracks' in the existing gender order in Sambas, revealing that gender relations are in the process of negotiation and change. While it is not clear whether women's participation in the Sambas protest specifically helped to inform these changing perspectives, it may be that the protest in part encouraged women to feel more empowered to participate in politics as women and even on behalf of women. This research proposes that women's participation in protest may start to change both men and women's conceptions of women's capacities and place in politics and start to sow the seeds that allow, encourage and empower women to participate in the public sphere.

In terms of this sub-question this thesis was informed by, and contributes to, understandings of social movement outcomes from the contentious politics literature. The women protesters' feelings that the size of the crowd led to success reflects studies this field that link protest size with effectiveness in achieving intended social and political change (Taylor and Van Dyke 2003). The perceived

effectiveness of the protest tactic in the Sambas case speaks to previous research studies which document how successful movements diffuse across space, time and groups, influencing the emergence and tactical repertoire of other movements (Meyer and Whittier 1994; Taylor and Van Dyke 2003; Whittier 2003) and changing the political opportunity structure for women (Borland and Sutton 2007; Campbell 1996; Tripp 2003). This research also attempts to contribute to the debate in the literature on whether protest participation results in further protest participation (Borland and Sutton 2007; Drogus and Stewart-Gambino 2005) or not (Adams 2002; Aguilar and Chenard in Téllez 2008), finding that despite having the commitment to protest again, their capacities to do so appear limited (Meyer and Reyes 2010).

By highlighting the possibility that gender relations may be shaped by and through protest, this thesis acknowledges insights from secondary literature that gender relations are not stable or natural facts but socially constructed and, thus, open to change (Ferree and Mueller 2003; Nightingale 2006). While it was not possible to pinpoint whether the Sambas protest reproduced or challenged gender relations (or something inbetween), this research found that there do appear to be 'cracks' in the existing gender order.

Overarching research question:
How do gender relations shape women's participation in protest in the context of oil palm plantation expansion in Sambas district, Indonesia?

The preceding sub-questions inform the overarching research question of this thesis. In short, the Sambas case study has demonstrated that gender relations shape women's participation in protest *all the way through*. Gender relations shape women's decisions to participate in protest (by informing their motivations and political opportunities), shape women's activities at a protest and shape how women understand and experience protest outcomes. While the research focused mostly on how gender relations condition protest emergence, dynamics and outcomes, it must be emphasized that gender relations are not fixed. This opens up the possibility that gender relations themselves may be shaped by and through

women's participation in protest. It reveals how rural struggles around land and dispossession, though ostensibly free of explicit gender concerns, are inevitably struggles over gender itself. Despite existing gender relations that lead to the exclusion of women from public affairs and formal politics in Sambas, the signs of change and negotiation with these relations provide some hope that a different kind of political landscape - one in which women participate in equal and meaningful ways - is possible.

As discussed, women and gender are almost entirely overlooked in the literature on oil palm expansion and resistance in Indonesia. As such, this thesis has contributed not just a valuable case study but a new way - through the lens of gender - to understand these contemporary processes. The next section will consider the broader implications of taking women and gender seriously in oil palm expansion and resistance.

Broader implications

The case study approach has been effective at exploring the under-researched and complex dimensions of women and gender in protest. However, the findings and analysis derived from intensive investigation of this one case are not - and should not remain - specific only to this one protest or to Sambas district. This thesis also aims to link these findings to the wider context and consider possible policy implications.

By drawing attention to how oil palm expansion disproportionately impacts rural women and gender inequalities, this thesis calls for an end to gender-blind oil palm expansion in Indonesia. Fulfilling this call requires real and potential gender impacts to be systematically included and addressed in any (or preferably all) of the following: state and district expansion plans, the state permitting process, company proposals and certification by the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil. It also necessitates efforts that encourage and allow women to *meaningfully* participate in the community consultations and decision-making frameworks that determine if and where oil palm plantations expand. Overcoming the gendered

barriers that prevent women from meaningfully participating in these kinds of decision-making processes requires not only that women are allowed to or even actively invited to participate. In the short-term it may also involve supporting external agents such as NGOs working on women's empowerment to produce that kind of engagement and/or first building women's confidence and skills in separate women's groups (Agarwal 2000, 2001; Komarudin et al. 2008). In the long run it means fundamentally challenging and transforming the gender relations that exclude or marginalize women from public spaces, let alone political ones.

By further highlighting the presence of women and gender in oil palm resistance, this thesis challenges the claim that women do not or cannot participate in the politics around oil palm. Though public spaces of contestation and resistance to oil palm are generally dominated by men, women also participate in oil palm resistance. By participating, rural women prove that they are far from ignorant, ambivalent or apathetic when it comes to oil palm expansion. Rather, they too have the desire and capacity to make demands on behalf of themselves, their families and their communities. Women's presence in protest is not sufficient though. This thesis calls for otherwise progressive social movements to consider if and how women are incorporated into oil palm resistance. Recognizing that protest often serves to reflect and reproduce - rather than transform - wider gender relations, protest organizers need to be attentive to the possibility that protest participation may be simultaneously empowering *and* disempowering for women. Taking seriously the current and potential role of women and gender in oil palm resistance has implications not only for women or gender relations but also for the future success of movements.

