



Environmental Conservation for Sustainable Development: An Analysis of the Aceh Pilkada Debate from a Legal Policy Perspective

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Abstract: Environmental Conservation is a critical concern within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in Indonesia. The primary prerequisite for development is the sustainable management of natural resources, including clean and inexpensive energy, climate change mitigation, and the preservation of marine and terrestrial ecosystems. The worldwide environmental catastrophe, characterized by unpredictable climate change, jeopardizes the future of the planet and humanity. This study aims to ascertain if environmental conservation for sustainable development may be integrated into legal policies during the 2024 Aceh Pilkada debate. This is a case study utilizing a legal policy framework. Data were collected through reviews of literature and interviews; the documents examined included laws, legal rules, journal articles, and books pertinent to the debate, while the participants were members of the People's Representative Council and the Environmental Service. The findings of this study indicate that environmental conservation for sustainable development is very necessary. The future of sustainable development in Indonesia is predominantly influenced by the nation's commitment to environmental protection. Moreover, environmental challenges in Aceh are intricate issues necessitating thorough and lasting solutions applicable to governmental policy. In the realm of legal policy, the government serves as the principal entity in executing these legal regulations, necessitating active involvement from all stakeholders to shape the legal conduct of the community and the private sector, which is essential for achieving sustainable development in Aceh.

Keywords: Environmental conservation, regional electoral discourse, legal ramifications, sustainable development, legal framework

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Abstrak: *Perlindungan lingkungan merupakan isu yang sangat penting dalam Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) termasuk Indonesia. Sebab syarat utama pembangunan adalah berbasis pada sumber daya alam yang terjaga seperti energi bersih dan terjangkau, penanganan perubahan iklim, ekosistem laut dan daratan. Namun demikian, krisis lingkungan secara global dengan perubahan iklim yang tidak menentu mengancam masa depan dunia dan manusia. Tujuan dari penelitian ini ialah untuk mengetahui perlindungan lingkungan untuk pembangunan berkelanjutan dapat terakomodir dalam kebijakan hukum melalui debat pilkada Aceh 2024. Penelitian tersebut menggunakan metode empiris dengan pendekatan kebijakan hukum. Data dikumpulkan dengan cara studi literatur dan wawancara, literatur yang dikaji adalah undang-undang, aturan hukum, artikel jurnal dan buku yang terkait dengan fokus pembahasan, sedangkan informan yang diwawancara adalah anggota Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat dan Dinas Lingkungan Hidup. Hasil penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa perlindungan lingkungan untuk pembangunan berkelanjutan merupakan suatu hal yang sangat urgen. Karena pembangunan berkelanjutan ke depan sangat ditentukan oleh seberapa serius negara tersebut menjaga lingkungannya di Indonesia. Selanjutnya isu lingkungan di Aceh merupakan masalah kompleks yang memerlukan solusi komprehensif dan berkelanjutan yang dapat diterapkan dalam kebijakan pemerintah. Dalam konteks kebijakan hukum, pemerintah sebagai aktor utama dalam mengimplementasikan aturan hukum tersebut, didukung oleh partisipasi aktif dari semua pemangku kepentingan, dan berpengaruh pada perilaku hukum masyarakat, dan sektor swasta, sangat diperlukan untuk mewujudkan Aceh dalam pembangunan berkelanjutan.*

Katakunci: *Perlindungan lingkungan, debat pilkada, implikasi hukum, pembangunan berkelanjutan, kebijakan hukum*

Introduction

Environmental conservation is a critical concern under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established in 2015 for global sustainable development.¹ The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are scheduled for implementation by 2030, comprising 17 objectives: eradication of poverty, elimination of hunger, promotion of healthy and prosperous lives, provision of quality education, attainment of gender equality, access to clean water and adequate sanitation, availability of clean and affordable energy, facilitation of decent work and economic growth, advancement of industry, innovation, and

¹Suyu Liu, "Interactions Between Industrial Development and Environmental Protection Dimensions of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Evidence From 40 Countries With Different Income Levels," *Environmental & Socio-Economic Studies* 8, No. 3 (2020), p. 60-66. Agus Salim and Liberthin Palullungan, "The Challenges of Environmental Law Enforcement to Implement SDGs in Indonesia," *International Journal of Criminology and Sociology* 10 (2021). p. 517-524.

