

The Impact of Land Conversion as a Form of Industrialization on the Community Life in *Pantura*

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Abstract

As a developing country, Indonesia continues to strive to increase its level to become a developed country in new ways, one of which is industrialization. Industrialization is predicted to be able to improve the welfare of people's lives and open up many new jobs for the community. However, various industrialization practices that have been and will be carried out are, in fact, not in favor of the community and instead create conflicts and social inequality in society. One of the industrializations carried out in Indonesia is one along the North Coast of Java or *Pantura*. This study aims to find out how industrialization is from the government and the capital owners' perspectives and the real impact of industrialization on society. This study uses a qualitative approach. Data were collected in the form of video documentaries and literature studies. The study results show that industrialization does not favor the welfare of society. Many people are put in a difficult situation because of the loss of lands and livelihoods and the environmental damage caused by industrialization. With this, it can be seen that industrialization is not following people's needs, aspirations, and desires.

Keywords

Land Conversion; Industrialization; *Pantura*

INTRODUCTION

From the city of Merak (Banten) to Banyuwangi (East Java), with a total length of 1,161.47 km, the north coast road (*Pantura*) is a road parallel to the north coast of Java, a strategic road for smooth economic management, and a cross-regional highway that connects cities in four provinces (Banten, West Java, East Java, and Central Java). Coastal areas, especially the north coast, have very high development potential, including 1) renewable resources (mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass beds,

algae, and marine fishery resources). 2) non-renewable resources consisting of minerals and geological resources. Environmental services (protected areas and life support systems), tourism, transportation, and energy sources. The coastal area also has the potential for industrialization, manifested by the establishment of enormous and modern factories, symbolizing progress and development. However, other reasons cause the industrial sector to be more important to develop than the agricultural sector.

The government's emergence of policies regarding the industrialization of the *Pantura* caused pros and cons. Making the North Coast an industrial center requires access to an international port directly connected to the Trans Java Toll Road. This follows the words of the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Ir. Joko Widodo, in the limited meeting at the Bogor presidential palace, asked the *Pantura* of Java to be filled with industrial centers as it was connected to the Trans-Java toll road. In addition, he assessed that the infrastructure in *Pantura* was relatively more ready to support industrial activities. Jokowi has said several times that "the north coast of Java which is connected to the toll road needs to be an economical super-corridor because the infrastructure is relatively complete," He emphasized more at opening a limited meeting at the Bogor presidential palace.

The existence of the policies on the industrialization of the north coast of Java caused various impacts, both positive and negative. The positive impact is that it can maintain economic stability, provide more job opportunities in small and large industries, and absorb more workers. Meanwhile, the negative impacts include the rise of various problems in various circles of society and from the policymakers (government) themselves.

Regarding these problems, the writers were worried and decided to conduct a study on the industrialization of the *Pantura*. The problem the writers were worried about and wanted to explore was how to industrialize the north coast of Java.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research focuses on the problems or impacts caused by industrialization practices done by the government and the capital owners. The author uses a

qualitative approach in writing this article. The research was conducted around the industrial area along the *Pantura*. The data were collected in the form of a documentary video from the Watchdoc Documentary YouTube channel entitled "*Surat Cinta Dari Pantura*" and a literature study using articles and journals relevant to the discussion raised in this article.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Industrialization is a form of encouragement to improve people's lives through modernization. Changes in development that are increasingly advanced due to industry certainly directly impact the lives and welfare of the surrounding community. People who live in areas around the north coast of Java are starting to feel worried about the consequences of industrialization, which is gradually being built, and some have even been established. The public concern arises because of its impacts along the north coast of Java.

Java Island is undoubtedly one of the islands in Indonesia that have contributed a lot to the country's economy by establishing many industrial factories. However, as said by Mr. Faisal Basri, an economist, it seems that this Java region has been forced or 'raped' continuously to advance the country's economic growth by ignoring the carrying capacity of nature and balance with other regions.

According to the Tempo daily news, the Ministry of Industry has noted that there are at least 70 potential industrialization areas along the sea route on the north coast of Java. This area is expected to be developed over the next few years. The total land area in the 70 locations is 35,214 hectares. The area that most supports the north coast comes from West Java, which reaches 39 regions. The ministry lists 12 potential areas

in Banten Province and 11 in East Java. There are also 6 industrial centers in Central Java and 2 locations in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta.

President Joko Widodo, in his speech, explained that the development of several industries would use the same principles, including constructing a super economic corridor on the north coast of Java, including the Batang, Subang, and Majalengka industrial areas. The government considers that the development currently being developed can invite quality investment and synergize with our MSMEs, while this is the opposite of the community condition around the industrial factory area.

Land Conversion around the North Coast of Java

One of the impacts of industrialization can be seen in the surrounding community, namely in the form of changes in land use or what is often referred to as land conversion. It is a change in the function of part or all of the land which was initially planned for something else but turned into another function that may have a negative impact on the environment around the land. Human efforts in utilizing and managing land resources reflect changes in land use that will affect humans and environmental conditions. The existence of policies issued by decision-makers significantly affects land-use change. The increasing need for living space, transportation, and recreation areas drives land-use change.

