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# Implications of Environmental Politics in Collaborative Governance and Community Empowerment through Corporate Social Responsibility: A Case Study in Juwiring Village

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**Abstract:** This research aims to analyze the implications of environmental politics through a collaborative governance approach in the implementation of PT Tirta Investama's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program in Juwiring Village, Klaten Regency. This qualitative research uses a case study approach, with data collection methods through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. The selection of informants used a purposive sampling technique, while data analysis adopted an interactive analysis model. Despite facing challenges related to transparency and coordination, collaborative governance has had a transformative impact on environmental politics in Juwiring Village, especially in terms of strengthening local institutions and integrating CSR programs with regional development. This case study shows a significant transformation in the power relations of natural resource management, from a top-down approach to a more participatory and democratic one, manifested in the formation of the Irrigation Volunteer Forum (FRI) involving various stakeholders. Klaten BAPPEDALITBANG plays an important role as a facilitator, ensuring effective collaboration between the government, private sector and the community. Community empowerment programs through Kelompok Wanita Tani (KWT) and Kelompok Tani (POKTAN) successfully increased the community's capacity in sustainable agriculture. The research concludes that a collaborative approach has the potential to create comprehensive and sustainable solutions to environmental and social challenges. There is potential to deepen the analysis of more specific challenges in the implementation of CSR programs as well as how various stakeholders handle conflicts that may arise in the collaborative process.

**Keyword:** Environmental Politics, Collaborative Governance, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Community Empowerment, Juwiring Village.

## INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of environmental politics in the context of sustainable development have undergone a significant transformation, especially in terms of approaches to natural resource management and community empowerment (Ansell & Gash, 2008). The paradigm shift from a

top-down approach to collaborative governance is an interesting phenomenon to study, especially in the implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs in Indonesia. Collaborative governance is an approach that emphasizes multi-stakeholder cooperation in resource management and sustainable development, involving the active role of government, private sector, and society (Emerson et al., 2012).

Indonesia has shown a serious commitment in regulating corporate social and environmental responsibility through Government Regulation No. 47/2012. This regulation not only requires companies to implement CSR programs, but also encourages effective collaboration between various stakeholders in environmental management (Octaviani et al., 2022). Astri (2012) emphasized that CSR is a concept that includes the promotion of sustainable economic development and the improvement of the quality of people's lives through the active involvement of companies. The implementation of this policy is becoming increasingly important given the complexity of the environmental challenges faced, especially in the context of water resource management and sustainable agriculture (Kraft, 2021).

One concrete manifestation of collaborative governance in environmental politics can be observed through PT Tirta Investama's CSR program in Juwiring Village, Klaten Regency. This program demonstrates how multi-stakeholder collaboration can produce effective solutions to environmental and social problems (Purwanto & Zaenuri, 2021). Through the establishment of the Forum Relawan Irigasi (FRI) and the implementation of a regenerative agriculture program, this initiative has created a model of community empowerment that focuses on water resource conservation and sustainable agriculture.

This phenomenon is interesting to study because it represents a paradigm shift in environmental politics, from a hierarchical approach to a more collaborative and participatory governance model (Bäckstrand et al., 2021). Sumodiningrat (2009) asserts that community empowerment is a social action that enables communities to organize themselves to address social and environmental problems. In this context, CSR programs are not only an instrument for fulfilling legal obligations, but also a catalyst for the creation of collaborative governance in environmental management (Wijaya & Furqan, 2020).

The urgency of this research is heightened by the complex environmental challenges, particularly in managing water resources and ensuring food security (Resosudarmo & Abdurohman, 2018). PT Tirta Investama's CSR program in Juwiring Village, which combines elements of water conservation, sustainable agriculture, and community empowerment, serves as a living laboratory to examine the effectiveness of collaborative governance in environmental politics. Hamid (2018) highlighted the importance of empowerment as an instrument to increase community capacity in managing natural resources sustainably.

This research aims to analyze the implications of environmental politics through a collaborative governance approach in the implementation of CSR programs, focusing on a case study in Juwiring Village. The analysis will include the dynamics of relationships between stakeholders, the effectiveness of community empowerment programs, and their impact on environmental sustainability (Murdiyarso et al., 2019). Through this study, a more comprehensive understanding of the role of collaborative governance in creating sustainable solutions to environmental and social challenges in Indonesia is expected.

