





# **Revitalizing Customary Law: Reforming Buffalo Farming Practices (*Jalangan*) in Menaming Village for Sustainable Governance**

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## **Abstract**

This research investigates the revitalization of customary law in buffalo farming practices (*Jalangan*) in Menaming Village, Rokan Hulu, with the aim of fostering sustainable governance and agriculture. The buffalo farming system in Menaming Village is deeply rooted in traditional practices that combine grazing and caging methods, reflecting the community's cultural values and environmental stewardship. These practices are designed to minimize the exploitation of natural resources, positioning Rokan Hulu as a region with significant potential to

support local livelihoods while contributing to national economic development. The study highlights the vital role of customary law, recognized in Indonesia's Constitution, in maintaining these traditional practices and promoting sustainable livestock management. Key strategies such as converting manure into organic fertilizer, utilizing organic materials for fuel, adopting pesticide-free animal feed, and implementing rotational grazing systems are central to the community's approach. These practices reduce environmental degradation, maintain ecological balance, and enhance livestock health and productivity, all while creating economic benefits, improving farmers' incomes, and fostering social cohesion. The novelty of this research lies in its demonstration of how customary law can be revitalized and integrated into contemporary governance frameworks to address modern challenges in sustainable agriculture and environmental conservation. This study contributes to the discourse on law reform by proposing that customary law be formally recognized and adapted within Indonesia's legal system as a dynamic tool for promoting sustainable development, empowering local communities, and preserving cultural heritage. The research underscores the urgency of adapting these traditional frameworks to ensure long-term ecological sustainability and community resilience.

**Keywords** *Customary Law, Buffalo Farm, Jalangan, Sustainable Governance, Sustainable Development*

## Introduction

Indonesia is governed by three distinct legal systems that regulate societal affairs: state law (commonly referred to as national law), customary law, and Islamic law. Customary law, often described as *living law*, is a system deeply rooted in and practiced by local communities. The coexistence and interplay of these three legal frameworks reflect the concept of legal pluralism. Legal pluralism arises

in multicultural societies where diverse social interactions occur among individuals of varying races, ethnicities, and religions.<sup>1</sup>

Customary law represents the values of truth and justice that are deeply embedded in society. In the context of legal development, the 1945 Constitution of Indonesia explicitly acknowledges and provides a foundation for the recognition and application of legal norms and institutions rooted in *living law*, including customary law, as an integral part of national law. This recognition is reinforced through the inclusion of two new articles in the second amendment to the 1945 Constitution.<sup>2</sup>

Article 18B(2) affirms that the state acknowledges and respects the existence and rights of indigenous peoples and their traditional customs, provided these traditions remain relevant, align with societal developments, and uphold the principles of the Unitary State of the

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<sup>1</sup> Legal pluralism in Indonesia, while reflecting the country's rich cultural and religious diversity, poses several significant challenges. The coexistence of state law, customary law (*adat*), and Islamic law (*sharia*) often leads to legal inconsistencies and jurisdictional overlaps. These conflicts can create uncertainty in legal enforcement, particularly when the principles of one system contradict those of another. For instance, customary practices may sometimes conflict with constitutional principles or human rights protections enshrined in state law. Similarly, the application of Islamic law may vary across regions, leading to unequal treatment under the law for individuals in different jurisdictions. This fragmentation risks undermining the principle of legal certainty and can complicate efforts to establish a cohesive national legal framework. Moreover, legal pluralism can exacerbate issues of discrimination, particularly against marginalized groups such as women or minority communities, where local or religious norms might perpetuate unequal practices. Addressing these problems requires careful balancing of tradition, religion, and modern legal principles. See Lukito, Ratno. *Legal pluralism in Indonesia: Bridging the unbridgeable*. (London: Routledge, 2012); Salim, Arskal. "Dynamic legal pluralism in Indonesia: Contested legal orders in contemporary Aceh." *The Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law* 42, no. 61 (2010): 1-29; Crouch, Melissa. "Review Essay: Legal Pluralism in Indonesia." *Australian Journal of Asian Law* 14, no. 1 (2013): 177-182.

<sup>2</sup> See Priambodo, Bono Budi. "Positioning adat law in the Indonesia's legal system: Historical discourse and current development on customary law." *Udayana Journal of Law and Culture* 2, no. 2 (2018): 140-164; Acciaioli, Greg. "From customary law to indigenous sovereignty: Reconceptualizing *masyarakat adat* in contemporary Indonesia." In *The revival of tradition in Indonesian politics*. (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 315-338.

Republic of Indonesia as regulated by law. Additionally, Article 28I(3) underscores that the cultural identity and rights of traditional communities are to be respected in accordance with the progress of time and civilization.

The recognition of customary law as an integral part of the legal and cultural fabric of Indonesian society is explicitly affirmed in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. Article 18B(2) states that the state acknowledges and respects the existence of customary law communities and their traditional rights, provided these communities remain active, align with societal developments, and adhere to the principles of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Additionally, Article 27(1) emphasizes the equality of all citizens before the law and government, mandating that everyone, including government officials, uphold the prevailing legal systems without exception. This provision underscores the obligation to respect and enforce all forms of law within Indonesia's legal culture, whether it pertains to criminal law, civil law, or customary law, thereby ensuring legal consistency and cultural integrity.<sup>3</sup> One example of customary law in practice is the buffalo management system in Menaming Village, which is carried out using traditional methods, combining grazing and caging techniques.