infrastructure, reduction of inequality, development of sustainable cities and communities, promotion of responsible consumption and production, management of climate change, preservation of marine ecosystems, conservation of terrestrial ecosystems, establishment of peace, justice, and robust institutions, and fostering partnerships to achieve these goals.²

Indonesia is a tropical nation endowed with a strategic geographical position, abundant natural resources, and a population advantage. Indonesia is actively addressing environmental degradation through the implementation of various laws and regulations designed to mitigate existing environmental issues that affect multiple sectors and support sustainable development. Consequently, collaboration and synergy among stakeholders and the broader community are essential to effectively achieve the vision, mission, and objectives aimed at combating global warming and achieving sustainable development in accordance with established targets.³

Natural resources and ecosystems play a vital role in human existence. For current and future success, their management and exploitation must be conducted sustainably, harmoniously, correctly, and in equilibrium.⁴ Indonesia, as a nation governed by the rule of law, enshrines in Article 33, paragraph (3) of the 1945 Constitution that the state controls the ground, water, and natural resources therein, utilizing them for the maximum benefit of the populace. The advancement of a region will invariably involve the difficulty of managing natural resources. Issues related to natural resources frequently arise from inadequate management. Inappropriate utilization of natural resources can lead to a decline in both their quality and quantity, ultimately resulting in depletion.⁵

Environmental degradation and ecological catastrophes are becoming tangible and jeopardize the world amid unpredictable climate change. Furthermore, a significant issue regarding natural resources is the inadequate protection of current resources by the government. The current laws and

²Lola Malihah, "Tantangan Dalam Upaya Mengatasi Dampak Perubahan Iklim Dan Mendukung Pembangunan Ekonomi Berkelanjutan: Sebuah Tinjauan," *Jurnal Kebijakan Pembangunan* 17, No. 2 (2022), p. 219-232. Zerlina Mendy Mahardhika, "Urgensi Reformasi Hukum Lingkungan Terhadap Perubahan Iklim di Indonesia," *Jurnal Kebijakan Pembangunan* 19, No. 2 (2024), p. 235-244.

³ Etika Khairina, et.al., "Sustainable Development Goals: Kebijakan Berwawasan Lingkungan Guna Menjaga Ketahanan Lingkungan Di Kabupaten Bantul Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta," *Jurnal Ketahanan Nasional* 26, No. 2 (2020).

⁴ Smith, M.J., et.al. "Managing Natural Resources for Their Human Values," *Ecosphere* 6, No. 8. (2015). Irma Yeny, et.al. "Examining the Socio-Economic and Natural Resource Risks of Food Estate Development on Peatlands: A Strategy for Economic Recovery and Natural Resource Sustainability," *Sustainability* 14, No. 1. (2022).

⁵ Nugroho, W. "Reorienting the Principle of Sustainable Development in Investing Policy Utilizing Natural Resources and Energy in Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Energy* 5, No. 1. (2022).

regulations do not align with the mandate and essence of the 1945 Constitution. Similarly, the potential of natural resources is inadequately safeguarded by the policies of central and regional governments. The preservation of ecological and socio-cultural values of communities reliant on natural resources will be compromised if the government fails to implement appropriate conservation policies. The issues surrounding laws, regulations, and governmental policies regarding natural resources are essential and urgent subjects that necessitate attention.⁶

The swift environmental degradation is attributable to a deficient vision of sustainability and the susceptibility of the carrying capacity of natural resources, as demonstrated by the several principal legal products of these resources. The growing population compels people to intervene to fulfill their wants, hence jeopardizing the sustainability of the natural resources' carrying capacity essential for human survival. Carrying capacity denotes the maximum population of a species that may inhabit a specific ecosystem without detrimental effects on that ecosystem.⁷ Human activity and environmental degradation are intricately connected; humans exploit natural resources, harm ecosystems, and elevate the risk of environmental disasters. Article 13 of the UUPPLH mandates that the preservation of environmental advantages necessitates the regulation of pollution and/or environmental degradation.⁸

The Government of the Republic of Indonesia has conferred particular autonomy onto the Province of Aceh, facilitating the establishment of firms, including state-owned enterprises (BUMN) and regional-owned enterprises (BUMD), such as PT Medco E&P Malaka, an oil and gas entity. A company founded in East Aceh Regency, Aceh Province. This marks the inaugural successful exploitation of gas in Block A Regency following the Aceh peace accord.⁹ On October 3, 2023, Aceh senator H Sudirman, also known as Haji Uma, visited the village of Panton Rayeuk Teungoh in East Aceh. Field monitoring revealed that individuals continued to report dyspnea, discomfort, and hematemesis. On September 24, 2023, 32 people of Gampong Panton Rayeuk

⁶ Efendi Efendi, et.al., "Animal Protection in the Perspective of Positive Law and Islamic Law: A Study of Elephant-Human Conflict in Aceh, Indonesia," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga dan Hukum Islam* 7, No. 1 (2023). Mary Christina Wood, "Nature's Trust: Environmental Law for a New Ecological Age," *Integrated Environmental Assessment and Management* 12, No. 1 (2021), p. 1-436.

