

Grebeg Susuk Wangan: a river conservation based on local wisdom in Gondang Village, Kendal Regency

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Abstract. Local wisdom in the spring has an important role in maintaining and preserving the spring in Gondang Village. The emergence of local wisdom is based on developing traditions and conservation values in the region. In 2019, Gondang won the title as the Proklamasi Utama at the national level and is currently in the process of submitting it to Proklamasi Lestari Village. One of the programs carried out by Gondang Village is carried out to maintain the river based on local wisdom called Grebeg Susuk Wangan. The method used in this research is literature study, observation and interview. The results showed that the Grebeg Susuk Wangan is done once a year, namely on Friday Wage between February and March. There are several events in the Grebeg Susuk Wangan conducted by the residents of Gondang Village, namely environmental gatherings, craft exhibitions, art performances, and planting hard trees. At present, the partnership in implementing Grebeg Susuk Wangan is still limited to local individual organizations, institutions and communities. Therefore, suggestions that can be given to the Gondang Village Government are 1) partnering with companies as a form of CSR, 2) inviting and involving Adiwiyata schools in its implementation, and 3) inviting journalists to cover activities.

1. Introduction

The interest of the community in maintaining biodiversity both for Indonesia and the whole world becomes important and must be directed in the long term. Improvement of human welfare is based on good management of natural resources, on the contrary to the adverse effects that will be felt by humans due to the management of natural resources that are not good. Water is an abundant natural resource on this earth and is a major component for all creatures. Without water, humans, animals, and plants will experience growth disturbance, health, productivity, and threatened its existence [1]. Current climate change is also influenced by the presence of water which is the main source of human needs for life [2]. Food security for humans will be difficult to realize if the amount of available water is inadequate [3].

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Lately, in many regions in Indonesia experiencing water crisis due to climate change. Many water sources are either dry or misused, so the sustainability of the spring is not always maintained. This condition makes the government to issue Law No. 37 of 2014 concerning Conservation of Land and Water. Soil and water conservation is interpreted as an effort to protect, restore, improve and maintain the function of land on land in accordance with the ability and allotment of land to support sustainable development and sustainable living. The implementation of soil and water conservation must be based on participatory principles, integration, balance, fairness, expediency, local wisdom, and sustainability [4].

People in Gondang Village, Limbangan District have different perceptions in preserving natural resources, especially water availability. The community together with the village apparatus together interpret water as a natural resource that must be maintained and preserved. Local wisdom-based conservation is carried out in the area around the water source they do to prevent damage and reduced water availability due to its vital role for agriculture in Gondang Village.

Local wisdom is an important thing that must be considered to support environmental protection and management activities [5]. It is listed in Law No. 32 of 2009 concerning Environmental Protection and Management, that these activities must be integrated with local wisdom that prioritizes the sustainability of natural resources, the welfare of the population, and the ecological conditions of the region in the planning, utilization, control, maintenance, supervision and law enforcement activities [6].

Gondang Village Region, Limbangan District, has a wellspring which is vital for the agriculture sector. At present the largest utilization of these springs is largely to support the sustainability of the community's agricultural sector. If the source of the spring is problematic both in terms of quality and quantity it will affect the agricultural output of the Gondang Village community.

Local wisdom in the spring has an important role in maintaining and preserving the spring in the village of Gondang. The emergence of local wisdom is based on developing traditions and conservation values in the region. This is what makes one of the steps to maintain the source of springs in Gondang Village can be maintained and sustainable until today.

2. Method

This research is a qualitative research with data collection method through literature study, observation and interview. Literature study is carried out by gathering literature related to the topic to be studied. Observation was carried out by observing the behavior and habits of the Gondang Village community in managing the environment. Interviews were conducted with the Head and Apparatus of Gondang Village regarding the background, essence of the activities, and conservation practices carried out.

3. Result and Discussion

Gondang Village is one of the villages in Limbangan District, Kendal Regency. This village consists of 4 dusun, namely Dusun Krajan Gondang, Dusun Penggik, Dusun Nambangan, and Dusun Beku. In 2019, Gondang Village won the title as the National Proklamasi Utama Village at the national level and is currently being submitted to Proklamasi Lestari Village. One of the programs carried out by Gondang Village is carried out to maintain the river based on local wisdom called Grebeg Susuk Wangan.

3.1 History of Grebeg Susuk Wangan

Grebeg Susuk Wangan is an annual tradition carried out by Gondang Village residents to guard and preserve rivers. This tradition was carried out again after the village head and residents discussed the things that can be done to protect the environment. Initially, the village head felt that as a village upstream, the condition of the water body in Gondang Village would affect the condition of the water body downstream. Contaminated upstream water bodies will exacerbate the condition of existing water bodies in downstream areas. Departing from this awareness, finally the village head and residents sat together to discuss what contribution they would make to reduce pollution in the upstream area. Residents and village elders then sparked a tradition that had been carried out by their ancestors in Gondang Village, namely Susuk Wangan.