Future research

As mentioned, the role of women and gender relations in protest has been overlooked and under-researched. Therefore, there remains significant scope for future research emerging or building off this study. Within the data already collected there are several possibilities for future work. For example, in-depth analysis could be done on the interviews conducted with men protesters and key

actors which were not included in this thesis. While the thesis emphasized the voices of women protesters, future research could compare and contrast the large array of voices and discourses on the oil palm issue in Sambas. Apart from the interviews pertaining only to the Sambas protest, there were a series of interviews conducted during the pilot phase that also deserve further analysis. These could form the basis of a cross-case comparison of oil palm resistance activities in West Kalimantan. However, details on women and gender are non-existent in these various accounts.

Beyond the data already collected, this research study opens up prospects for a new stage of fieldwork. This would primarily serve to follow-up on the outcomes of the Sambas protest, in particular: the status of the contested PT SAM concession in Sambas; if and how the Sambas protest set a precedent for future protests in Sambas and elsewhere; if and how political opportunities (in formal or informal politics) have since changed for individual women protesters or women in general in Sambas; and if and how gender relations are changing due to shifting political opportunity structures. Further fieldwork would also aim to investigate the changing role of women and gender in the organizations which initiated the protest (Gemawan and STSD).

Final thoughts

This thesis sought to acknowledge the role of women and gender relations in protest in Indonesia today. It initially posited that informal politics like protest could provide women with a new empowering space to influence decision-making, thus achieving political participation by skirting formal political institutions and processes that too often exclude and marginalize women. It found instead that protest is far from an empowering space. In fact, by reproducing and reinforcing the gendered power relations that exclude women from formal politics and public affairs in general, protest may even prove to be disempowering for women. Protest as it stands is hardly the silver bullet required to voice women's demands and include women in politics. This finding does not mean that, in future, protest should be discarded or women's participation in protest discounted. There are elements

of protest that are empowering. Furthermore, if made aware, progressive protest organizers may be able to address and confront gender restrictions in future.

A strategy for improving protest is important, though fundamentally limited. Trying to achieve political participation, recognition and influence for women solely through the informal political sphere will always be partial and constrained so long as it sidesteps or skirts around formal politics. While occasional protests and resistance movements may succeed in influencing some decisions, ultimately these informal political events remain at the margins of decision-making. This thesis has chosen to focus specifically on how protest may facilitate women's political participation. However, it recognizes that efforts to encourage women's political empowerment in Indonesia cannot focus solely on protest. Efforts must also battle to advance participation in the formal political sphere (which shape and are shaped by informal politics) and to transform the underlying gender relations which too often exclude or marginalize women from the political landscape.

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Appendices

Appendix A: List of interviewees (in alphabetical order)

Name	Interview Location	Gender	Group	Role (if relevant)
Abdul Fatah	Sekuduk	Man	Men Protester STSD	
Almizan	Sambas	Man	Men Protester State Actor	DPR member (former)
Aloysius	Jakarta	Man	Media	Reuters (News Agency)
Anong	Pontianak	Man	Men Protester NGO	
Arief*	Terikembang	Man	Men Protester	
Andini*	Teluk Durian	Woman	Women Protester	
Athiah*	Teluk Durian	Woman	Women Protester	
Bethari*	Sebetaan	Woman	Women Protester	
Burhanudin	Sambas	Man	State Actor	Bupati (current)
DPR members	Sambas	Man	State Actor	DPR members (current)
Fitra*	Sebetaan	Woman	Women Protester	
Hafiz*	Sebetaan	Man	Men Protester	
Hikmah*	Sebetaan	Woman	Women Protester	
Hirni*	Teluk Durian	Woman	Women Protester	
Ifan*	Teluk Durian	Man	Men Protester	
Indri*	Teluk Durian	Woman	Women Protester	
Irma*	Sebetaan	Woman	Women Protester	
Iskandar	Sekuduk	Man	Men Protester STSD NGO State Actor	Village head (former)
Iskandar Mirza	Pontianak	Man	State Actor	Representative of Department of Food Security (provincial)
Ivan	Jakarta	Man	PT SAM	Representative of Ganda Group
Jamilah*	Sebetaan		Women Protester	