⁷ Efendi Efendi, et.al., "Animal Protection in the Perspective of Positive Law", p. 175-194.

⁸ Winarni, F dan Dinarjati, E.P. "Peran Pemerintah Dalam Penanggulangan Pencemaran Air Tanah Oleh Bakteri E. Coli di Kota Yogyakarta," *Jurnal Mimbar Hukum* 25, No. 2 (2013).

⁹ Ramadhani, W. "Pencemaran Lingkungan Akibat Pembuangan Limbah yang Dilakukan oleh PT. Medco di Kabupaten Aceh Timur Menurut Undang-Undang Nomor 32 Tahun 2009 tentang Perlindungan dan Pengelolaan Lingkungan Hidup," *Jurnal Hukum Samudra Keadilan* 16, No. 1 (2021).

Teungoh were exposed to air tainted with hazardous gas. This led to infected individuals being transported to the hospital and hundreds of others seeking sanctuary in the adjacent District Office.¹⁰

Consequently, Aceh will conduct a gubernatorial election in 2024. The inaugural discussion of the 2017 regional elections focused on the themes of vision, mission, and trustworthy leadership. The second debate focused on identifying a visionary leader. The third argument focused on achieving high-quality bureaucratic services. Regrettably, the theme of the 2017 Aceh regional elections did not prioritize environmental concerns. Research addressing environmental protection for sustainable development encompasses: Environmental Problems and Environmental Law Enforcement in Indonesia;¹¹ Implications of Environmental Permit Policies on the Environment in Indonesia;¹² Impact of Mining on the Environment in South Kalimantan and its Implications for Citizens' Rights;¹³ Existence of Environmental Law in Fostering a Healthy Environment in Indonesia;¹⁴ The Role of Government Policies in Environmental Management;¹⁵ The New Environmental Governance;¹⁶ Environmental Protection: Law And Policy.¹⁷ Nature's trust: Environmental law for a new ecological age;¹⁸ The green case (routledge revivals): a sociology of environmental issues, arguments and politic.¹⁹

The aforementioned studies indicate a paucity of research connecting environmental conservation and sustainable development within the framework of legal policy. The legal policy in this instance pertains to governmental policy

¹⁰ Hendri, S. Haji Uma Ingatkan PT Medco Agar Tak Lagi Mencemari Lingkungan. <https://aceh.tribunnews.com/2023/10/03/haji-uma-ingatkan-pt-medco-agar-tak-lagi-mencemari-lingkungan>. (2023).

¹¹ Herlina, N. Permasalahan lingkungan hidup dan penegakan hukum lingkungan di Indonesia. *Jurnal Ilmiah Galuh Justisi*, 3(2), (2017).

¹² Muryati, Dewi Tuti, Dharu Triasih, and Tri Mulyani. "Implikasi Kebijakan Izin Lingkungan Terhadap Lingkungan Hidup Di Indonesia." *Jurnal USM Law Review* 5.2 (2022): 693-707.

¹³ Listiyani, N. Dampak pertambangan terhadap lingkungan hidup di kalimantan selatan dan implikasinya bagi hak-hak warga negara. *Al-Adl: Jurnal Hukum*, Vol 9 No 1, (2017). P. 67-86.

¹⁴ Arliman, L. Eksistensi Hukum Lingkungan dalam Membangun Lingkungan Sehat Di Indonesia. *Lex Librum: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum*, 5(1), (2018).

¹⁵ Andriansyah, A., Sulastri, E., & Satispi, E. The role of government policies in environmental management. *Research Horizon*, 1(3), (2021).

¹⁶ Holley, C., Gunningham, N., & Shearing, C. *The New Environmental Governance*. Routledge. (2013).

¹⁷ Glicksman, R. et.al., *Environmental Protection: Law and Policy*. Aspen Publishing. (2023).

