

Land Conflicts

Keywords

- > Resource use
- > Building material extraction
- > Zoning
- > Tourism

Instruction and Location

The Karimunjawa National Park (KNP), situated 80 km off central Java's northern coast, is made up of 27 islands (Figure 1). It was the first marine park established in Indonesia in 1986 and has become an important area for conservation and marine biodiversity protection. The KNP is renowned as the 'jewel of the Java Sea' among the emerging Javanese urban middleclass. Around 8,850 people live on the three inhabited islands of Karimun & Kemujan, Nyamuk and Parang that belong to the sub-district of Karimunjawa, Jepara Regency.

The island of Karimunjawa is representative of various islands and coastal areas around the world experiencing rising tensions due to land and resource use conflicts. An important question thus arises, of how to enable biodiversity conservation and the development of local development simultaneously. It is the national vision of the Indonesia's Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy to build and promote Karimunjawa as "the 'Eco - Island Resort of Indonesia'". Unfortunately however, unsustainable land and resource use threaten the likelihood of such plans succeeding (Figures 2-4).

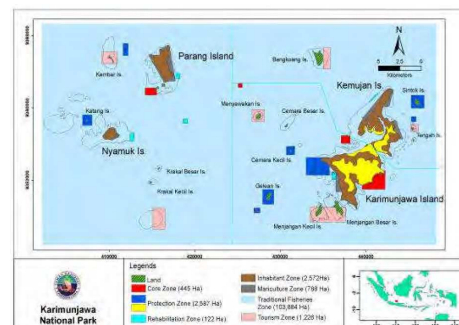


Figure 1: Map of the KNP. Source: Balai Taman Nasional Karimunjawa (2012)

mangrove forest (222,20 ha). To manage and control the human economic activities within these areas, regulation was introduced in form of a 1999 official zoning plan, with rezoning in 2005 and 2012 in response to rapid social and economic changes. Zoning divides the park into core, protected (maritime and terrestrial), utilization, tourism, traditional, mariculture, religious and historical, rehabilitation and residential areas. A doubling of the maritime protection and tourism zone was the outcome of zoning revisions in 2012. Rezoning itself is essential to the adaptive co-management of the KNPA, which uses participative methods of involving locals in park management.

Zoning

Regulations governing activities in the KNP. Key: ✓: permitted; [✓]: permitted only in emergency; x: forbidden; p: prior permit required; n/s: not specified; n/a: not applicable.

	Core zone	Protection zone (marine)	Protection zone (terrestrial)	Utilization zone (terrestrial)	Tourism zone	Traditional use zone	Mariculture use zone	Religious and historical zone	Rehabilitation zone	Residential zone
Area covered (ha)	445	2600	1452	56	2733	100,327	1371	1	68	2572
Fishing (all techniques)	x	x	n/a	n/a	p	✓	x	n/a	✓	n/a
Research	p	p	p	n/a	p	p	p	n/a	p	n/s
Boat transit only	[✓]	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a
Boat transit and anchoring	[✓]	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a
Tourism	x	x	x	n/a	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/s
Restoration and rehabilitation	x	x	x	n/a	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/s
Education	p	p	p	n/a	p	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/s
Traditional and ritual use	p	p	p	n/a	p	✓	✓	✓	✓	n/s

Table 2: Regulations governing activities in the KNP. Campbell et al. (2012)

A doubling of the maritime protection and tourism zone was the outcome of zoning revisions in 2012. Rezoning itself is essential to the adaptive co-management of the KNPA, which uses participative methods of involving locals in park management.

In 1986 the KNP was formally declared a Strict Natural Reserve. Renamed Karimunjawa National Park in 1988, it encompasses an area of 111,635 hectares (ha), marine (1.285,50 ha and terrestrial, including the tropical lowland rain forest (110.117,30 ha) and





Sand extraction for building local infrastructure. Source: P. Dorn

Legal Gap

Although the given zones of the KNP define land use, they lack adequate restrictions on resource use. The tourism zone for example is restricted in terms of tourism activities only. The impacts of large scale resource use by tourism are hidden in the “residential” or “inhabited” zone, where different regulations are applied and development activities like building tourism infrastructure (hotels/homestays/streets...) are on the rise. While those resource intensive activities are restricted to the inhabited zone, their significant impacts endanger the sustainable development and question the promoted “Eco-Tourism”.

The KNPA as a central government authority is responsible for the financial management of the park, yet this gap in regulation effectively paves the way for uncontrolled tourism. The Jepara District Government regulates tourism and development in the residential zone. The lack of a coherent regulatory framework across jurisdictions, along with corruption, allows investors from local to global levels to exploit land and resources unsustainably. Property prices furthermore, are said to be exploding as brokers and investors compete in land-grabbing for tourism.

Environmental impacts

The impacts of uncontrolled tourism are evident and have been addressed by researchers. These relate to:

- Destruction of corals reefs through anchoring and trampling
- Water pollution and landslides from infrastructure and sewage
- Higher pressure on local resources, notably fish, water and electricity
- Waste disposal
- Resource extraction for infrastructure

Domestic and regional tourism have grown rapidly since 2009 and conflicts between the need for biodiversity conservation and local development are intensifying. Well-managed and small-scale Eco-tourism could be part of the solution for the dilemma the island is facing. To identify the potential of Eco-Tourism in Karimunjawa, the four main institutions Jepara District Government, the NGO Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), the Karimunjawa National Park Authority (KNPA) and the Indonesian Tourist Guide Association (the Himpunan Pramuwisata Indonesia, or HPI), published a joint Action Plan for Eco-Tourism.

The SWOT analysis undertaken in that



Figure 2: Clear-cut and sand extraction - a failed tourism project.

Source: P. Dorn

This document should be cited as:

Dorn, Patricia. 2015. Land and resource use conflicts on the Island of Karimunjawa, Indonesia, EJOLT Factsheet No. 29, 3 p.



Figure 3: Mangrove cutting for local building material.
Source: P. Dorn



Figure 4: Waste.
Source: P. Dorn



This publication was developed as a part of the project Environmental Justice Organisations, Liabilities and Trade (EJOLT) (FP7-Science in Society-2010-1). EJOLT aims to improve policy responses to and support collaborative research and action on environmental conflicts through capacity building of environmental justice groups around the world. Visit our free resource library and database at www.ejolt.org or Facebook (www.facebook.com/ejolt) or follow tweets (@EnvJustice) to stay current on latest news and events.

plan is revealing of the tension between local development and biodiversity conservation – it identifies weaknesses such as a “lack of access to transportation” and “lack of tourist infrastructure”, and simultaneously acknowledges the threat of “negative impacts on natural resources”, while seeing “rising numbers of tourists and investors” as “opportunities”. Until now, the question of how to balance the tensions and conflicts over the two distinct pathways for the island has been left unanswered.

More on this case

- Youtube: Zoning and fishing testimonies in the KNP
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=me_CMt95Nrg
- New York Times: “Where fish outnumber phones”
http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/27/travel/indonesias-karimunjawa-is-a-watery-wonderland.html?pagewanted=all&_r=1&_r=1&_r=1
- Wildlife Conservation Society
<http://indonesia.wcs.org/WildPlaces/Karimunjawa.aspx>

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