Name	Interview Location	Gender	Group	Role (if relevant)
Jayanti*	Senujuh	Woman	Women Non-Protester	
Karima*	Terikembang	Woman	Women Protester	
Khairul*	Sekuduk	Man	Men Protester	
Laily Khainrur	Pontianak	Woman	NGO	Executive Director
Lastri*	Sebetaan	Woman	Women Protester	
Latihan	Sekuduk	Man	Men Protester STSD	
Leviana*	Sekuduk	Woman	Women Protester	
Lusi*	Sebetaan	Woman	Women Protester	
Mahsuri*	Teluk Durian	Woman	Women Protester	
Mardiana	Senujuh	Woman	Women Protester STSD NGO	
Marus	Sebetaan	Man	Men Protester STSD	
Maziah*	Sekuduk	Woman	Women Protester	
Maznan*	Sebetaan	Man	Men Protester	
Meeya*	Senujuh	Woman	Women Non-Protester	
Melati*	Teluk Durian	Woman	Women Protester	
Meri*	Sebetaan	Woman	Women Protester	
Miathi*	Sebetaan	Woman	Women Protester	
Murni*	Teluk Durian	Woman	Women Protester	
Nanang*	Teluk Durian	Woman	Women Protester	
Norbani	Sebetaan	Man	State Actor	Sub-village head (current)
Norhadiyati	Teluk Durian	Woman	State Actor	BPD member (current)
Nova	Sambas	Man	Media	Equator Newspaper
Nurbani*	Sekuduk	Woman	Women Protester	
Nurfitri*	Sebetaan	Woman	Women Protester	
Nursanti*	Sebetaan	Woman	Women Protester	
Nurul*	Sebetaan	Woman	Women Protester	
Pahadi*	Teluk Durian	Man	Men Protester	
Rahayu	Jakarta	Woman	RPSO	Representative
Risa*	Sebetaan	Woman	Women Protester	
Ratih*	Sebetaan	Woman	Women Protester	
Rusdi	Terikembang	Man	Men Protester STSD	

Name	Interview Location	Gender	Group	Role (if relevant)
Ryani*	Sebetaan	Woman	Women Protester	
Saleha*	Sebetaan	Woman	Women Protester	
Sapri*	Teluk Durian	Man	Men Protester	
Saraswati*	Teluk Durian	Woman	Women Protester	
Sari*	Sekuduk	Woman	Women Protester	
Selamat Riadi	Sambas	Man	State Actor	Lawyer of Bupati (current)
Seruwati*	Teluk Durian	Woman	Women Protester	
Shariafie*	Sebetaan	Woman	Women Protester	
Siska*	Sekuduk	Woman	Women Protester	
Siti*	Teluk Durian	Woman	Women Protester	
Surya*	Teluk Durian	Woman	Women Protester	
Syaif*	Teluk Durian	Man	Men Protester	
Supriatin	Sebetaan	Man	Men Protester STSD State actor	BPD member
Syarial	Teluk Durian	Man	Men Protester STSD State Actor	Secretary-General BPD member (current)
Tamhir	Sambas	Man	State Actor	Head of Department of Food Security (district)
Tini and De	Pontianak	Man and Woman	State Actor	Representative of Department of Plantations (provincial)
Titin*	Sebetaan	Woman	Women Protester	
Tomo	Pontianak	Man	Men Protester NGO	
Tri*	Sebetaan	Woman	Women Protester	
Wati*	Teluk Durian	Woman	Women Protester	
Yana*	Teluk Durian	Woman	Women Protester	
Yayu*	Teluk Durian	Woman	Women Protester	
Yuriza*	Teluk Durian	Woman	Women Protester	

* Pseudonyms used for men and women protesters not affiliated to other groups or roles

Appendix B: Key demographic data of women protesters

Sub-district	Community	Name	Age	Amount of land (ha)
Sejangkung	Sebetaan	Meri	18	1.16
Sejangkung	Sebetaan	Shariafie	24	1
Sejangkung	Sebetaan	Lusi	25	0.64
Sejangkung	Sebetaan	Nursanti	30	1.5
Sejangkung	Sebetaan	Lastri	31	0.8
Sejangkung	Sebetaan	Tri	32	3
Sejangkung	Sebetaan	Nurul	35	0.82
Sejangkung	Sebetaan	Irma	37	2
Sejangkung	Sebetaan	Risa	38	1.5
Sejangkung	Sebetaan	Hikmah	40	0.4
Sejangkung	Sebetaan	Jamilah	40	0.9
Sejangkung	Sebetaan	Nurfitri	40	2
Sejangkung	Sebetaan	Saleha	40	2.5
Sejangkung	Sebetaan	Titin	40	3
Sejangkung	Sebetaan	Ratih	41	2.5
Sejangkung	Sebetaan	Ryani	41	1
Sejangkung	Sebetaan	Bethari	42	1.5
Sejangkung	Sebetaan	Miathi	50	0.82
Sejangkung	Sebetaan	Fitra	55	0.84
Sejangkung	Sekuduk	Siska	25	2.32
Sejangkung	Sekuduk	Nurbani	28	unavailable
Sejangkung	Sekuduk	Leviana	35	2
Sejangkung	Sekuduk	Sari	36	3.5
Sejangkung	Sekuduk	Maziah	44	0.8
Sejangkung	Senujuh	Mardiana	27	2.56