¹⁸ Wood, Mary Christina, "Nature's Trust: Environmental Law for a New Ecological Age," *Integrated Environmental Assessment and Management* 12, No. 1 (2021).).

¹⁹ Yearley, S. *The green case (routledge revivals): a sociology of environmental issues, arguments and politics*. Routledge. (2014).

originating from environmental concerns, whereas the discourse study focuses on the controversy around the 2024 Aceh regional election. Research frequently undertaken pertains mostly to the execution of environmental utilization. This topic is compelling due to its renewable nature; and also environmental challenges transcend national boundaries and have evolved into global concerns.

This research presents an empirical legal analysis informed by the legal policy theory articulated by Jeffrey J. Rachlinski. Rachlinski, as a law professor, has advanced the study of law and behavior, particularly in elucidating how law might influence individuals' conduct.²⁰ Jeffrey J. Rachlinski's expertise on the intersection of law and conduct offers significant insights for tackling legal policy challenges related to promoting ecologically sustainable elections. The author posits that Rachlinski's methodology, informed by the impact of law on individual behavior, can formulate more effective policies to attain the objectives of ecologically sustainable elections.

The study uses methods of data collection, which enable the researchers to get data pertinent to the research outcomes. For that reason, data is gathered through reviews of relevant literature, interviews, and document analysis as sources from participants pertaining to data, documents, or other relevant materials linked to the focus of the study. The data is sourced from a variety of origins, including personal accounts, journals, publications, reports, and institutional resources.²¹ The participants were members of the House of Representatives and the Environmental Service.

Environmental Conservation in Sustainable Development

Environmental protection within sustainable development is a critical global concern, particularly in Indonesia. To achieve environmental protection, numerous measures can be implemented. Primarily, environmental protection and management constitute a collective obligation among the government, the business sector, and the society. One of the society's tasks in environmental initiatives is space monitoring. Community engagement in safeguarding the right to a healthy environment is incorporated within numerous environmental regulations, as stipulated in the Environmental Protection Law. Secondly, empirically, community engagement in environmental management has predominantly seen the community merely as a conduit for information or as a source of counsel, facilitating the smooth execution of environmental actions. In the future, the optimization of community engagement in environmental

²⁰Jeffrey John Rachlinski, "The Politics of Legal Empirics: Do Political Attitudes Predict the Results of Empirical Legal Scholarship?," *Cornell Legal Studies Research Paper* No. 18-29 (2018). Jeffrey J. Rachlinski, "Rulemaking Versus Adjudication: A Psychological Perspective," *Florida State University Law Review* 529 (2005).

²¹ Zainuddin Ali, *Metode Penelitian Hukum*, Jakarta: Sinar Grafika, 2018.

protection and management operations must be enhanced by expanding involvement opportunities.²²

According to the 2009 Environmental Management Law, the central government grants extensive jurisdiction to regional governments, encompassing planning through environmental inventory, as well as the formulation and creation of environmental protection and management plans. Similarly, the management of natural resources, regulation of pollution, and protection of environmental functions including prevention, mitigation, and restoration are executed through initiatives aimed at conserving natural resources, oversight, and legal enforcement. Consequently, municipal governments play a significant role in environmental preservation.²³

Consequently, for sustainable development to be achieved, there must be an equitable allocation of natural resources, both among contemporaneous communities and for posterity. The recognition of the necessity to save the planet for future generations has established the notion of Sustainable Development, which can be realized through the Clean Production framework. Industry stakeholders must acknowledge that including the Clean Production mechanism into environmental protection initiatives is essential for achieving Sustainable Development as mandated by the environmental law. While the implementation of the Clean Production mechanism in industry is not mandatory, this does not imply a diminished bargaining position for Clean Production, as its principles are reflected in various national legal frameworks, including the 2009 Environmental Management Law.²⁴

If these legal obligations are not enforced, the ecosystem will face numerous forms of harm. Air, marine, and aquatic pollution, ecosystem degradation, and the ramifications of climate change are issues that require urgent resolution to mitigate environmental pollution, necessitating governmental consideration of all these factors. Per Article 53, paragraph (2) of the 2009 Environmental Management Law, the public is alerted about environmental pollution and/or damage, even isolated contamination. This is an alternative approach to mitigate environmental pollution and harm, which can be adapted in accordance with scientific and technological advancements in localized environmental contamination, with the public being alerted to this concern. This

²² Kadek Cahya Susila Wibawa, "Mengembangkan Partisipasi Masyarakat Dalam Perlindungan dan Pengelolaan Lingkungan Hidup Untuk Pembangunan Berkelanjutan," *Administrative Law & Governance Journal* 2, No. 1 (2019), p. 79-92.