The buffalo management system in Menaming Village is practiced using traditional methods, combining grazing and caging techniques. This approach is deeply rooted in local customs and is widely adopted by the community. By employing this traditional system, the local population ensures the sustainable use of natural resources, preventing overexploitation and preserving the ecological balance of Menaming Village.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the traditional buffalo management system in Menaming Village embodies significant local

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<sup>3</sup> Burhanudin, Achmad Asfi. "Eksistensi Hukum Adat di Era Modernisasi." *Salimiya: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Keagamaan Islam* 2, no. 4 (2021): 96-113. *See also* Syahbandir, Mahdi. "Kedudukan Hukum Adat dalam Sistem Hukum." *Kanun Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* 12, no. 1 (2010): 1-13; Susylawati, Eka. "Eksistensi hukum adat dalam sistem hukum di Indonesia." *Al-Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum & Pranata Sosial* 4, no. 1 (2009): 124-140.

<sup>4</sup> *See* Sarodi, Arif, and Dadang Mashur. "Pengelolaan lubuk larangan masyarakat desa Sialang Jaya Kecamatan Rambah Kabupaten Rokan Hulu." *Cross-border* 5, no. 2 (2022): 1039-1056.

wisdom. This includes processing buffalo manure into organic fertilizer, utilizing organic matter for campfires, providing pesticide-free animal feed, herding on foot through rotational efforts, and fostering community cohesion through regular group meetings and mutual cooperation activities. These practices contribute to reducing pollution and mitigating environmental degradation, maintaining ecological balance, ensuring adequate feed and animal health, and generating economic benefits. Additionally, this system provides sustainable employment and income for farmers, enhances the community's standard of living, and strengthens kinship and social ties within the village.<sup>5</sup>

With its abundant natural resources, Rokan Hulu has the potential to become a key contributor to the nation's economy, particularly benefiting the local community. Currently, Rokan Hulu features several designated buffalo grazing areas, one of which is Ganigi Street, located in Menaming Village, Rambah District, Rokan Hulu Regency. Spanning 54 hectares, this land serves as a communal grazing area where local ranchers are granted the freedom to herd their buffalo. In return, they pay a fee of Rp. 10,000 per buffalo, which is deposited into the village fund. This expansive 54-hectare area represents a remarkable opportunity to enhance the livelihoods of the local community, fostering economic growth and supporting sustainable livestock management practices.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Asriany, Anie. "Kearifan lokal dalam pemeliharaan kerbau lokal di Desa Randan Batu Kabupaten Tana Toraja." *Buletin Nutrisi dan Makanan Ternak* 12, no. 2 (2016): 64-72. *See also* Handoko, J., and Muhammad Rodiallah. "Reproductive performance of buffalo-cows with various synchronization protocols in kampar regency of Riau province." *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*. Vol. 260. No. 1. IOP Publishing, 2019; Paman, Ujang, Shigeki Inaba, and Susumu Uchida. "Power Availability and Requirements for Small-Scale Rice Farm Operations: A Case in Riau Province, Indonesia." *American Journal of Agricultural Science, Engineering, and Technology* 1, no. 1 (2017): 1-11.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Head of Ganigi Menaming Livestock Group, Mr. Almadison, July 2023. Furthermore, in an interview with Mr. Almadison, Head of the Ganigi Menaming Livestock Group, key points about the buffalo management system in Menaming Village were shared. The 54-hectare grazing area, used by local ranchers, charges a fee of Rp. 10,000 per buffalo, which supports the village fund. The system promotes sustainable livestock management, with rotational grazing to preserve land fertility and prevent overgrazing. It fosters community

Buffalo is one of the important components in the development of the livestock sector to support the farming of rural communities. Buffalo (*Bubalus bubalis*) is a type of ruminant livestock that has a special ability to digest low-quality food to survive.<sup>7</sup> To be able to develop well, of course a good pattern for maintenance is needed. One of the buffalo rearing patterns carried out in Indonesia is the rearing of swamp buffalo using the UMO system. The system used is to maintain local wisdom in developing buffalo livestock by maintaining rice fields as grazing areas.<sup>8</sup>

In its development, the community adapts to its environment by developing a wisdom in the form of knowledge combined with customary norms, cultural values and environmental management activities to meet their needs. Menaming Village is a village that is still thick with its customs such as how to grow crops, catch fish, cultivate forests, maintain river environments, raise livestock, and so on that develop in everyday life both through direct teachings from parents to

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cooperation through regular meetings and mutual support among approximately 150 households. Additionally, buffalo manure is used as organic fertilizer, aligning with eco-friendly practices and contributing to improved livelihoods and environmental sustainability in the region.

<sup>7</sup> Asriany, Anie. "Kearifan lokal dalam pemeliharaan kerbau lokal di Desa Randan Batu Kabupaten Tana Toraja."

<sup>8</sup> Firmansyah, Firmansyah, et al. "Pemeliharaan Ternak Kerbau Rawa dengan Sistem UMO (Studi Kasus di Kecamatan Muara Bulian Kabupaten Batanghari)." *JAS (Jurnal Agri Sains)* 7, no. 1 (2023): 97-105. In addition, the UMO system (*Usaha Masyarakat Organik*) in rice field management refers to an approach that prioritizes organic farming principles, focusing on the use of natural and environmentally friendly materials to enhance agricultural productivity. This system emphasizes sustainable resource management by avoiding the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, promoting ecosystem sustainability. In the context of rice fields, the UMO system may involve the use of compost or other organic fertilizers, natural pest control, crop rotation, and the maintenance of biodiversity. The goal of this system is to improve soil quality, preserve ecosystem balance, and reduce negative impacts on the environment and human health. As such, the UMO system supports more environmentally friendly and sustainable farming practices. *See also and compare with* Ardila, Santia. "Analisis Strategi Pengembangan Ternak Kerbau (*Bubalus Bubalis*) Pada Sistem Pemeliharaan UMO di Kecamatan Muara Bulian Kabupaten Batanghari. *Thesis*. (Jambi: Universitas Jambi, 2022); Rusli, Rusli, and Syahidin Syahidin. "Karakteristik Peternak dan Strategi Pengembangan Ternak Kerbau Gayo Sistem Peruweren." *Jurnal Ilmu dan Teknologi Peternakan* 9, no. 2 (2021): 81-89.

their children, as well as from *ninik mamak* to grandchildren conveyed through *petatah petitih*, abstinence and oral literature.

