



# Social Communication Panglima Uteun in Forest Management at Aceh Besar Regency

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**Abstract.** This research discusses the social communication of Panglima Uteun in forest management based on reduced cultural capital between the State and privatization of forest management which ignores the social power of forest customs. This study uses a qualitative approach sourced from observation data, in-depth interviews, FGDs and documentation studies. This research shows that the dimension of social communication based on cultural capital becomes the identity space of Panglima Uteun in protecting the forest on the one hand, and the struggle for economic capital on the other hand places the social communication of Panglima Uteun being eroded as a traditional institution which is very important for maintaining forests in the reality of the community's ecological traditions Aceh.

**Keywords:** Social Communication, Panglima Uteun, Cultural Capital, Forest Management

## 1 Introduction

The study of forestry is still an interesting dialogue when examined both in terms of aspects of economic, social, cultural, political communication and local cultural entities of communities around forests. This can be understood where forests are not only seen as a buffer for environmental sustainability but also forests become economic assets developed by the government and private parties from upstream to downstream. The development of the forestry sector must be seen and understood as part of the socio-political system that still occurs from the New Order to post-reform. Various crises that develop in the forestry sector such as the emergence of injustice, marginalization of local people, or forest looting, due to over-extraction in its management are reflections of crises that still occur today [1]. In the context of political economy, the forestry sector is influenced by the doctrine of timber as the main element, yield sustainability, long-term, and absolute standards. These four doctrines also influence the perspective and practice of forest management which not only leads to efforts to realize the welfare of the people around the forest, but provides high space for various problems in the forestry sector from deforestation problems, environmental degradation to poverty around the forest permanently [2].

This fact indirectly signals various aspects of sustainability of forestry sector governance, both economic, political and socio-cultural aspects. It is also undeniable how then the customary local identity of the tradition passed down in the Acehnese people, especially where forest management involves the Commander of Uteun or Pawang Glee who is in charge of maintaining the preservation of customary local-based forests located under Mukim. Various problems that arose later such as illegal logging, flash floods, forest burning, forest looting as affirmed by the forum of environmental journalists where From 2018 to 2020 Aceh has experienced 423 floods, landslides, and flash floods. Various disasters that arise are nothing but a form of ecological damage from the bad record of uprooting local values of forest management based on human relations and creators, which are replaced by the forces of globalization of the market economy in the name of a balance of development in the face of the state and global market forces radically [3]. Through these empirical facts, this study is focused on exploring the social communication of *Panglima Uteun or Pawang Glee* to realize the ecological sustainability

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of sustainable forest management which is aliased from the relationship between the state and local communities.

## 2 Research Methods

This research focuses on qualitative approaches sourced from primary and secondary. This research was located in the forest area of Jantho city. The selection of the research site was carried out with the consideration that as a large forest area in the Jantho city area, there are forest areas that are claimed by the community, some areas are customary forests even though they have not been outlined in the Decree of the Minister of Environment and Forestry, and also community forests. Data collection was done by direct observation, in-depth interviews and documentation studies. In-depth interviews are directed with customary institutional actors such as *petua seunebok*, or *panglima uteun*, *keuchik*, traditional leaders, communities around the forest as well as with sub-districts, local district governments. Documentation studies are techniques for collecting materials in the form of documents related to research themes by searching and reviewing reference materials such as books, journals, newspapers, and scientific papers. Other. Data analysis is carried out using qualitative analysis methods. In an effort to obtain data whose validity can be claimed, the correctness of the data is tested by data triangulation. This is done with a view to reducing the chances of misinterpretation. Stake (2000: 23) triangulation is the process of using many perceptions in clarifying meaning (*meaning*) and in verifying the repetition of observation.