Sub-district	Community	Name	Age	Amount of land (ha)
Galling	Terikembang	Karima	35	1.56
Telok Kramat	Teluk Durian	Siti	21	0.5
Telok Kramat	Teluk Durian	Nanang	24	0.16
Telok Kramat	Teluk Durian	Yayu	26	3.5
Telok Kramat	Teluk Durian	Athiah	30	1
Telok Kramat	Teluk Durian	Yuriza	30	1
Telok Kramat	Teluk Durian	Hirni	31	0.5
Telok Kramat	Teluk Durian	Wati	31	0.8
Telok Kramat	Teluk Durian	Seruwati	34	1
Telok Kramat	Teluk Durian	Murni	36	1
Telok Kramat	Teluk Durian	Yana	36	1.5
Telok Kramat	Teluk Durian	Indri	40	1
Telok Kramat	Teluk Durian	Andini	45	6
Telok Kramat	Teluk Durian	Saraswati	48	8.5
Telok Kramat	Teluk Durian	Surya	50	2.5
Telok Kramat	Teluk Durian	Mahsuri	53	15.5
Telok Kramat	Teluk Durian	Melati	62	10

Appendix C: Semi-structured interview questions

1. Name

2. Age

3. Do you have a family?
If so, how many children? how many grandchildren?

4. Did you go to school? To what level?
Can you read? can you write?
Can you speak and undertand Indonesian?

5. Did you participate in the demo on June 24 2008?
a. Why did you participate?
b. Where/how did you learn about palm oil?
c. Where/how did you receive information on the demo?
d. What influenced (*mempengaruhi*) you to join?
e. Describe the day (how did you get there, what did you take with you, what did you do, did you shout, etc)
f. How did you feel on the day?
g. How do you feel now?
h. Was the demo successful?
i. Do you think demos are an effective way of resolving issues or problems?

6. Have you participated in other actions or demos? If so, what?

7. Do you want to demo again? Why?
Would you demo for the same issue? Would you demo for a different issue?

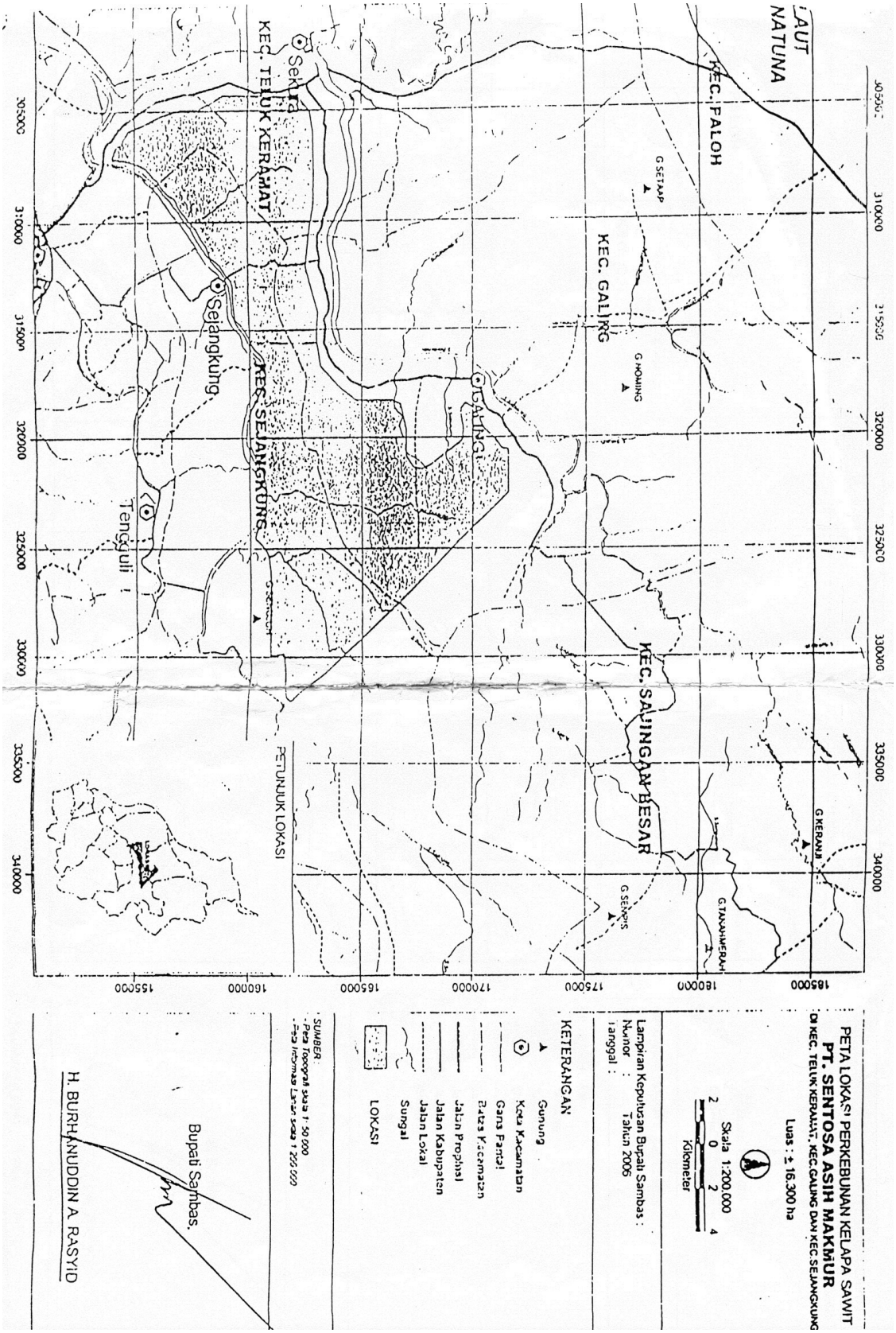
8. Are you involved in any groups in the village? (such as, women's groups, farmers groups, etc)
Do you attend meetings in the village?