Local wisdom is a way of attitude, perspective and way of action that contains essential thinking that is wise, intelligent, responsive, culturally valuable and has high moral integrity and forward-looking. With local wisdom, the scope of local community culture will be explored which is oriented towards the balance and harmony of humans, nature and culture, sustainability, natural and cultural diversity, conservation of natural resources and ancestral cultural heritage, saving resources of economic value, morality and spirituality.<sup>9</sup>

A fundamental collective right for indigenous peoples is the preservation of their cultural and linguistic identity, alongside the protection of their rights to land and natural resources, grounded in local institutions within the land law system. These rights serve as the foundation for indigenous peoples' ongoing efforts to safeguard their heritage over time. The bond between indigenous communities and their ancestral land is deeply rooted, as it encompasses both personal and communal interests, reflecting the profound significance of land to their way of life and cultural continuity. This connection is crucial in addressing conflicts over *adat* rights and ensuring that indigenous peoples are not criminalized for defending their traditional rights. Effective legal frameworks that respect and protect these rights are essential for promoting environmental sustainability and cultural preservation, as seen in the experiences of various indigenous communities in Indonesia.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> See Pesurnay, Althien John. "Local wisdom in a new paradigm: Applying system theory to the study of local culture in Indonesia." *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*. Vol. 175. No. 1. IOP Publishing, 2018; Rozi, Syafwan, and Zulfan Taufik. "Adaptation of religion and local wisdom in global environmental issues in Indonesia." *Religious: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama dan Lintas Budaya* 4, no. 3 (2020): 191-203.

<sup>10</sup> Serfiyani, Cita Yustisia, Ari Purwadi, and Ardhiwinda Kusumaputra. "Declarative System in Preventing the Criminalisation of Indigenous People for Adat Rights Conflicts in Indonesia." *Sriwijaya Law Review* 6, no. 2 (2022): 254-267. See also Thontowi, Jawahir. "Pengaturan Masyarakat Hukum Adat dan Implementasi Perlindungan Hak-Hak Tradisionalnya." *Pandecta Research Law Journal* 10, no. 1 (2015): 1-13; Damaitu, Emanuel Raja, and Dominikus Rato. "The Perspective of the Tengger Indigenous People in Lumajang on a Good and Healthy

Furthermore, local wisdom encompasses a range of values, norms, ethics, beliefs, customs, laws, and special rules that guide societal behavior. Key values associated with local wisdom include honesty, responsibility, discipline, creativity, and a strong work ethic. In Menaming Village, the buffalo management system is practiced through traditional methods, specifically grazing and penning. This system, known as *Jalangan Kerbau*, is managed by the local Indigenous community and is a common practice among the villagers. By utilizing this traditional approach, the community effectively avoids the exploitation of the natural resources in Menaming, ensuring the sustainability of their environment.<sup>11</sup>

Currently, there are calls for the management of buffalo to be transferred to the local government. However, this proposal has faced resistance from the local community, as they are uncertain about how the government would implement the system. There are concerns that such a shift could undermine the local wisdom that has long been practiced by the community (*Interview with Almadison*).<sup>12</sup> The transfer of management from the traditional community-based system to government control is expected to alter the established practices, potentially disrupting the existing management patterns. This change could also threaten the continued existence and cultural identity of the local indigenous communities.

Based on the background provided, the issue pertains to the management of *Jalangan* by indigenous communities in Rokan Hulu Regency. The research employs a socio-legal approach, which combines doctrinal legal analysis with empirical research methods. This involves both document study and field research. The study is conducted in Rokan Hulu Regency, focusing on the Indigenous Community in Menaming Village, chosen as a representative sample due to its

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Environment." *The Indonesian Journal of International Clinical Legal Education* 6, no. 2 (2024): 151-182.

<sup>11</sup> See also Atmoko, Bayu Andri, et al. "Conceptual Framework for Assessing Sustainability of Swamp Buffalo Production Systems." *Journal of Buffalo Science* 12 (2023): 44-54; Prihandini, Peni Wahyu, et al. "Biodiversity of Indonesian indigenous buffalo: First review of the status, challenges, and development opportunities." *Veterinary World* 16, no. 11 (2023): 2217.

<sup>12</sup> Interview with Head of Ganigi Mennaming Livestock Group, Mr. Almadison, July 2023.



prominent role in buffalo livestock management (*Jalangan*) in Indonesia.

Secondary data is gathered from books, journal articles, and other reference materials. The analysis is qualitative, involving classification and correlation of data. The research utilizes both primary and secondary data. A qualitative approach is adopted to address the research problem, breaking down the object of study into specific elements, followed by generalization to draw conclusions. The collected data is analyzed, with primary data categorized by issues and integrated with secondary data, interpreted inductively, and ultimately leading to a conclusion aimed at resolving the research problem.

## **Management of Buffalo Farms (*Jalangan Kerbau*) Based on Customary Law in Menaming Village, Rokan Hulu Regency**

Indonesian customary law is part of the rules or norms that arise from the customs or habits of the developing community and has a relationship with human activities in carrying out daily life, in general customary law is in the form of unwritten, always respected and obeyed by the community, because it has legal consequences.<sup>13</sup> Customary law and Indonesian national law have positions that are interrelated with each other.<sup>14</sup>

The historical development of law in Indonesia reflects the significant study of customary law, regarded as a living legal system within Indonesian society. Van Vollenhoven argued that to understand the laws that exist in this world, particularly given the diversity of forms both past and present, one must consider the entirety of the colonial legal framework, which serves as an inexhaustible source for scholarly study. This observation acknowledges that legal pluralism in customary

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<sup>13</sup> Kurniawan, Joeni Arianto. "Contested land, contesting laws. A context of legal pluralism and industrialization in Indonesia." *Sortuz: Oñati Journal of Emergent Socio-Legal Studies* 6, no. 2 (2014): 93-106.