²³ Undang-Undang Nomor 32 Tahun 2009 tentang Perlindungan dan Pengelolaan Lingkungan Hidup.

²⁴ Laila Nurul Jihan, "Pembangunan Berkelanjutan Melalui Penerapan Produksi Bersih Sebagai Upaya Penegakan Hukum Lingkungan," *Jurnal Juristic* 3, No. 1 (2022), p. 13.

alternate method for mitigating environmental pollution and damage can be adapted to advancements in science and technology.²⁵

The Indonesian government imposes regulations on environmental issues to supervise companies that process and utilize natural resources. Consequently, environmental management and protection must adhere to legal mandates that require compliance from all sectors, including the government and the community. Furthermore, the province of Aceh hosts numerous enterprises that employ natural resources as their primary raw materials.

The Legal Implications of Environmental Protection in the Aceh Pilkada Discourse

The Aceh Pilkada is a political contest for the election of regional leaders in Aceh Province. The 2017 Aceh Gubernatorial Election constitutes a pivotal occurrence in Aceh. On February 15, 2017, the Acehnese electorate selected the Governor and Deputy Governor for the 2017-2022 term. The election had six pairs of competing candidates. During the 2017 Aceh Gubernatorial Election, the Aceh Independent Election Commission (KIP) recognized six candidate pairs competing for the governorship. The campaign is getting progressively captivating with the addition of three pairs of independent candidates and three pairs of candidates supported by different political parties. The incumbent, Zaini Abdullah, chose an independent path and was affiliated with Nasaruddin. Simultaneously, Tarmizi Abdul Karim, the former Inspector General of the Ministry of Home Affairs, advanced with the support of Golkar, NasDem, and PPP. Notable individuals like as Abdullah Puteh, Irwandi Yusuf, Muzakkir Manaf, and Zakaria Saman also engaged in the Aceh gubernatorial election.

The inaugural debate in the 2017 Aceh gubernatorial election focused on the vision, mission, and integrity of leaders. The second debate focused on identifying a visionary leader. The third argument focused on achieving high-quality bureaucratic services. Regrettably, the theme of the 2017 Aceh governor election did not emphasize environmental concerns. The forthcoming Aceh gubernatorial election, first slated for 2022, has been deferred to 2024. In the 2024 gubernatorial election, environmental issues should be the primary focus for Aceh's leadership candidates to facilitate the implementation of ambitious policies in the future.

Data from BPBA (Aceh Disaster Management Agency) indicates that Aceh has seen 99 documented catastrophes between January and June 2024. Between January and June 2024, Aceh experienced 39 residential fires resulting in the destruction of 187 houses, 23 floods affecting 61 houses, 18 forest and land fires incurring losses of IDR 11 billion, 12 tornadoes damaging 27 houses, five

²⁵Syafrudin. *Sengketa Lingkungan dan Hak Gugat Masyarakat dan Pemerintah*. Surabaya: Airlangga University Press. (2013).

landslides impacting five houses, one flash flood, and one earthquake. The disasters inflicted damage on several significant facilities, including six educational institutions, four places of worship, 18 shophouses, and also caused harm to bridges and roads owing to floods and landslides²⁶

Aceh Province possesses significant forest resources, encompassing both natural and cultivated forests. The expanse of community woods totals 11,632 hectares, distributed among multiple districts and cities. The potential for timber in diverse forest regions amounts to tens of millions of cubic meters. Moreover, there exist community-managed plantation forests operated by cooperatives, with proposals for designated areas for plantation forest development. Roundwood production in Aceh originates from multiple sources, including industrial plantation forests, timber consumption permits, community forests, and auction outcomes. Aceh produces several Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) in addition to wood, including rattan, sandalwood, and charcoal. Numerous issues pertain to forest management in Aceh, including land conversion and suboptimal expansion of community management zones. Consequently, it is imperative to enhance the governance of the forest and land sector and to fortify oversight of the forestry business. The government must prioritize the acknowledgment of community management areas.²⁷