This land conversion will undoubtedly have a negative impact on the community and the surrounding environment. As explained in the documentary video from the Watchdoc Documentary YouTube channel entitled "*Surat Cinta dari Pantura*," the land conversion due to industrialization will negatively impact the surrounding community economically, socially, and environmentally. The industrialization

process occurs along North Coast Road or around the North Coast of Java.

Many areas on Java Island have their land converted into industrial factories. In the Serang area, 400 hectares of ponds in the Kasemen District will be converted into industrial areas. In addition, there are 1000 hectares of dry agricultural land in Walantaka District, which will be converted into industrial zones and supporting areas such as housing. Land conversion also occurred in Cirebon, West Java. No less than 300 hectares of land in the Losari District will be part of the Cirebon integrated industrial area, and many others will be converted for industrialization purposes.

Then, the Batang Central Java Integrated Industrial Estate was the super economic corridor of the north coast of Java by President Jokowi. Unlike other development projects, there is no problem with land acquisition here because the 4300 hectares of the converted area are under the control of State-Owned Enterprises. In KITB (Grand Batang City), six industrial areas will be built: (1) Automotive Equipment Industry and Transportation Equipment, (2) Chemical Industry, (3) Textile and Battery Industry, (4) ICT and Electronic Warehousing Industry, (5) Food and Beverage Industry, and (6) Commercial Industry.

Then, the exact condition also occurred in the East Java area, Mount Tumpang Pitu in Sumberagung Village, Pesanggaran District, Banyuwangi, which was initially a protected forest. However, in 2013, the government changed its status to a production forest. Since then, PT BSI has started to carry out gold mining operations. Like in other locations, residents who refuse to mine will be criminalized in various cases.

Quarrels and conflicts over land will continue to occur. The choice of economic activity and other civilizations outside of

industrialization needs to be seen as diversity as it does not only include ethnic, religious, or racial identities. Diversity also includes economic choices. Forcibly evicting fishing villages or farmers under the pretext of development investment has denied this diversity.

Based on the description above, it is apparent that industrialization's development process is an attempt to convert the lands that become the place of business for farmers, cultivators, and many more into industrial factories. In the conversion process, a conflict can occur between land owners/communities and industrial owners. This can happen because the community also thinks about its impact on people's lives around the development area. Many people reject the holding of industrialization in their area because of several impacts that will be caused, such as in terms of environmental, social, and economical. Some of these communities were forced, threatened, or persecuted to agree to industrialization immediately. This seems to show that industrialization's development process does not create prosperity but creates misery for the small community, whose voices are often not heard by the authorities.

Impacts of Land Conversion due to Industrialization around the North Coast of Java

The development of various industrial activities along the north coast of Java is considered to have damaged the comfort and safety of the surrounding population. In addition, the public still has doubts that companies in industrial areas can contribute to the development of the surrounding area. In general, this land-use change along the north coast of Java has several consequences. The direct impact is the loss of agricultural land, which will affect

agricultural production and lead to the loss of agricultural jobs for both owners and smallholders. The existence of this industrialization certainly has the potential to eliminate the primary livelihood sector, which was once the dominant sector.

Initially, industrialization was intended to support the community's welfare because it would provide jobs for the people. However, over time and if you look closely, this concept is inversely proportional to the current reality where the industrialization development process looks like it makes people miserable. The development process requires the community to always agree with decisions related to the handover of the land where they work to be handed over to industrial owners. The community was forced and threatened to give up the land without thinking about other impacts that would arise for the community, such as losing their only livelihood, which initially had a sizable profit. The documentary video from the Watchdoc Documentary YouTube channel entitled "*Surat Cinta Dari Pantura*" also shows where a fisherman is unsure whether to sell his land for industry. He was confused because he thought about what alternative work he would do after selling his land, even though his previous job was sufficient to meet his family's daily needs.

The impact is not only on land conversion. With the existence of this industry, the yields obtained by farmers, fishers, and cultivators are very unsatisfactory and even detrimental to them. Pollution caused by the reckless operation of industrial factories has a terrible impact on crop yields, such as smoke pollution from coal factory activities in Indramayu which makes onion harvests unsatisfactory and land owners suffer significant losses. The pollution of the water discharged by the factories causes losses to fishers because of the minimum yields.

Besides those problems, there are still many impacts caused by the pollution released.

In his speech, the Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia said that our task is to plant so that our future generations can reap the good and not reap the storms of trying to hunt for short-term profits that we snatch from their hands. No need to wait for the next generation or two; the farm workers have been reaped by what the Vice President called the storm. The PLTU-1 (Steam Power Plant-1) Indramayu that produces dust spreads to the rice fields and reduces the quality of plants. PLTU Indramayu is also directly adjacent to the north coast of Java. Residents who depend on the sea for their livelihoods are also affected by the operation of the PLTU. The fishers experienced a decrease in income from the quality of marine products due to the establishment of the PLTU. The residents' anxiety about Indramayu increased when plans for constructing PLTU-2 emerged in 2015.