The purpose of this research is to analyze and find out the implications of environmental politics through collaborative governance in CSR programs and community empowerment in Juwiring Village, Klaten Regency.

## **METHOD**

This research uses a qualitative approach to understand the phenomenon of collaborative governance in the implementation of CSR programs in Juwiring Village in depth. Creswell & Creswell (2017) explain that qualitative research allows for in-depth exploration and understanding of the meanings that individuals or groups attach to social problems. The

type of research used is a case study, which according to Yin (2018) is an empirical investigation that investigates contemporary phenomena in depth in the context of real life.

The research was conducted in Juwiring Village, Klaten Regency, which was chosen because it is the location of PT Tirta Investama's CSR program implementation that applies a collaborative governance approach in water resource management and sustainable agriculture. Data collection was conducted during the period March to April 2024.

This research uses two types of data that complement each other. Primary data was obtained directly from the field through in-depth interviews with key informants, participatory observation of Irrigation Volunteer Forum activities, and documentation of CSR program activities. Meanwhile, secondary data was collected from various PT Tirta Investama CSR program documents, reports on the implementation of community empowerment programs, village statistical data, and documentation of relevant activities.

Selection of informants using purposive sampling technique, with a focus on individuals directly involved in CSR programs and collaborative governance, as described by Creswell & Creswell (2017). Key informants in this study include representatives of PT Tirta Investama in the position of CSR Manager, representatives of Juwiring Village Government, Irrigation Volunteer Forum administrators, program beneficiary farmers, and community empowerment program facilitators.

Data analysis adopted the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014: 31-33), which consists of data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The data condensation process followed Wolcott (1994) guidance on qualitative data transformation. Bazeley (2021) emphasize the importance of a systematic coding process in this stage. Data presentation adopted the principle of thick description proposed by Geertz (in Denzin, 2019) to provide a rich context for the research findings.

The validity of the research was ensured through the triangulation technique described by Flick (2018) as the use of multiple sources and methods to verify data. Member checking was applied following the recommendations of Lincoln & Guba (2018) to ensure the accuracy of data interpretation. Peer debriefing was conducted as suggested by Creswell & Poth (2016) to gain an external perspective on the research process.

The research was conducted in four stages following the model developed by (Maxwell, 2013). Tracy (2024) emphasizes the importance of systematic planning in each stage of qualitative research. These stages include preparation, data collection, analysis and report writing, taking into account the iterative principles described by (Saldaña, 2021).

This research acknowledges limitations in terms of geographical coverage focused on one village, a relatively short observation period, and a focus on one specific CSR program. These limitations are expected to be taken into consideration for future research.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Transformation of Power Relations in Natural Resource Management**

The dynamics of environmental politics in Juwiring Village demonstrate a significant transformation in power relations, particularly in how stakeholders interact and influence natural resource management. Referring to the concept of Kraft (2021), environmental politics includes complex interactions between regulation, power, and the interests of various actors in natural resource management. In Juwiring Village, this transformation stems from the systematic identification of environmental problems by Klaten BAPPEDALITBANG, specifically related to water resources management in the Pusur Sub-watershed area.

“BAPPEDALITBANG showed data on water problems in the Pusur Sub-watershed area at the musrenbang forum. The focus was on water availability in the watershed area, which includes the upstream, middle and downstream areas of the Bengawan Solo river,” said Rama Zakaria, CSR Manager of PT Tirta Investama Klaten. The identification of this problem is the

starting point of a paradigm shift from a fragmented sectoral approach to an integrated approach involving multiple parties.

This paradigm shift is in line with the collaborative governance theory proposed by Ansell & Gash (2018), where resource management is no longer dominated by a single actor, but involves the active participation of various stakeholders. This is manifested in the establishment of a formal structure for water resources management through the Forum of Irrigation Volunteers (FRI). “These regulations, known as Village Regulations or *Perkades*, are each contained in an official document that includes detailed provisions for each village”, explains Ika Kesaktian Putri, Head of Welfare and Services of Juwiring Village.