<sup>14</sup> Karepesina, Sakina Safarina, Edi Susilo, and Erlinda Indrayani. "Eksistensi hukum adat dalam melindungi pelestarian sasi ikan lompia di desa Haruku Kabupaten Maluku Tengah." *ECSOFiM (Economic and Social of Fisheries and Marine Journal)* 1, no. 1 (2013): 25-41.

contexts is a unique and defining characteristic of Indonesian society. Kusni Sulang, a member of the Palangka Raya Dayak Cultural Institute, further emphasized that the plurality of customary law is a blessing.<sup>15</sup> Legal pluralism, in this regard, functions as a unifying force, addressing urgent concerns. The challenges related to environmental justice are increasingly pressing, highlighting the growing threats to socio-environmental equity and the well-being of ecosystems.

There exists a diverse range of conceptual frameworks to examine instances of injustice, one of which is intersectionality. This theoretical perspective posits that individuals possess many identities, such as gender and race, which interact and collectively shape their lived experiences. Justice should encompass the ability of individuals to engage in various capabilities, including but not limited to recreational activities and property ownership, which contribute to a well-rounded and fulfilling existence.

Rokan Hulu Regency is one of the regencies in Riau Province that has extraordinary historical wealth. Its cultural thickness has even been recorded since the 13th century in the state book *Kartagama Empu Prapanca* who lived in the heyday of the Majapahit Kingdom in the archipelago in 1364 AD. In the 14th to 15th centuries the kingdom of Kota Tua was ruled by descendants of Sultan Saidi, the sultan's brother, since described in the book *Sulalatus Salatin*, which states that King Rokan was the son of Sultan Saidi, the brother of Sultan Sujak. In the 15th century, the old Rokan kingdom was ruled by the tiger sultan and the beard sultan. The Rokan Kingdom was centered in Koto Intan, somewhere near Kotolamo and moved to *Pakaitan* and finally moved to Rantau Kasai (*Siarang-arang*).<sup>16</sup>

The Directorate General of Livestock and Animal Health of the Republic of Indonesia (2021) stated that domestic beef demand in 2022 is estimated to reach 700,000 tons or equal to 3.6 million heads. Meanwhile, the availability of local beef and buffalo is 434,935 tons, so

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<sup>15</sup> Abubakar, Lastuti. "Revitalisasi Hukum Adat Sebagai Sumber Hukum dalam Membangun Sistem Hukum Indonesia." *Jurnal Dinamika Hukum* 13, no. 2 (2013): 319-331.

<sup>16</sup> See Ahmad, A. Samad. *Sulalatus Salatin Sejarah Melayu*. No. 414. (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Malaysia, 2008). See also Idris, Zubir. "Etnosentrisme Melayu Dalam Sulatus Salatin (Malay Ethnocentrism In Sulalatus Salatin)." *Jurnal Melayu* 7 (2011): 107-120.

that to meet domestic meat needs, the Government will again take steps to import beef as much as 265,065 tons.<sup>17</sup> To reduce the number of beef cattle imports, as well as towards national beef self-sufficiency, there are several problems faced today. Some of the problems in the development of beef cattle business in Indonesia are:

- a. Livestock productivity is still low,
- b. The availability of local high-yielding seedlings is limited,
- c. Human resources are less productive and low level of knowledge,
- d. Marketing results have not been efficient,
- e. The livestock business system has not been optimal, and
- f. The availability of feed is not continued, especially in the dry season.

If customary law, which is intrinsically unwritten, is promulgated in a form such as a law, it provides benefits in terms of defining and clarifying the legal rules of speech. With it, laws can be communicated and known by society in a certain way more widely. This facilitates the process of implementing and enforcing customary law as well as other laws. Traditional unwritten practices and laws will be lost to time. The spirit and importance of such practices and traditions will also not be remembered from generation to generation of followers.

However, the process of codification of customary law can also reduce important elements in a custom, namely its nature that can change naturally according to contemporary needs and situations. Even though laws in the form of laws require a long time to be changed by the responsible institution. As a result, customary law promulgated becomes static and may no longer be in accordance with the needs of the times. This situation may be one of the factors against the current position of customary law which is often considered irrelevant at this time even though the codification process itself has stopped the ability of customary law to continue to adjust to the current situation.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Masitoh, Siti. "Kebutuhan daging sapi tahun ini 700.000 ton, produksi dalam negeri hanya separuhnya", *KONTAN*, June 21, 2021. Online at <https://nasional.kontan.co.id/news/kebutuhan-daging-sapi-tahun-ini-700000-ton-produksi-dalam-negeri-hanya-separuhnya>.

<sup>18</sup> Wook, Izawati, et al. "Tanah Adat Di Negeri Sembilan: Undang-Undang, Pelaksanaan dan Realiti: Customary Land in Negeri Sembilan: Laws, Implementation and Reality." *Malaysian Journal of Syariah and Law* 5, no. 1 (2017): 1-10.