The Sabang City region, particularly surrounding Weh Island, is abundant in marine resources, notably the 2,600-hectare coral reef designated as a conservation area. Nonetheless, the presence of this conservation area does not inherently ensure its sustainability. Unsustainable fishing practices, including overfishing and the utilization of damaging fishing gear, continue to pose a significant danger to the coral reefs and marine ecosystems surrounding Weh Island.²⁸

The readily accessible Iboih Beach tourism destination contributes to a continual rise in visitor numbers. The many tourism activities, while advantageous to the community's economy, also affect the environment, particularly concerning waste management issues. The rise in visitor numbers to Iboih Beach, attributed to improved accessibility, has regrettably been accompanied by a surge in rubbish accumulation. Public understanding on the significance of preserving environmental cleanliness remains inadequate, as does their involvement in environmental empowerment initiatives. This poses a significant threat to the viability of Iboih Beach as a tourist destination. The

²⁶ Pemerintah Aceh. *BPBA Aceh Catat Penurunan Signifikan Kejadian Bencana pada Semester Pertama 2024*. Diakses: <https://www.acehprov.go.id/berita/kategori>. (2024)

²⁷ Walhi. *Aceh Bertaburan Masalah Lingkungan Hidup*. Diakses: <https://www.walhi.or.id/aceh-bertaburan-masalah-lingkungan-hidup>. 2017

²⁸ Setyawati, L. R., et.al., "Implementasi konsep ekonomi biru dalam pembangunan masyarakat pesisir di kota Sabang," *Jurnal Education and Development* 9, No. 4 (2021).

primary impediments to achieving sustainable tourism at Iboih Beach are insufficient public awareness and engagement in environmental cleanup efforts.²⁹

Alongside the Sabang City region, East Aceh Regency is likewise facing environmental contamination. Environmental pollution transpires when human activities introduce dangerous compounds into the environment in quantities that surpass safe thresholds. This may harm the environment and jeopardize human health..³⁰

Waste generated by industry, hospitals, and families is a primary contributor to pollution. B3 waste is the most hazardous category of waste due to its inclusion of harmful compounds that can harm the environment and human health. B3 garbage generated by PT. MEDCO E&P Malaka Blok A has resulted in environmental contamination in its operational vicinity. A definitive indication of environmental pollution is the persistent presence of unpleasant scents that damage public health.³¹

This indicates that the company's industrial operations have adversely affected the environment and the local community. Prior to the establishment of PT. MEDCO E&P Malaka Blok A, the inhabitants of Seuneubok Cina Village had not had issues with unpleasant odors. Residents now assume that the unpleasant stench is attributable to a gas leak resulting from the company's operations. This indicates that industrial presence might adversely affect the neighboring community, resulting in health issues.

B3 garbage generated by PT. MEDCO E&P Malaka Block A has resulted in environmental contamination in its operational vicinity. A definitive indication of environmental pollution is the pervasive bad stench that compromises public health.

According to Government Regulation No. 29 of 1986, air pollution may result from several human activities that alter air quality. Part. MEDCO E&P Malaka Block A, as an entity in the energy sector, is obligated to uphold air quality in its operational vicinity. Nonetheless, the purported air pollution surrounding the company indicates that this responsibility has not been entirely met.

In addition to East Aceh, Langsa City also faces environmental issues, specifically trash management. Inadequate garbage management constitutes a significant issue, particularly in densely populated metropolitan regions. The community's perception of trash as mere refuse leads to a waste management approach that prioritizes landfill disposal. This strategy not only generates

²⁹ Erniati, E., et.al., "Sosialisasi Gerakan Bersih Pantai Sebagai Upaya Mengurangi Sampah di Desa Iboih Kecamatan Sukakarya Kota Sabang," *Jurnal Solusi Masyarakat Dikara* 3, No. 1 (2023).

³⁰ Angga, A., et.al., "Kemampuan Adaptasi Masyarakat Terhadap Pencemaran Udara Akibat Aktivitas Tambang dari Pt. Medco Ep Malaka Blok A di Desa Seuneubok Cina, Kecamatan Indra Makmu, Kabupaten Aceh Timur," *Jurnal Pendidikan Geosfer* 5, No. 1 (2020).