The formalization of community roles through Village Regulations reflects a fundamental shift in environmental politics. In contrast to conventional top-down environmental management models, this approach provides formal legitimacy for community participation in decision-making. This is in line with the concept of community empowerment proposed by Sumodiningrat (2009), where the community is no longer the object of development, but an active subject in natural resource management.

### **Democratization of Environmental Management through Collaborative governance**

The implementation of collaborative governance in Juwiring Village has opened up democratic space in environmental management through the establishment of multi-stakeholder forums. “BAPPEDALITBANG serves as a liaison between the government, the company, and the community, ensuring that CSR programs are in line with local needs by conducting assessments and gathering community input,” said Sutrisno, Head of Economic Affairs at Klaten BAPPEDALITBANG.

This democratization process is strengthened through regular dialogue mechanisms involving all stakeholders. “A face-to-face dialog forum is held by the Juwiring Klaten Village Government every 35 days with all parties involved in the village empowerment process,” said Ika Kesaktian Putri. This regular dialog reflects the principle of face-to-face dialogue proposed by Ansell & Gash (2018) as a fundamental element of collaborative governance.

### **Redistribution of Power in Natural Resource Management**

Redistribution of power in natural resource management in Juwiring Village is manifested through various collaborative mechanisms. “Collaboration between the Juwiring Village Government and related parties in the empowerment program was triggered by various factors. First, the decline in land cover that was originally used for agriculture due to land conversion into settlements, industries, and roads. Second, the lack of conservation efforts around the land targeted by the CSR program. Third, the lack of integration between conservation programs and village or district government programs,” explained Ika Kesaktian Putri.

Responding to these challenges, PT Tirta Investama adopts a comprehensive collaborative approach. “PT Tirta Investama, as a CSR implementer, adopts the pentahelix concept, which emphasizes the importance of partnerships among government, private sector, academia, community, and media in empowerment initiatives”, said Titin Marliyana from NGO Gita Pertiwi. This statement shows the transformation of the CSR approach from the traditional philanthropy model to the participatory empowerment model as suggested by (Astri, 2012).

The process of power redistribution is also evident in the formation of a water management structure that involves the community. “FRI consists of farmers, sub-district heads, and village heads from seven villages in Juwiring sub-district. They work together in maintaining the irrigation channels of Bendung Bagor, which has resulted in a more equitable distribution of water to all rice fields downstream,” explains Rama Zakaria. This structure provides formal legitimacy for community participation in the management of vital infrastructure.

### **Empowerment as an Instrument of Environmental Politics**

The community empowerment program in Juwiring Village demonstrates how environmental politics can be implemented through strengthening local capacity. “The POKTAN members have successfully improved their knowledge and skills in farm management, especially by adopting organic farming practices. The products of these practices include vegetable fertilizers and pesticides. However, there are some failures that occur, such as rat infestation due to the unscheduled planting system in the entire Juwiring sub-district”, said Edy Sumarsono.

The Women Farmers Group (KWT) plays an important role in the transformation of agricultural practices. “economy of residents by increasing income levels and enhancing food security. The enthusiasm for farming increases, especially among housewives, which then contributes to economic improvement. They are taught to grow various types of vegetables such as long beans, tomatoes, eggplants, mustard greens, oyong, chilies, and others without using excessive pesticides”, explains Sri Sugiarti. This practice reflects the integration of economic empowerment and environmental conservation.

NGO Gita Pertiwi acts as a facilitator in the empowerment process by organizing community workshops, providing resources, and fostering partnerships among stakeholders. “We collaborate with various stakeholders to direct empowerment activities that focus on environmental conservation and fight for justice and gender equality in Juwiring Village. The form of collaboration that we do is to mobilize various farmer group organizations and communities who voluntarily want to participate in the development of Juwiring Village,” said Titin Marliyana.

### **Institutionalization of Participatory Environmental Politics**

The institutionalization process of participatory environmental politics in Juwiring Village is strengthened through various formal and informal mechanisms. “In 2022, POKTAN focused on rice processing and applied the knowledge learned from the NGO Gita Pertiwi. We help village farmers who are interested in applying better and sustainable farming techniques”, explains Edy Sumarsono, demonstrating how local knowledge is integrated into sustainable farming practices.