One of the livestock businesses is an important component in sector development livestock is buffalo. This business is also a branch of farming business in rural communities. The existence of livestock has become integrated with social and cultural life in several regions in Indonesia. Buffalo is known as livestock that is historically linked to local customs and culture. In Its management applies local traditions that have been practiced for generations.<sup>19</sup>

Rokan Hulu Regency is one of the districts in Riau province that has the potential of human resources and natural resources that are expected to support the development of beef cattle. In several places in Rokan Hulu Regency there are locations of community cattle farms commonly referred to as Jalangan Sapi, One of which is Jalangan Pasir Pulo Hotang, Bangun Purba Timur Jaya Village, Bangun Purba District. Then walk on the banks of the Batang Lubuh River. The location is also at the same time a natural tourist destination, bathing as well as the uniqueness of buffalo maintenance and colony. Two other buffalo roads located not far apart are Pasir Tanjung road with a population of 300 buffaloes. Then Pasir Siabu with a population of 200 buffaloes. And the most extensive is Jalangan Ganigi in Menaming village amounting to 54 hectares which is village land, but if traced further the land of 54 hectares is originally the customary land of the Menaming Village Community.<sup>20</sup>

In Jalangan Ganigi there are 230 buffaloes with the Head of the Group named Almadison. In managing livestock through this road, the farming community is subject to a levy of Rp. 10,000 per cow deposited through the village.<sup>21</sup> The management of keeping cows on the road is carried out by penning the cows in the road, then every 7.00 am all the cows are released from their pens to search for food in the area of the road with an area of 54 hectares. Around the road there are also small rivers which are a place for the cows. These cows look for water, there are lots of trees that these cows can use for shade and rest. Next in the afternoon the cows will be called to return to the pen, namely at 5 pm to be precise. When called, these cows very regularly return to their pen.

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<sup>19</sup> Tatipikalawan, Jomima Martha, and Insun Sangadji. "Kearifan Lokal Dalam Pengelolaan Kerbau Moa Pada Masyarakat Pulau Moa Provinsi Maluku." *Jurnal Hutan Pulau-Pulau Kecil* 8, no. 1 (2024): 11-21.

<sup>20</sup> Interview with the Head of the Menaming Village Street Group, Mr. Almadison

<sup>21</sup> Personal Interview.

It will look like a very neat queue when they return to the cage. This view is seen every day. The process of returning these cows to the barn attracts the attention of the public and visitors who want to see the uniqueness of cow management in *Jalangan*. Many community members deliberately come in the afternoon to watch this activity.

This cattle management in the *Jalangan* is very good as a model because cattle management is carried out traditionally but with good supervision, because the *Jalangan* area is surrounded by a fence. This is to prevent the cows from leaving the road or being stolen. Cattle rearing in *Jalangan* is going well, this is proven by the number of cows which continues to increase and with good body weight. The cows also look fat and healthy. These cows from *Jalangan* are often asked to be used as supplies for sacrificial animals or to fill the consumption supply of the community in Rokan Hulu and its surroundings. The demand for cattle from *Jalangan* also continues to increase every year. This of course also proves the quality of the cows raised in *Jalangan*.

It is hoped that with the potential of this vast land resource can have a positive impact on the surrounding community with directed management, so that the traditional management system carried out by this community group can provide benefits. The values of local wisdom in livestock culture include: processing buffalo manure into manure, campfire from organic matter, pesticide-free animal feed, herding on foot and taking turns as well as regular group/community meetings and mutual cooperation activities minimize the use of natural resources, reduce the impact of pollution and decrease in environmental quality, maintain ecosystem balance, ensure the fulfillment of feed and health needs Livestock, providing economic benefits, can provide employment and adequate income for farmers, improve the standard of living of the community, and maintain kinship and social-community relations.

In the context of local wisdom, the 54-hectare Ganigi street area in Menaming Village exemplifies sustainable farming practices, blending buffalo farming with intercropping and aquaculture. The land also features ponds stocked with goldfish and tilapia, providing an additional source of income for the local breeder group. While buffalo manure is not yet processed, it is repurposed by the surrounding community as fertilizer for crops, reflecting the resourceful use of natural by-products.

Buffalo feed is primarily sourced from the grass found along the road and supplemented by grasses provided through government assistance, including indoguvera, elephant grass, and odot rumpot. Ensuring the nutritional needs of the buffalo is vital for their optimal productivity, with forage being the main source of food for these large ruminants. The buffalo raised in Menaming Village are mud buffalo, also known as swamp buffalo, which adapt well to the local environment, even in challenging agroecosystem conditions or dry lands.

The buffalo's diet includes various grasses, such as elephant grass (*Pennisetum purpureum*), which is highly favored for its high production, strong roots, and nutritional value. This grass is pesticide-free, making it a safe and sustainable food source for the buffalo, thus aligning with the community's local wisdom of maintaining ecological balance and promoting sustainable agricultural practices. This integrated approach demonstrates the village's deep-rooted commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainable livelihoods.

This represents the local wisdom of the community, which encompasses knowledge about the diverse food sources for buffaloes allowed to roam the streets to meet their nutritional needs. According to information from one of the buffalo breeders, the grass is periodically cut and regrows luxuriantly, particularly during the rainy season when it thrives. Furthermore, the buffalo manure deposited in the pastures contributes to soil fertility, fostering the growth of grasses and other plant species. While concerns about potential soil degradation from manure accumulation exist, these require further research. Assuming a balance between livestock numbers and pastureland, buffalo manure can enhance environmental sustainability by serving as a natural fertilizer. As noted by Suhubdy, planting forage on fertile land yields higher productivity than on degraded or less fertile soil, highlighting the importance of maintaining healthy land for optimal forage growth.<sup>22</sup>

Farmers in Kuantan Singingi Regency face significant challenges, particularly the reduction of pasture and fertile land for growing forage due to land use changes for housing, industry, rice fields, plantations,

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<sup>22</sup> Suhubdy, Suhubdy. "Nutrition Reproduction of Indonesian Buffalo: An experience from Sumbawa Buffalo". *Buffalo Newsletter*, 22 (2007): 7-11

and other developments.<sup>23</sup> To ensure a sustainable supply of forage, it is essential to plant forage on fertile land. In response to these challenges, breeders maintain protective trees around the enclosure areas, which provide shelter for livestock and herders, particularly during the dry season. The types of protective trees include banyan trees, rubber trees, and local mango trees with large trunks and dense foliage.

In addition to preserving protective trees, the breeders also follow local wisdom regarding the importance of buffalo puddles within the housing area. Farmers understand that wallowing is essential for buffalo to cool down and regulate their body temperature, as well as to protect themselves from insects. Buffaloes wallow during the hottest hours of the day and also use the mud or shallow water at night for protection. These puddles may consist of small mud holes or rivers with deeper water, serving both as a cooling mechanism and a water source.