## 3 Results and Discussion

### 1. Reposition of Panglima Uteun

*Panglima uteun* or *Pawang Glee* in Qanun Number 10 of 2008 concerning Customary Institutions is mentioned as a person who is in charge or leads and regulates customs related to the management and preservation of the forest environment. Article 31 Qanun Number 10 of 2008 states that, *Pawang glee* or other names serve as:

1. Lead and regulate the implementation of customary activities related to forest management and preservation;
2. Enforce customary law on forests;
3. Levy *wase* or customary excise tax (retribution) on the produce collected in the mukim forest.
4. Regulate hunting time;
5. Coordinir the implementation of customary ceremonies related to the forest;
6. To determine the location of the forest, the type of timber and the size of the timber that can be cut down for the needs of the mukim houses;
7. Supervise hunting activities and the number of deer / deer that can be hunted in a year;
8. Supervise forest utilization activities and
9. Resolving disputes between community members in forest use

Customary institutions such as *Panglima Uteun* (as a social institution related to the forestry sector) in practice slowly its identity is increasingly marginalized in the social system of the population around the forest. Slowly even replaced by formal institutions, such as forest rangers who carry out social functions *Panglima Uteun*. The practice of democracy and bureaucratic system has positioned the village (read *gampong*) as a miniature state that carries out centralistic and authoritarian principles from upstream to downstream. In line with Husken's study (1998) which states that the development of the pattern of capitalist democracy in villages in an integrated manner in rural areas of Indonesia has a real impact on the village governance system based on local capital [4]. Entering the reform period through Law number 22 of 1999 concerning regional autonomy, Law number 18 of 2001 concerning special autonomy of Aceh, then the issuance of Qanun Number 5 of 2003 concerning *gampong* government, Qanun number 10

of 2008 concerning customary institutions and strengthened again by Law number 32 of 2004 concerning regional government, had a very significant impact on the return of local customary identity structured in Mukim governance and Gampong as well as in the culture of the community where previously uprooted in the democratic system of village government of the New Order model [5].

In the tradition of forest product management and utilization, there are several customary rules that must be followed by the community when in the forest and utilizing forest products. First, within a predetermined distance from the eye source such as a water reservoir that is about 600 meters away, it is not allowed to cut trees, except planting trees. Second, in areas close to large riverside channels, it is not allowed to cut trees and use them for the common good. Third, it is not allowed to cut trees in the coastal area of the river. It aims to resist river abrasion. Fourth, it is forbidden to cut down trees in hilltop or mountain areas except planting trees. This ban is carried out to prevent flooding to the area of residents around the forest [6].

This tradition of forest conservation is a fundamental reference that must be understood by a Panglima Uteun or Pawang Glee, therefore not all people who make a living gardening, or farm in the forest understand these customs and values and are referred to as Panglima Uteun. The appointment as *Commander of Uteun* and *Pawang Glee* was chosen by the local community based on emperist knowledge and experience understanding forests in the context of Acehnese culture that blends between custom and religion. This shows that the uteun commander is not only a person who understands knowledge about the field of forestry, but also a person who is wise to read forests in cultural and religious views.

## 2. Social Communication and Local Wisdom Practices for Forest Management

The basic principles of Acehnese ecology are basically inseparable from the relationship between nature, humans and creators. This is seen in the old philosophy, the land *hak kullah* (the right of Allah SWT). Artiya, land tenure or land is used and controlled together as long as the land has no ownership status. The forest is controlled and shared by the community. Forest products can be used together, trees can be cut down only to meet the needs of daily life and should not be done carelessly [7]. The tradition that has been carried out in the form of reusam (written and unwritten rules) of gampong to preserve the forest is carried out jointly between *the Panglima uteun* or *Pawang Glee* and *the local Imum Mukim*. In the Aceh Besar forest area, the form of social communication for forest management involves *Panglima Uteun* or *Pawang Glee*, *Peutua Seunobok* and *Imum Mukim*. The involvement of these institutions is very important related to forest conservation and integrated forest development efforts. This means, as emphasized by the imum mukim of Jantho city, the use of forest land and the opening of new land as gardens in forest areas to be developed by local communities must be with the knowledge of *Panglima Uteen* or *Pawang Glee*, *Peutua Seunobok* and *Imum Mukim*. Khanduri uteun activities carried out by the community by involving traditional leaders, local communities and sub-districts in the perspective of indigenous locales contain religious, communal, real, and visual elements. The religious perspective illustrates that people believe that forests are inhabited by God's creatures and should be believed to be a form of human relationship with nature and its creator. One of them is by doing khanduri uteun as a form of gratitude to Allah SWT for everything in the forest or vice versa. Communally describes, communities cooperate and help each other in forest governance, such as activities *Khanduri Uteun*, as well as when clearing new land. Meanwhile, the real and visual reality is reflected in the uteun customary activities carried out and involving elements of the community, community leaders and sub-district governments to maintain uteun customs and can be followed by all levels of society [8].