9. Have you ever participated in musrenbang or PNPM?

10. Have you voted before? How many times?

11. Family income
a. What do you do? What is your livelihood?
b. How much land do you have?
c. What is your average income per day/week/month?
d. Do you receive help from family members (ie. those working in Malaysia)?
e. Have you ever received BLT or Raskin, or any other kind of state support?

Appendix D: Location map of PT SAM in Sambas district (2006)



Appendix E: Letter revoking PT SAM permit (June 24 2008)

Page 1:

BUPATI SAMBAS

ini yang bertanda tangan dibawah

Nama : IR. H. BURHANUDDIN AR.
Jabatan : Bupati Sambas

Berdasarkan aspirasi masyarakat diwilayah perizinan PT. SAM dan PT. Bumi Rekan Hijau pada hari ini Selasa tgl 24 Juni 2008, pukul 17.14 WIBA yg menyatakan :

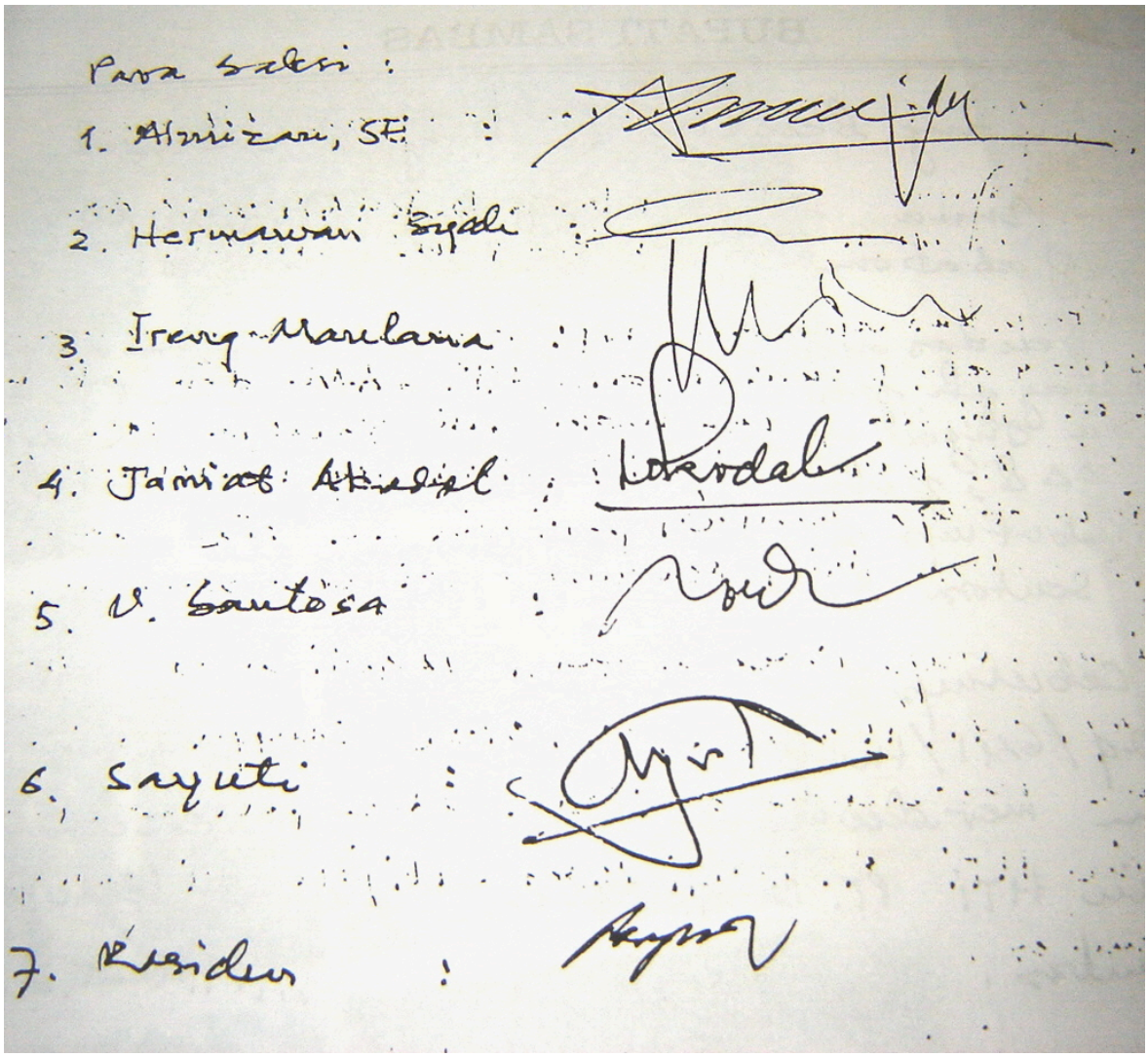
1. Dicabutnya seluruh perizinan atas nama : PT. Santosa Asih Makmur di kab. Sambas.
2. Dicabutnya rekomendasi Bupati Sambas nomor : 529/641/Hutbun/VI/2006 tanggal 16 juni 2006 dan merekomendasikan ke pencabutan Izin HTI PT. Bumi Rekan Hijau di kabupaten