This local wisdom of maintaining protective trees and buffalo puddles contributes to the ecological balance and sustainability of livestock management. To further support the well-being of their livestock, regular meetings are held to address urgent needs, and mutual aid activities are organized to repair enclosures, maintain road barriers, and clear roads of shrubs.

The division of labor within the group is based on the number of livestock owned by each farmer, including the allocation of responsibilities for maintaining the cages and enclosures. Each farmer is required to manage a 30-meter long cage for every buffalo they own. In cases where there are multiple buffalo, the length of the cage is multiplied by the number of livestock. Additionally, the road where the buffalo are kept is monitored by rotating pickets, who are responsible for opening and closing the cages each day. This system ensures shared responsibility and collective management of the livestock, fostering cooperation within the community.

Indonesia is a nation that upholds the principle of legal pluralism, where three distinct legal systems—Western law, religious law, and

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<sup>23</sup> See Wulanasa, Fitria. "Faktor-Faktor Yang Mempengaruhi Alih Fungsi Lahan Karet Rakyat di Kecamatan Singingi Hilir Kabupaten Kuantan Singingi". *Thesis*. (Riau: Universitas Islam Riau, 2020); Astuti, Puji. "Dampak Pembangunan Kawasan Minapolitan Terhadap Desa Warsawa Di Kabupaten Kuantan Singingi." *Jurnal Kebijakan Pembangunan dan Inovasi* 6, no. 1 (2023): 17-25.

customary law—are recognized and applied. Despite the prominence of formal legal frameworks, many communities continue to rely on customary law to regulate their daily lives and address conflicts. Each region in Indonesia has its own unique system of customary law, tailored to the social realities of its people. These systems often consist of unwritten rules passed down through generations. Over time, however, the relevance and effectiveness of customary law in addressing contemporary issues have been called into question, particularly regarding its capacity to regulate daily community activities and resolve emerging conflicts. This is evident in indigenous communities, where local wisdom, like the management of buffalo livestock in Menaming Village, relies on traditional practices and legal customs that are deeply embedded in the community's way of life. As these communities face external pressures, the challenge becomes balancing the continuation of customary law with the demands of modern legal systems.

While in our country has a rule of law that has been made by the body and also the institutions making laws in the form of laws and regulations. Between customary law and state law have different mandatory powers, which are constitutionally the same, but differ in form and aspect. The existence of customary law is officially recognized by the state, but its application is still very limited. This is contained in Article 18B paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution which states "*The State recognizes and respects the unity of indigenous peoples and their traditional rights as long as they are alive and in accordance with the development of society and the principles of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, which is regulated in law*", which means that the state recognizes the existence of customary and constitutional rights in the legal system in Indonesia. In addition, Article 3 of the Law also provides for "*The exercise of customary rights and similar rights of indigenous peoples, as long as they exist in reality, shall be carried out in a manner consistent with national and state interests based on national unity based on and shall not conflict with other higher laws and regulations*".<sup>24</sup>

The recognition and respect for the unity of indigenous peoples and their rights are central to Indonesia's legal framework, as stated in the 1945 Constitution. This principle can be further explored through

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<sup>24</sup> Susylawati, Eka. "Eksistensi hukum adat dalam sistem hukum di Indonesia." *Al-Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum & Pranata Sosial* 4, no. 1 (2009): 124-140.



the historical legacy of various kingdoms in Indonesia, such as the Rambah Kingdom. Located in Luhak Rokan Hulu, the Rambah Kingdom was initially established along the banks of the Rokan Kanan River, before its capital was moved to Pasir Pangarayan. Believed to have emerged in the 16th century, the kingdom adopted Islam as its guiding faith. It operated under the "*Four Selo King*" system, consisting of three royal heirs and one king's son. Hierarchically, the Rambah Kingdom is considered a royal relative of the Tambusai Kingdom. The kingdom's founding is attributed to the Viceroy and the entourage of Sutan Perempuan, with Raja Muda, the son of the Tambusai king, playing a central role in its establishment. The entourage of Sutan Perempuan, originating from Penyabungan, further contributed to the kingdom's early development, illustrating the deeply rooted traditions and leadership systems within Indonesia's indigenous communities.<sup>25</sup>

As an area that is included in the Riau region, Rambah is certainly dominated by Malays where the Malay ethnic kinship system is *Matriakat*, or lineage from the maternal line. In socio-cultural interactions in the life of ethnic Malay people are based on customs that are thick with Islamic values. In Malay society customary norms today still apply. In every *luhak* (country), every tribe has a tribe. The top of the tribe in one *luhak* is headed by a Datuk with the title of Treasurer. The position of Treasurer can only be held by people from the Malay and Ampu tribes. The reason is, the Malay tribe is the oldest tribe, while the Ampu tribe is the youngest tribe (Taslim bin Fohom, Pasirpangarayan). These two tribes were Bulega, taking turns in serving as Treasurer.

The existence of tribal officials or commonly referred to as Tribe Leaders in the Rambah area still exists today. This is evidenced by the Inauguration process of Datuk Munaro Kayo Rambah Hilir at the Rambah Hilir District Level on September 25, 2020.

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<sup>25</sup> See Dasrol, Dasrol, Widia Edorita, and Ramlan Darmansyah. "Kebijakan Pemerintah Terhadap Penguatan Eksistensi Sistem Pemerintahan Adat." *Jurnal Kebijakan Publik* 13, no. 1 (2022): 66-72.