The tradition of Susuk Wangan has a long and meaningful history. Initially, this tradition was carried out as a form of expression of farmers' gratitude for the abundant water. The community believes that in ancient times, there were 3 religious leaders named Sunan Bromo who cut stones at the Tukung Dam with his staff so that water from the dam could irrigate rice fields. This is reinforced by the presence of large stones which are split into two in the Tukung weir. In addition, he also planted bamboo alongside the river where the bamboo turned into a bamboo clump. These bamboo clumps are planted to prevent erosion and strengthen river embankments. Based on this story the village head, elders, finally decided to revive the tradition of Susuk Wangan and package it to become more modern. By the village chief of Gondang, this tradition was later renamed Grebeg Susuk Wangan. Grebek is defined as the reappearance of the spirit of environmental preservation while Susuk Wangan is defined as a movement to preserve river bodies.

3.2 Implementation of Grebeg Susuk Wangan

Grebeg Susuk Wangan is held once a year, on Friday Wage between February and March. There are several events in the Grebeg Susuk Wangan conducted by the residents of Gondang Village, namely environmental gatherings, craft exhibitions, art performances, and planting hard trees. In environmental gatherings, the village government invites religious or environmental leaders to give lectures on the importance of protecting and preserving the environment. This is done to increase the enthusiasm of citizens in protecting and preserving the environment and providing innovative environmental conservation efforts.

The handicrafts and MSMEs of Gondang Village are also displayed in the Grebeg Susuk Wangan. Residents who have products from their businesses can exhibit and market their products during the event. The superior products of Gondang Village include processed tiwul, herbal medicine, powdered herbs, vegetables, and fruit. In addition to exhibitions, art performances are also held to preserve local culture and educate young people about local culture.

Hard tree planting is carried out by cooperating with the Kendal Environmental Agency, Perhutani, environmental lovers organizations, the Perhutani Office, and individual communities who have a high environmental concern. In the Grebeg Susuk Wangan tradition, Gondang villagers and partners can plant 1,500-6,000 hard tree seedlings consisting of ketepeng, mahogany, saman, pine, and other perennials. This type of tree was chosen because of its root ability to store water and prevent erosion. In Gondang Village there are 40 springs

that are scattered throughout the village. By planting hard plants, residents hope to preserve the springs so that the amount and discharge of the water does not decrease.

In addition to the above program, Grebeg Susuk Wangan also presented a community service program to clean up the river, followed by a joint prayer led by village elders. In a joint prayer event, residents bring supporting a cooked whole and seasoned chicken. Tukung chicken is a type of chicken that does not have an anus. In addition to seasoning, the chicken must also be roasted using bamboo. The use of supporting chicken is derived from the word "telikung" which is interpreted by the community as a prohibition to speak carelessly in the river area. The obligation to roast chicken with bamboo is a symbol of the message for planting. According to the story that developed in the community, formerly Sunan Bromo stuck bamboo on the edge of the river which then transformed into a bamboo clump. This story is interpreted as a message for replanting.

Another food component that must be present in a joint prayer event is bondet rice. Bondet rice is a mixture of glutinous rice and crackle rice. By Sunan Bromo, this rice is considered a symbol of harmony. By the village community, this rice is considered as a symbol of harmony in the management and preservation of the environment. Residents hope that this tradition can increase enthusiasm and awareness in environmental management and preservation. In addition, Grebeg Susuk Wangan is also expected to preserve local culture and wisdom, foster a sense of unity and unity, and improve the economy of citizens.

4. Conclusion and recommendation

4.1 Conclusion

Grebeg Susuk Wangan is a movement to bring up the spirit of the preservation of river bodies which is motivated by ancestral stories. This tradition is carried out once a year, namely on Friday Wage between February and March. The implementation of the Susuk Wangan Grebeg was motivated by the Gondang Village Head's awareness of the upstream village. Pollution that occurs in the upstream area will worsen pollution in the downstream area. Departing from this awareness, finally the village head and the community held the Susuk Wangan tradition which was renamed the Grebeg Susuk Wangan.

The tradition of the Grebeg Susuk Wangan is done by cleansing river bodies and prayer together as a core event. After that, an environmental workshop, exhibition of UMKM products and products, an art performance, and planting hard trees. The planting of hard trees is carried out as an effort to preserve springs in Gondang Village, which is estimated to reach 40 springs. Every year, Gondang Village can plant 1,500 - 6,000 hard trees consisting of mahogany, ketepeng, pine, saman, etc.

4.2 Recommendation

Based on the results and discussion above, the following is a suggestion that the author can propose to the Gondang Village government for the implementation of Grebeg Susuk Wangan further:

1. Offering partnerships with companies in Kendal and surrounding areas as a form of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
2. Inviting Adiwiyata schools in Kendal and surrounding areas to be involved in the Susuk Wangan tradition

3. Partner with journalists to publicize village activities. This is done to transmit the spirit of environmental conservation to the wider community and form the image of the village as a pro-environment village

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