³¹ Angga, A., et.al., Kemampuan Adaptasi Masyarakat Terhadap Pencemaran Udara.

environmental issues, including greenhouse gas emissions, but also incurs substantial management expenditures. To address this issue, modifications in community behavior and the establishment of an improved waste management system are essential.³²

Langsa City possesses existing regional regulations concerning trash management. The Qanun Number 3 of 2014 for Langsa City delineates the significance of waste management, particularly in regions undergoing swift population expansion like Langsa City. The growth in population and community activities affects the rise in garbage generation. If inadequately managed, garbage can pose significant environmental and health issues.³³

Waste management must adhere to specific principles, including accountability, sustainability, and advantages.³⁴ Waste management must adhere to specific principles, including accountability, sustainability, and advantages. Waste management include reduction, reuse, and recycling, alongside waste handling, which involves sorting, collection, transportation, processing, and final disposal. The participation of garbage organizations and community groups is crucial in the waste management initiatives in Langsa City, alongside the government's role. By engaging multiple stakeholders, the aim is to achieve integrated and comprehensive waste management, thereby successfully addressing trash-related issues. The primary aim of this waste management is to safeguard public health, protect the environment, and generate economic value from trash.³⁵

Future leaders of Aceh must possess the competence to address the environmental issues that have persisted to the recent times. The involvement of six local Aceh parties in the 2024 Election demonstrates a dedication to democratization and popular sovereignty. The involvement of local parties in promoting environmental sustainability in Aceh must be enhanced. Local parties possess significant potential to articulate the concerns of the populace regarding environmental issues, including natural resource management, pollution, and climate change. Consequently, local parties can facilitate the achievement of sustainable development that harmonizes economic, social, and environmental dimensions.³⁶

³² Asiyah, N. "Kebijakan Pemerintah Kota Langsa Terhadap Pengelolaan Sampah Dalam Memenuhi Prinsip Good Environmental Governance," *Jurnal Hukum Samudra Keadilan*, 14, No. 2 (2019).

³³ Qanun Kota Langsa Nomor 3 Tahun 2014 tentang Pengeloaan Sampah.

³⁴ Lazarus, R. J. *The making of environmental law*. University of Chicago Press. (2023). Huang, J., & Hartemink, A. E. Soil and environmental issues in sandy soils. *Earth-Science Reviews*, 208, 103295. (2020).

³⁵ Asiyah, N. Kebijakan Pemerintah Kota Langsa Terhadap Pengelolaan Sampah.

³⁶ Janah, K., "The Role of Aceh Local Parties in the 2024 General Election in Realizing Democratization," *Volksgeist: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum Dan Konstitusi*, (2023).

Importance of Environmental Conservation in Aceh Pilkada Discourse and Sustainable Development

The control of environmental protection, as outlined in the law on Environmental Protection and Management, has grown problematic due to the overlap between public policy laws and other field elements, resulting in several environmental issues. The issue of conflicting regulatory policies necessitates a revision of environmental protection laws to ensure that field implementation aligns with established rules.³⁷

The government has faced numerous hurdles in promoting environmental urgency to facilitate sustainable growth. Environmental concerns in the regions frequently receive insufficient prioritization due to constrained authority and budgetary allocations, while education and religion predominantly shape the vision and goal of the regional government in Aceh.³⁸ The budget lacks realism, as 20% is allocated for educational requirements and an additional 10% for healthcare. The allotment of required Gampong money is set at 10%, hence precluding the provision of monies for environmental issues. In the vision and mission, the matters of education and religion are the most salient in Aceh. Despite not being referenced in the vision and mission, the budget remains extant. Environmental concerns are more suitably addressed in the Aceh province.³⁹

The government similarly encounters this issue, specifically the department responsible for sanitation and environmental matters; trash management policies in Central Aceh continue to have difficulties, particularly with the funding for landfills and trash transportation expenses, in addition to enhancing public knowledge of waste management. Furthermore, in tourism regions like the administration of Laut Tawar Lake, agency responsibilities remain fragmented, with environmental oversight limited to waste management, while other functions, such as land use and community engagement, are distributed among multiple agencies.⁴⁰ The primary concerns are the management of funds and waste issues surrounding the lake, emphasizing the necessity of the regent's willingness to address these challenges.⁴¹

Politics are influenced by relationships and interests, as well as reliance on the conscience and integrity of leaders in fulfilling their responsibilities.⁴² The

³⁷Aswandi Aswandi, "Interpretasi Pemikiran Hukum Kritis Terhadap Kebijakan Perlindungan Lingkungan Hidup Dalam Hukum Positif di Indonesia," *Tanjungpura Law Journal* 6, No. 2 (2022), p. 163

³⁸Interview with Edi Kurniawan, deputy chair of DPRK Central Aceh Regency, 3 July 2023.