Dengan ini saya menyatakan :

1. Mencabut izin PT. Santosa Asih Makmur (PT. SAM) di Kabupaten Sambas.
2. Mencabut rekomendasi Bupati NO. 529/641/Hutbun/VI/2006 tanggal 16 juni 2006 dan merekomendasikan untuk pencabutan izin HTI PT. Bumi Rekan Hijau di kab. Sambas kepada Menteri Kehutanan.
3. Permintaan akan di tindak lanjuti dengan S.K. Bupati selambat - lambatnya 1 (satu) minggu setelah Pernyataan ini di buat.

Bupati Sambas

Page 2:



Para Saksi :

1. Amrizal, SE :
2. Hermawan Sigali :
3. Irang Maulana :
4. Jamiat Abadi :
5. V. Santosa :
6. Sayuti :
7. Residen :

Appendix F: Letter revoking PT SAM permit (June 25 2008)

Pages 1-2:

BUPATI SAMBAS

KEPUTUSAN BUPATI SAMBAS
NOMOR 181 A TAHUN 2008
TENTANG
PENCABUTAN KEPUTUSAN BUPATI SAMBAS
NOMOR 81 TAHUN 2006 TENTANG PEMBERIAN IZIN USAHA PERKEBUNAN (IUP) KEPADA
PT. SENTOSA ASIH MAKMUR DAN KEPUTUSAN BUPATI SAMBAS NOMOR 193 TAHUN 2006
TENTANG PEMBERIAN IZIN LOKASI UNTUK KEPERLUAN PERKEBUNAN KELAPA SAWIT
ATAS NAMA PT. SENTOSA ASIH MAKMUR

BUPATI SAMBAS,

Membaca : Surat Pernyataan dari sebagian besar warga masyarakat di wilayah konsesi PT. Sentosa Asin Makmur, yang menyatakan menolak ekspansi perkebunan berskala besar (Kelapa Sawit dan lain sebagainya), dan segala bentuk kegiatan perusahaan perkebunan;

Menimbang :
a. bahwa sehubungan dengan adanya tuntutan sebagian masyarakat di lokasi perizinan PT. Sentosa Asin Makmur, yang tidak menginginkan adanya ekspansi perkebunan Kelapa Sawit di wilayahnya;
b. bahwa sehubungan adanya aksi penolakan dari Serikat Tani Serumpun Damai Kabupaten Sambas pada tanggal 24 Juni 2008 yang menuntut dicabutnya Izin Perkebunan PT. Sentosa Asih Makmur;
c. bahwa berdasarkan pertimbangan yang dimaksud pada huruf a dan b tersebut di atas dan demi menjaga ketenihan dan ketentraman warga masyarakat di areal Izin Lokasi PT. Sentosa Asih Makmur, perlu mencabut Keputusan Bupati Sambas Nomor 81 Tahun 2006 tentang Pemberian Izin Usaha Perkebunan (IUP) PT. Sentosa Asih Makmur dan Keputusan Bupati Sambas Nomor 193 Tahun 2006 tentang Pemberian Izin Lokasi untuk Keperluan Perkebunan Kelapa Sawit atas nama PT. Sentosa Asih Makmur dengan Keputusan;

Mengingat :
1. Undang-Undang Nomor 27 Tahun 1959 tentang Penetapan Undang-Undang Darurat Nomor 3 Tahun 1953 tentang Pembentukan Daerah Tingkat II di Kalimantan (Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1953 Nomor 9, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Nomor 352) Sebagai Undang-Undang (Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1959 Nomor 72, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Nomor 1820);
2. Undang-Undang Nomor 5 Tahun 1960 tentang Peraturan Dasar Pokok-Pokok Agraria (Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1960 Nomor 104, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Nomor 2013);
3. Undang-Undang Nomor 23 Tahun 1997 tentang Pengelolaan Lingkungan Hidup (Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1997 Nomor 68, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Nomor 3699);
4. Undang-Undang Nomor 18 Tahun 2004 tentang Perkebunan (Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 2004 Nomor 85, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Nomor 4411);
5. Undang-Undang Nomor 32 Tahun 2004 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah (Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 2004 Nomor 125, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Nomor 4437) sebagaimana telah diubah dengan Peraturan Pemerintah Pengganti Undang-Undang Nomor 3 Tahun 2005 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah (Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 2005 Nomor 38, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Nomor 4493) yang telah ditetapkan dengan Undang-Undang Nomor 8 Tahun 2005 (Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 2005 Nomor 108, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Nomor 4548)
6. Undang-Undang Nomor 25 Tahun 2007 tentang Penanaman Modal (Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 2007 Nomor 67, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Nomor 4724);
7. Undang-Undang Nomor 26 Tahun 2007 tentang Penataan Ruang (Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 2007 Nomor 68, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Nomor 4725);
8. Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 38 Tahun 2007 tentang Pembagian Urusan Pemerintahan Antara Pemerintah, Pemerintahan Daerah Propinsi dan Pemerintahan Daerah Kabupaten / Kota (Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 2007 Nomor 82, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Nomor 4737),
9. Peraturan Menteri Negara Agraria / Kepala Badan Pertanahan Nasional Nomor 2 Tahun 1999 tentang Izin Lokasi;
10. Peraturan Menteri Pertanian Nomor 26/Permentan/OT.140/2/2007 tentang Pedoman Pemberian Izin Usaha Perkebunan