**Table 1.** Level of Society

Stairs	Description
Can't cut down trees indiscriminately	There is a ban on cutting down trees close to reservoir areas or lakesides that are about 500 meters away
Jambo Guest	Jambo / or hut is not boleg made on the path usually passed by wild animals, then also the wood must not be made of wood loops or roots that store creeping animals.
Darut palms	It is forbidden to wrap a cloth around a tree and not indiscriminately a machete is placed on a tree, will bring a locust mite
Abstinence shouting shouting	It is forbidden to shout shouting in the forest will bring wild animals and pests
Teumeubang wate pade mirah	Abstain from cutting wood when rice is about to be harvested.
Pantang ceumecah lam ujeun tunjai	It is forbidden to cut down trees or grasses during heavy rains because it will bring locust pests that cause crop failure

*Source : processed from several literature and field data*

Several studies have shown that the involvement of indigenous leaders such as: *Panglima Uteun* or *Pawang Glee*, *Seunobok*, *Imum Mukim* And *Keuchik* Maintaining uteun customs is very important in order to maintain the balance of forests which are not only beneficial economically but also for the social, cultural and ecological aspects of the forest environment. (Chadija, 2017). At a time when the economic function of forests is seen only from the side aspect *mode of production* The economic function of forests, which is only limited to meeting the economic needs of households around forests, turns into radical exploitation of forests when the State, Private Sector and community see forests as capital assets for economic, social and cultural fulfillment [10]

Based on the view of the Aceh Customary Council, the function of forests includes family food sources, family protein sources, economic sources, sources of medicines, water sources, sources of housing materials, sources of recreational areas, and buffer areas [11]. The customary perspective shows that forests play an important role as an economic buffer for communities that not only impact communities around forests, but also for all communities from the context of human relations and the surrounding nature.

### **3. Panglima Uteun's Cultural Capital on Sustainable Forest Management Ecology**

Social capital is defined as a set of informal values and normalities shared among members of a community or group that leads to the achievement of cooperation among members of that community or group [12]. That is, social capital can be interpreted as social assets based on actors' relationships and access to resources within the network or group to which they are a member [13]. Social capital or often referred to as social capital is defined as the social construction of individual social interactions to build social forces together to overcome social problems. In a broader context in terms of social structure (micro, mezzo and macro) the potential of social capital consisting of elements of community, common goals, and overcoming social problems is an important aspect of the survival of social capital or social capital. In other words, social capital refers to all the social forces of a community constructed by individuals or groups with reference to the social structure according to which the community's assessment can achieve individual or group goals efficiently [14].

The social function of local wisdom in society plays an important role in fostering collective consciousness, collective identity, communal harmony, and cultural stability. Indirectly, local wisdom becomes the driving force for the growth of natural balance with human needs themselves. At the same time as affirmed in Qanun number 10 of 2008 concerning Acehnesse customary institutions, the presence of *Panglima Uteun* or *Pawang Uteun* as a customary institution that plays a structural and cultural role in maintaining the integrity of forests both culturally, socially and economically which has an impact on sustainable forest preservation [9].

### **4. Forest management based on customary norms**

Rules of customary norms that must be obeyed by the community when they go to the forest or already in the forest. First, the rule is not to cut or cut trees carelessly. Even more so the trees that bees love. Such as trees, bones, kemuning or keutapang trees or large trees as beehives that will benefit the community. Second, it is not allowed to cut or cut trees that can be used as basic materials for making ships from wood. Third, do not cut down trees carelessly when clearing new land. Fourth, there is the authority of the Commander of Uteun to collect results *Wase Glee*, in the form of good forest products in the form of honey, rubber sultry, resin which ranges from 10%. Fifth, as a judge if there is a dispute related to forest management, where the principle of deliberation is carried out to decide cases on every dispute that arises. Sixth, Commander Uteun has the right to determine the day when he can enter the forest and not [15].