The industrial development along the north coast of Java was initially expected to attract investment in Indonesia. However, before it happens, a series of disasters hit the residents first. The opening of the industry is always justified for the sake of job creation and prosperity. Ironically, productive citizens such as fishermen in Batang are in danger of losing their jobs. Narratives about industries that create jobs and promise prosperity to circulate widely. However, this is in contrast to the facts that are currently happening.

A previous study by Linda Dwi Rohmadiani regarding "The Impact of Agricultural Land Conversion on Farmers' Socio-Economic Conditions" explains that the conversion of agricultural land causes changes in the structure of the household life of farmers from the primary sector (agriculture) to the secondary and tertiary sectors such as workers and traders and

others. The following impact is the reduction in the area of agricultural land, which causes an increase in migrants or immigrants to find work (Rohmadiani, 2011).

In this case, the number of farmers who own agricultural land will be less than that of non-owners.

Ahmad Riskawa also researched the "Impact of Land Use Transfer to Non-Agricultural Uses on Farmers' Income, Labor Absorption, and Excitement in Farming." This study explains that changes in land use affect farmers' income. However, even though farmers suffer losses due to industrial development, their income is relatively constant because they can use the one from the field sale for additional agricultural and non-agricultural capital. Rice conversion also affects agricultural use after the land-use change. The more significant the land-use change, the less enthusiastic the farmer is about agriculture. For example, changes in land use cause farmers to lose their enthusiasm for farming (Riskawa, 2004). Farmers in this group usually have access to employment opportunities in the non-agricultural sector and can improve their standard of living if they have access to opportunities.

The research conducted by Linda Dwi Romadhoni on "Impact of Agricultural Land Conversion on Farmers' Socio-Economic Conditions" and Ahmad Riskawa on "Impacts of Converting Rice Fields to Non-Agricultural Uses on Farmers' Income, Labor Absorption, and Excitement in Farming" is related to this study, of which focuses on the impact of industrialization development that is currently happening. The impact is certainly very influential on all aspects of society.

Sociological Theory Analysis

In this article, problems regarding industrialization along the north coast of

Java in the study of sociological theory can be analyzed using the conflict theory of Karl Marx. The social background behind the emergence of Marx's theory is that this conflict perspective was born during a social crisis, namely the Industrial Revolution. Marx saw poverty and greed in society. He saw pictures of the miserable life of the working man, as opposed to the lavish lifestyle of the capital owners. Marx's early ideas were heavily influenced by the industrialization of the early 19th century (Ridwan, 2019).

The situation is almost the same as the current state of industrialization. The policymakers have taken the people's rights for their interests without thinking about the impact in the long term. Several testimonies from the community around the Pantura area show that if people object to the decisions in the form of protest or demonstration against industrial development, they will be arrested by several officers, and they will be taken to the police station. Some of them even received inappropriate treatment from the authorities. Thus, it shows that the conflict theory between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat still occurs today, especially in some areas along the north coast of Java.

Essentially, people believe that the government will bring people a prosperous life, and the government's development plan is to carry out industrialization, which is likely to impact the community negatively. However, there are still many rulers/capital owners who even ignore the welfare of the people for the sake of the industrialization plan, so it appears that the word welfare is only incitement to the community. The voices of community appealing for the reduction of the negative impacts caused are often not heard by the authorities/owners of the industrial capital, so people are like slaves who want to be

ruled by anything. If you look closely, workers in industrial factories are like those slaves who do all the work ordered by their superiors with wages that are not enough for their end meets.

CONCLUSION

Industrialization is a form of encouragement to improve people's lives through modernization. One of the impacts of industrialization is land conversion. The government considers that the current development can bring quality investment and synergize with MSMEs.

As explained in the documentary video from the Watchdoc Documentary YouTube channel entitled "*Surat Cinta dari Pantura*," the land conversion due to industrialization will negatively impact the surrounding community economically, socially, and socially environmentally. No less than 300 hectares of land in the Losari District will be part of the Cirebon integrated industrial area, and many other areas will be converted for industrialization purposes.

The existence of paddy fields can bring significant economic, social, and ecological benefits. When the rice fields are converted, the losses incurred are felt by the broader community than a small portion of the land-owning community. Not only that, but the production results may also suffer losses later.

In addition, industrialization's actual impact on society is the development of various industrial activities along the North Coast of Java. These activities have been considered a disturbance to the comfort and safety of the surrounding residents. The development also causes the loss of agricultural land, which will affect agricultural production activities and lead to the loss of agricultural land, and agricultural jobs for both owners and sharecroppers. Moreover, the community is

even forced and threatened to give up the land without thinking about other impacts that will arise for the community, such as losing their only livelihood, which initially had a sizable profit.

Based on the conclusions that have been described above, the advice that the author can give is that the Regional Government should tighten the permit for land conversion. In addition, the government needs to conduct an environmental impact assessment (AMDAL) analysis and re-observe the agricultural areas that can be converted and determined. In addition, local governments need to have a control system related to land conversion and prepare replacement land for those converted under the applicable laws and regulations.

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