Page 3:

MEMUTUSKAN :

Menetapkan :

KESATU : Mencabut Keputusan Bupati Sambas Nomor 81 Tahun 2006 tentang Pemberian Izin Usaha Perkebunan Kepada PT. Sentosa Asih Makmur dan Keputusan Bupati Sambas Nomor 193 Tahun 2006 tentang Pemberian Izin Lokasi untuk keperluan Perkebunan Kelapa Sawit atas nama PT. Sentosa Asih Makmur.

KEDUA : Kepada pihak PT. Sentosa Asih Makmur segera menghentikan aktivitasnya di lokasi Izin, kecuali menyangkut pemeliharaan aset – aset yang ada dan telah dikelola meliputi pembibitan, kebun yang telah dibeli dari perusahaan lain, alat-alat berat, fasilitas sarana dan prasarana serta aset lainnya milik perusahaan.

KETIGA : Apabila pihak PT. Sentosa Asih Makmur melanggar ketentuan sebagaimana dimaksud diktum **KEDUA**, maka Pemerintah akan memberikan sanksi berdasarkan peraturan perundang-undangan yang berlaku.

Ditetapkan di Sambas
pada tanggal 25 Juni 2008

BUPATI SAMBAS,

BURHANUDDIN A. RASYID

TEMBUSAN : Keputusan ini disampaikan kepada :

1. Yth. Bapak Gubernur Kalimantan Barat
   di- PONTIANAK.
2. Kepala Kantor Wilayah Badan Pertanahan Nasional Provinsi Kalimantan Barat
   di- PONTIANAK
3. Ketua DPRD Kabupaten Sambas
   di- SAMBAS
4. Kepala Badan Kerjasama dan Investasi Kabupaten Sambas
   di - SAMBAS
5. Kepala Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah Kabupaten Sambas
   di- SAMBAS
6. Kepala Dinas Kehutanan dan Pekebunan Kabupaten Sambas
   di- SAMBAS
7. Kepala Kantor Pertanahan Kabupaten Sambas
   di- SAMBAS
8. PT. Sentosa Asih Makmur
   Wisma 46 Kota BNI, 16th floor, suite 1609 Jalan Jenderal Sudirman kav. 1, Jakarta

Appendix G: Borneo Tribune article on protest (June 25 2008)

Ribuan Massa STSD Datangi DPRD

Minta Izin PT SAM Dicabut

Agus Wahyuni
Borneo Tribune, *Sambas*

JANJI Sekretaris Jenderal Serikat Tani Serumpun Damai (STSD) Kabupaten Sambas, Syahrial, mendatangkan massa seribu orang benar- benar terbukti, Selasa (24/6).

Sekitar pukul 09.00 ribuan massa dari belasan kecamatan Kabupaten Sambas mendatangi gedung DPRD Kabupaten Sambas dengan waktu bersamaan. Mereka mengaku mengatasnamakan petani Kabupaten Sambas.

Tampak di pinggir jalan DPRD, puluhan truk- truk berjejer rapi. Truk tersebut sengaja didatangkan dari STSD untuk pengangkut massa yang tanahnya disinyalir dirampas oleh PT SAM.

Ibu setengah baya dengan caping kusam, larut dalam lautan manusia. Dia mengusung spanduk bertuliskan "Tolak Imperialisme!"

Berbagai atribut, spanduk, dan baligho besar membentang di halaman DPRD, terlihat juga sebuah mobil pick up kuning lengkap dengan pengeras suara menggema di sekitarnya, dengan teriakan.

"Cabut Izin HTI, kembalikan hak petani!"

Dari belasan kecamatan yang tergabung dalam STSD, diantaranya kecamatan teluk keramat, Sejangkung, Jawai, Galing, Sala Tiga, dan lainnya.