The power of local knowledge systems refers to aspects of *self-interest*, in the sense that local knowledge is an important key to conservation efforts, because its strength comes from within the community itself rather than views and knowledge from outside. Knowledge systems become compulsive, meaning the accumulation of centuries of patterns of ecological adaptation of local communities. In addition, knowledge has the potential to help design effective resource conservation efforts due to local support and high levels of adaptation and *practicability* considerations. The principle of maintaining customs is in line with the philosophy of the Acehnese people "*mate anek meupat jeurat, mati adat pat tamita*" (dead children know their graves, but customs where to look for them). This philosophy is deeply rooted in its customary institutions, including the customary diversity of *Panglima Uteun* or *Pawang Glee*. As emphasized by *Imum Chik* district Jantho, forests are not only seen as a place of livelihood for some residents, but forests also contain customary elements that connect religious elements and local community customs to maintain forest ecosystems. This means that the use of forest products must be in accordance with the needs of the community and not be carried out radically which can cause forest ecosystems to be disturbed and cause widespread impacts on the community. (Interview, public figure, 2022).

### **5. Indigenous Institutional Network**

The rise of illegal logging cases that are still developing in the Jantho forest area places the position of the uteun commander to be very strategic amid the waning cultural power and structure of the uteun commander to protect the forest. On the one hand, the commander of the uteun received his confirmation in the realm of gampong institutions in the mountainous area, but on the other hand, the authority of the commander of the uteun as stated in the *Qanun* of the *Gampong* government 5 of 2003 over forest management was weakened when the forest became a space for the reproduction of forest modernization as a productive market [16].

Problem solving through consensus and deliberation carried out through customary institutions also involves the sub-district and the environmental service (DLH) in the Jantho sub-district. If the verdict and consensus made cannot be resolved customarily, it will be carried out through a mediation process involving the subdistrict, gampong and police if the case involves serious violations. However, if such violations can be committed involving gampong apparatus and customary institutions, it will be carried out through the customary mechanism of the local community [17].

### **6. Community Interaction**

In the unity of life of the Acehnese people, kinship relations in the form of social interaction are carried out in the form of cooperation and mutual cooperation for social activities in the community. These cooperation activities are seen in various social behaviors, both worldly activities and activities when someone dies. Social interaction built in the structure of Acehnese society is still carried out with a strong kinship system in accordance with the customary values of the local community. This behavior is clearly seen how social networks that develop are open and mutually respectful of indigenous relations in the form of oral communication and action. Communication relations that are built between customary institutions are manifested in the form of open communication both with the community and with other customary institutions related to various matters related

to customary forest issues and solving cases of forest management violations. The pattern of social relations that is built includes how the position of Mukim as a customary authority in gampong is integrated with Panglima Uteun and the elements of gampong in it. Various issues that arise related to the issue of using forest land as plantation land, starting with the relationship built by *Panglima Uteun* with *Mukim*, *gampong* and the community. This is done so that conflicts do not arise related to various matters related to forest management, such as the opening of new land. Social interaction that is built by prioritizing cultural access to local communities is very influential in unraveling and stopping conflicts with fellow land owners.

## 4 Conclusion

The existence of the customary institution of the commander uteun in practice has a strategic role in sustainable forest management. The local value base that exists in the commander uteun is a very strong social capital in an effort to overcome forest management problems that have been neglected both culturally and culturally. Panglima uteun as a social entity that plays an important role in preserving and sustaining customary local-based forest governance. Social communication developed in the form of Forest management based on customary norms, Indigenous Institutional Network and Community Interaction are social relatives in maintaining the identity of the Uten commander as an important actor in community-based forest management is in the Aceh Besar Regency Area. Through Qanun, customary institutions number 10 of 2008 concerning customary institutions places *the uteun commander* as an institution that plays an important role in community-based forest management to maintain cultural and structural forest ecology in a sustainable manner.

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