³⁹Interview with the deputy chair of DPRK Central Aceh Regenc .

⁴⁰Interview with the head of environmental service, Central Aceh Regency, 3 July 2023.

⁴¹Interview with the secretary of environmental service, Central Aceh Regency, 3 July 2023.

⁴²Harper, C., & Snowden, M. *Environment and society: Human perspectives on environmental issues*. Routledge. (2017). Hansel, H. T. *Regulasi Cerdas (Smart Regulation)*

execution of campaign promises is sometimes obstructed by intricate central regulations and procedures, highlighting the necessity for punishments in the proposed political commitments to guarantee their fulfillment. Political transformation is frequently instigated by conflict and novel commitments; nonetheless, the actualization of change often remains consistent.⁴³

Consequently, Indonesia, recognized for its abundant natural and environmental resources, plays a pivotal role in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the context of sustainable development focused on environmental protection and climate change, teamwork and partnerships are essential for achieving objectives. The significance of collaboration among the government, local/indigenous people, and the private sector to guarantee inclusive and sustainable forest management.⁴⁴ Conversely, to facilitate sustainable development concerning the legal preservation and utilization of natural resources, the commitment of all stakeholders is essential. Environmental law is interconnected with other legal frameworks, and its enforcement is frequently obstructed by conflicts of interest between economic objectives and environmental sustainability. Inadequate law enforcement and insufficient commitment from relevant stakeholders constitute the primary challenges.⁴⁵

Environmental challenges in Aceh encounter numerous institutional and political impediments that obstruct their prioritization in regional initiatives.⁴⁶ The distribution of an increased budget for education, health, and Gampong funds has constrained resources for the environmental sector, necessitating that this issue be addressed at the provincial level. garbage and environmental management in Central Aceh encounters difficulties, particularly regarding landfill financing, garbage transportation, and inter-agency collaboration, exemplified by the fragmented management of Lake Laut Tawar.

Alongside policy and budget considerations, political dynamics can affect the execution of environmental regulations. Political interests and central rules frequently obstruct the fulfillment of campaign promises, highlighting the necessity for a penalty mechanism to enhance accountability for political

Sebagai Bagian Atau Perspektif Baru Dari Penegakan Hukum Lingkungan Di Indonesia. *JISIP (Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Pendidikan)*, 6(4). (2022).

⁴³Interview with Muhammad Nur, the member of the East Aceh DPRK, Gerindra Faction, July 1, 2023. Interview with Emma Zalmi, the member of the East Aceh DPRK, Democrat Faction, July 1, 2023.

⁴⁴ Khairul Amri and Sinta Ningrum, "Sustainable Forestry Policy: Indonesia's Adaptation in Supporting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)," E3S Web of Conferences 611 (2025).

⁴⁵ Yuna Salsabila, et.al., "Analisis Keterkaitan Hukum Pertambangan dan Hukum Lingkungan dalam Pengelolaan Sumber Daya Alam Berkelanjutan," *Indonesian Journal of Law and Justice* 2, No. 2 (2024), p. 6.

⁴⁶ Nuribadah Nuribadah et al. "The Existence of The Aceh Government In Reducing Aceh's Forest Damage." *Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Policy* (2022).

commitments.⁴⁷ Consequently, a more robust commitment from local governments and political leaders is essential to incorporate environmental challenges into the development agenda, rather than allowing them to remain a disregarded topic.

Conclusion

Environmental protection is a critical concern under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in Indonesia. The primary prerequisite for development is the sustainable management of natural resources, including clean and inexpensive energy, climate change mitigation, and the preservation of marine and terrestrial ecosystems. The worldwide environmental catastrophe, characterized by unpredictable climate change, jeopardizes the future of both the planet and humanity. This study concludes that environmental conservation for sustainable growth is vital. The primary criterion for future sustainable development is the extent to which a country, including Indonesia, is committed to environmental protection. Moreover, environmental challenges in Aceh are intricate issues necessitating comprehensive and lasting solutions for implementation in governmental policies. In the realm of legal policy, the government serves as the principal entity in enforcing legal regulations, necessitating active engagement from all stakeholders to shape community and private sector legal conduct, which is essential for achieving sustainable development in Aceh. Researchers advocate for the government to incorporate environmental issues into the educational curriculum, reflecting efforts to enhance public knowledge of environmental significance from an early age. To ensure the effective attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) concerning environmental preservation.

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