Setelah menyakinkan semuanya berkumpul di halaman DPRD, setengah jam kemudian, massa meninggalkan gedung perwakilan rakyat tersebut, dan mengetahui tidak ada tanda- tanda pejabat Pemkab menyambut mereka, apalagi Bupati Sambas, menurut informasi sedang berada di Jakarta tentang sesuatu hal. Kemudian massa memutuskan menuju ke rumah kediaman wakil Bupati, Juliarti, yang berlokasi di Jalan Ahmad Sood, Sambas, dengan melakukan long march.

Akibatnya arus lalu lintas menjadi terganggu, pengguna jalan yang kebetulan melewati jalan tersebut terpaksa membalikkan arah ke jalan lain, karena lautan massa tumpah ruah di tengah jalan, tepat depan rumah Wakil Bupati, walaupun menurut informasi, wakil Bupati juga tidak berada di tempat, sedang berada di luar kota.

Namun massa tetap melanjutkan orasi, sampai tuntutan mereka terpenuhi, yakni "Pemkab segera mencabut Izin HTI milik perusahaan swasta."

Syahrial mengatakan keberadaan sawit—salah satunya yang dilakukan PT SAM—memutuskan prekonomian masyarakat yang ada sekarang.

Apalagi lahan yang digarap warga saat ini telah ditanami kebutuhan pangan, jika digarap dan dikelola dengan serius akan berkomoditi tinggi, diantaranya, padi, sahang, kopi, karet, sayuran , dan lainnya. Dan ini sangat kontra dari apa yang dicanangkan bupati sendiri, dengan mengembangkan tanaman pangan, seperti padi, sebagai antisipasi krisis pangan, kata Syahrial.

STSD sendiri merasa kecewa dengan ketidaktegasan dan ketidakberpihakan Bupati atas masalah yang mereka alami. Saat ini PT SAM menurut Syahrial masih melakukan kegiatan pembibitan di areal yang masih disengketakan. Padahal sebelumnya menurut Syahrial lagi, Bupati pernah mengeluarkan instruksi kepada PT. SAM agar menghentikan kegiatannya sampai masalah sengketa lahan diselesaikan.

Untuk itu, kita mendesak Pemkab agar mencabut izin HTI seluas 16.300 Ha, dan kembalikan hak rakyat yang menggarap lahan tersebut, tegas Syahrial.

Di tempat terpisah, kepala Kantor Pertanahan Nasioal Kabupaten Sambas, Siswidodo berkata, dari hasil dialog bersama DPRD, STSD dan PT SAM, Kamis (12/6) lalu, ada tiga opsi yang ditawarkan Pemkab Sambas pada petang, memberikan keputusan seluas- luasnya bagi petani yang tidak setuju tanahnya diserahkan pada PT SAM. Dan bagi petani yang setuju, akan dilakukan inklaf dengan mengeluarkan HGU oleh PT SAM berdasarkan kesepakatan harga antara PT SAM dan petani. Dan terakhir adalah pola kemitraan antara petani dan PT SAM dalam menggarap lahan, baik perkebunan karet maupun sawit.

Dalam hal ini kata Siswidodo, pihak perusahaan tidak ada unsur pemaksaan dalam penggarapan lahan milik petani. Jusstru sebaliknya ia berkeyakinan jika petani dan PT SAM bermitra, banyak keuntungan yang nantinya didapat oleh petani sendiri dengan pola kemitraan.

"Salah satunya mendapatkan bantuan pinjaman lunak, tenaga kerja, dan tingkat kesejahteraan masyarakat akan terjamin," kata Siswidodo.

Dan ia juga menegaskan, BPN dalam hal ini tidak berpihak pada siapa- siapa. BPN hanya menjalankan tugas, tidak lain tujuannya untuk memajukan kesejahteraan masyarakat.

Saat ini sudah mengeluarkan sertifikat sebanyak 277 dari PT MIS, bergerak di sektor perkebunan juga. Dan sebanyak 250 sertifikat tanah petani dan perusahaan dengan pola kemitraan.

Sementara kepala Badan Kerjasama dan Investasi, U. Santosa berkata banyak manfaat yang akan dipetik oleh petani, andai saja pola kemitraan bisa berjalan, salah satunya terciptanya lapangan kerja, terciptanya infrastruktur jalan yang tidak mampu dibangun oleh Pemkab, dan masih banyak lagi, kata Santosa.

Dan lagi, PT SAM tidak ada unsur pemaksaan dalam penyerobotan lahan milik petani, justru sebaliknya, kecocokan harga tanah tergantung kesepakatan antara petani dan perusahaan. Dan jika petani tidak setuju, PT SAM tidak bisa memaksa.

Malahan nantinya jika terjadi kesepakatan dengan pola kemitraan, PT SAM juga akan mendirikan perkebunan plasma untuk petani sebesar 20 persen.

"Barangkali perlu kita sikapi bersama, bagaimanapun caranya, Pemkab ingin berniat baik, bersama-sama ingin memajukan kesejahteraan masyarakat," kata Santosa.□

MENUNTUT
Ribuan masa yang 'mengepung' gedung DPRD Sambas kemarin menuntut agar izin PT SAM dicabut. FOTO Agus Wahyuni/ Borneo Tribune

Appendix H: Structure of relevant administrative units