Customary Law Peoples in this case the Rambah community has rights as indigenous peoples in its territory, where the rights of indigenous peoples include:<sup>26</sup>

- 1) To manage, maintain, prevent and protect the environment from damage and rehabilitate after taking benefits in environmental management;
- 2) To obtain protection for local wisdom in sustainable management of natural resources and the environment;
- 3) To receive information, education, empowerment and training related to sustainable environmental management;
- 4) To determine and/or approve the management for the benefit of development of natural resource management areas that belong to Customary Law Peoples; and
- 5) To obtain environmental restoration in indigenous territories that have suffered damage due to management by other parties.

Environmental management rights held by Indigenous Peoples encompass a range of practices vital to their way of life and sustainable resource use. These rights include the utilization of water resources for various needs, such as irrigation and consumption. Farming practices, rooted in traditional knowledge, allow communities to cultivate crops in a manner that is harmonious with the environment. Forest management is another key aspect, where Indigenous Peoples are responsible for the stewardship of forest ecosystems, ensuring biodiversity and sustainable use.

Additionally, hunting practices are integral to their subsistence, alongside the opening of agricultural land and plantations, which are managed in accordance with ecological balance. Fishing in rivers, lakes, and seas also forms an essential part of their livelihood, with methods passed down through generations to prevent over-exploitation. The collection of natural products, such as honey, fruits, and vegetables, reflects their deep connection to the land and its offerings.

Animal husbandry is another significant environmental management right, as communities keep animals in a way that respects their role in the ecosystem. Lastly, there are various other management

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<sup>26</sup> Article 5 of Riau Provincial Regulation Number 14 of 2018 concerning Guidelines for Recognition of the Existence of Customary Law Peoples in Environmental Protection and Management

rights, grounded in local wisdom, that reflect the Indigenous Peoples' holistic understanding of nature and its preservation for future generations. These practices collectively demonstrate their stewardship over natural resources and the environment.

Environmental management is a conscious effort to maintain, protect and improve the quality of the environment so that basic human needs can be best met so that it can support human survival to the level of welfare and social justice. The definition of management based on the General Dictionary Indonesian is management or maintenance. While the juridical definition is: "Integrated efforts to preserve environmental functions which include policies for structuring, utilizing, developing, maintaining, restoring supervision and controlling the environment."<sup>27</sup>

Based on the above understanding, it can be seen that the term management is interpreted in addition to policy activities in the utilization or utilization of natural resources also includes conservation and preservation activities, even including in the field of law enforcement in the form of supervision and control.<sup>28</sup> The implementation of community participation in environmental management based on Article 7 paragraph (2) of the UUPH can be:

- a) Increase independence, community empowerment and partnership;
- b) Develop community capabilities and pioneering;
- c) Fostering community responsiveness to carry out social supervision;
- d) Provide opinion suggestions;
- e) Submit information and/or submit reports.

Livestock management in Menaming Village aligns with environmental stewardship due to its traditional practices, which help prevent the exploitation of local natural resources. By integrating local wisdom into livestock culture, such as processing buffalo manure into fertilizer, using organic matter for campfires, providing pesticide-free animal feed, and practicing rotational herding, the community minimizes resource consumption. Additionally, regular group meetings

<sup>27</sup> Article 1 point (2) of Law Number 32 of 2009 concerning Environmental Protection and Management. *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 32 Tahun 2009 Tentang Perlindungan Dan Pengelolaan Lingkungan Hidup*.

<sup>28</sup> Yusuf, Asep Warlan. "Kebijakan Desentralisasi Pengelolaan Lingkungan Hidup, Makalah tentang Otonomi Daerah dan Pengelolaan Lingkungan Hidup", *Paper*, Commemoration of Faculty of Law, Parahyangan University, Bandung, 2001.

and cooperative activities promote communal effort. These practices not only reduce pollution and protect the environment but also maintain ecosystem balance. Furthermore, they ensure the fulfillment of animals' nutritional and health needs, provide economic benefits, create employment opportunities, improve the standard of living for local farmers, and strengthen kinship and social ties within the community.

The management of the Jalangan Ganigi Livestock in Menaming Village has, to date, been solely coordinated by the chairman, without involvement from local traditional leaders. The village receives a rent of Rp. 10,000 per buffalo, which is a limited financial return considering the substantial potential of the 54-hectare land used for the livestock road. Given the significant size of the land and its potential for development, there is a clear opportunity to enhance the benefits derived from this land. Expanding the involvement of the broader community could ensure more equitable distribution of the resources, thereby benefiting all villagers.

Livestock serve as a valuable economic resource for the community, with various products derived from them, such as meat for sale, processed skin for drum-making, the creation of art tools from cowhide, and the conversion of manure into organic fertilizer. This reflects the need to develop a sustainable livestock system that is ecologically sound, economically viable, and capable of supporting both industrial and smallholder farming. Such a system is essential for ensuring food security and addressing poverty. Furthermore, livestock have long been integral to meeting human needs, providing resources for clothing, food, and labor.<sup>29</sup>

Livestock management based on Customary Law in Menaming Village is in line with environmental management because of its traditional nature, so it is hoped that it can avoid exploitation of Menaming Village's natural resources. By applying local wisdom values in livestock culture, including: processing buffalo dung into manure, bonfires made from organic materials, pesticide-free animal feed, grazing on foot and in turns as well as regular group/community

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<sup>29</sup> Apriana, Evi, et al. "Kearifan Lokal Masyarakat Lamteuba Droe Seulimeum dalam Konservasi Ternak." *Serambi Saintia: Jurnal Sains dan Aplikasi* 9, no. 2 (2021): 98-105.

meetings and mutual cooperation activities, minimizing use of natural resources, reducing the impact of pollution and reducing environmental quality, maintaining ecosystem balance, ensuring the fulfillment of animal feed and health needs, providing economic benefits, providing employment and adequate income for farmers, improving livestock standards, community livelihoods, and maintaining kinship and social relations. So far, the management of Jalangan Ganigi livestock in Menaming Village has not involved local traditional leaders, it is only coordinated by the chairman and the village only receives a rental fee of Rp. 10,000 Rupiah per buffalo, considering that the potential land used for roads is very large, namely 54 hectares, then of course this has the opportunity to be developed so that the benefits can be felt by all village residents.