Klaten's BAPPEDALITBANG plays an important role in ensuring the sustainability of the program. “During the empowerment process, we strive for a two-way dialog. These dialogs include during planning, implementation, training, and dialogs with other external parties such as the agriculture and tourism offices to improve the economy of Juwiring Village,” explained Rama Zakaria.

### **Challenges in Implementing Collaborative governance**

The implementation of collaborative governance in environmental politics in Juwiring Village faces several significant challenges. Klaten BAPPEDALITBANG identified challenges in the aspects of transparency and access to information. “The level of openness in terms of information disclosure and transparency in the collaboration process between the Klaten government and companies undertaking CSR responsibilities can be accessed through the CSR forum website.

However, the website is still under development so information related to the budget and budget channels, especially by PT Tirta Investama, is incomplete”, Sutrisno said.

Coordination between stakeholders is also a challenge. “The obstacle we encountered in the collaboration process in Juwiring Village was the difficulty in arranging a schedule that was convenient for the villagers. We have to pay attention to the busy schedules and needs of each villager so that empowerment activities can run effectively”, explained Titin Marliyana from NGO Gita Pertiwi.



### **Transformative Impact on Local Environmental Politics**

The collaborative governance program has had a transformative impact on environmental politics at the local level. “The collaboration between BAPPEDALITBANG and PT Tirta Investama brings a number of significant benefits. First, it strengthens BAPPEDALITBANG's role in the development of development programs at the local level. Second, it enhances BAPPEDALITBANG's research and analysis capacity. Third, it ensures the integration of CSR programs with the direction of regional development,” Sutrisno said.

Positive impacts are also seen at the community level. “The collaboration between the Juwiring Village Government and PT Tirta Investama has a significant impact on village progress and community welfare. This collaboration enables the development of better agricultural infrastructure, increased access to modern agricultural technology, and increased income through increased agricultural productivity”, explained Ika Kesaktian Putri.

### **Lessons Learned and Prospects for Sustainability**

The experience of Juwiring Village provides valuable lessons on the implementation of collaborative governance in environmental politics. “The Juwiring Village Government took a significant part in decision-making regarding the empowerment of Juwiring Village by PT Investama through the NGO Gita Pertiwi. The Juwiring Village Government is not only an information provider or observer, but also plays an active role in the decision-making process, providing input, and ensuring that the interests of the local community are prioritized in every collaborative step,” said Ika Kesaktian Putri.

Program sustainability is guaranteed through strengthening local capacity. “The structure of POKTAN in 2022 consists of 25-30 active members, with me as chairperson, Sasmita as secretary, and Sri Sugiarti as treasurer. The rest become members”, explained Edy Sumarsono, showing the formation of a solid organizational structure for program sustainability.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of research on the implications of environmental politics through collaborative governance in PT Tirta Investama's CSR program in Juwiring Village, several conclusions can be drawn:

The CSR program through a collaborative governance approach has resulted in a significant transformation in environmental politics in Juwiring Village. This transformation can be seen from the change in the pattern of power relations in natural resource management, from a top-down model to a more participatory and democratic one. This is evident from the formation of the Irrigation Volunteer Forum (FRI), which involves seven villages in Juwiring sub-district and is legitimized through a Village Regulation.

BAPPEDALITBANG Klaten plays an important role as a facilitator that bridges the interests of various stakeholders. This role strengthens the implementation of collaborative governance through effective coordination between the government, private sector, and community. Regular dialog forums held every 35 days ensure communication and active participation of all stakeholders in decision-making.

The community empowerment program through Kelompok Wanita Tani (KWT) and POKTAN has successfully increased the community's capacity in environmental management and sustainable agriculture. The knowledge and skills gained through training from NGO Gita Pertiwi have resulted in changes in agricultural practices to be more environmentally friendly, such as the use of organic fertilizers and reduction of pesticides.

Despite facing various challenges such as time coordination and limited access to information, the program has shown success in integrating economic, social, and environmental interests. This success is reflected in increased agricultural productivity, strengthened local institutions, and improved water resource management.

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