The transfer of the buffalo management system from the local community will certainly affect the pattern of buffalo management in Menaming Village, which has so far been carried out traditionally. This transfer will of course also affect the existence of local communities because it certainly does not fully involve local indigenous communities. This will result in the local community no longer implementing customs in managing buffalo farms, and in the end the activities of local indigenous communities will decrease, and will even cause the existence of indigenous communities to disappear.

Indonesian customary law is part of the rules or norms that arise from the customs or habits of the developing community and has a relationship with human activities in carrying out daily life, in general customary law is in the form of unwritten, always respected and obeyed by the community, because it has legal consequences. The buffalo management system in Menaming Village is carried out in the traditional way, which is grazed and caged. This method is a method that is usually done by the local community, because with this traditional system it can avoid exploitation of the natural resources of Menaming village. With the natural resources that exist in the management of buffalo livestock, Rokan Hulu is expected to become one of the areas that will support the economy of this nation. Especially for the people of Rokan Hulu.

The livestock management system in Batang Hari, Jambi Regency is implemented with a strategy for livestock development buffalo in the

UMO rearing system in Muara Bulian District, Regency Batang Hari is defending local wisdom in livestock development buffalo by defending rice fields as a grazing place.<sup>30</sup> In strengthening the local wisdom of indigenous communities Dawan, ideas to consider for implemented are: first, do Integrated Stakeholders Management, includes government, community groups, academics, NGOs, or even private parties. Second, strengthening traditional institutions and increasing the capacity of indigenous communities. Third, strengthening local wisdom through ecotourism. With Thus, it is hoped that it will be able to stimulate the inside uphold local wisdom in strengthening conservation and ecotourism domains, which of course can also be applied to the Rokan Hulu community.<sup>31</sup>

If customary law, which is intrinsically unwritten, is promulgated in a form such as a law, it provides benefits in terms of defining and clarifying the legal rules of speech. With it, laws can be communicated and known by society in a certain way more widely. This facilitates the process of implementing and enforcing customary law as well as other laws. Traditional unwritten practices and laws will be lost to time. The spirit and importance of such practices and traditions will also not be remembered from generation to generation of followers.

The codification of customary law, while essential for providing formal recognition and structure, can also have unintended consequences. One key concern is that it may strip away the inherent flexibility and adaptability that characterize customary law. Customary law, by nature, evolves with the community's changing needs, cultural shifts, and the dynamic environment in which it operates. This adaptability allows for the law to remain relevant and responsive to contemporary issues.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Firmansyah, et al. "Pemeliharaan Ternak Kerbau Rawa dengan Sistem UMO (Studi Kasus di Kecamatan Muara Bulian Kabupaten Batanghari)."

<sup>31</sup> Lake, Smaracodus Consulatus Vivendus, Ricky Avenzora, and Harnios Arief. "Treasure of Local Wisdom in Strengthening Conservation and Ecotourism: Case Study of Dawan Indigenous People in Timor Tengah Utara District." *Media Konservasi* 22, no. 3 (2017): 213-219.

<sup>32</sup> See Hoadley, Mason C. "The Leiden Legacy: Concepts of Law in Indonesia." *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 21, no. 1 (2006): 124-128; Buana, Mirza Satria. "Living adat Law, Indigenous Peoples and the State Law: A Complex Map of Legal Pluralism in Indonesia." *International Journal of Indonesian Studie* 1, no. 3 (2016): 104-119; Fasseur, Cees. "Colonial dilemma:

However, once codified, customary law becomes a formalized set of rules, often anchored in written documents. This rigid structure can hinder the law's capacity to evolve organically, as it is subjected to the long and complex processes required to amend formal legislation. Codified laws typically undergo slow and bureaucratic changes, which means they may fail to meet new societal needs in a timely manner.

This tension between the flexibility of customary law and the rigidity of codified law can lead to a disconnect between the law and the lived experiences of the community. As a result, codified customary law can be perceived as outdated or irrelevant, even though it was once a dynamic tool for social governance. In many cases, the law becomes static, unable to adapt to modern realities. This stagnation is one of the reasons why customary law, despite its historical significance, is often considered inadequate or obsolete in contemporary legal discourse.

## Conclusion

The buffalo farming system in Menaming Village, rooted in traditional practices such as grazing and penning on *Jalangan Kerbau*—land owned by the Indigenous People—demonstrates the enduring presence and relevance of customary law in Rokan Hulu. This system aligns with sustainable environmental management principles, leveraging traditional methods to prevent the exploitation of natural resources. The existence of *Jalangan Kerbau* reflects the resilience of Indigenous Peoples and their capacity to maintain ecological balance while supporting economic and social well-being.

The integration of customary law into the management of buffalo farming showcases its potential as a dynamic legal framework that preserves cultural heritage and promotes sustainable practices. By recognizing and revitalizing customary law through law reform, policymakers can ensure that these traditional practices are protected and adapted to contemporary governance systems. This approach not

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Van Vollenhoven and the struggle between adat law and Western law in Indonesia." *The Revival of Tradition in Indonesian Politics*. (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 70-87; Holleman, Johan Frederik. "Trouble-cases and trouble-less cases in the study of customary law and legal reform." *Law & Society Review* 7, no. 4 (1973): 585-609.

only fosters sustainable agricultural development but also empowers Indigenous communities, strengthens social cohesion, and enhances the ecological and economic resilience of regions like Menaming Village.

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## Acknowledgment

None

## Funding Information

None

## Conflicting Interest Statement

There is no conflict of interest in the publication of this article.

## Publishing Ethical and Originality Statement

All authors declared that this work is original and has never been published in any form and in any media, nor is it under consideration for publication in any journal, and all sources cited in this work refer to the basic standards of scientific citation.

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