



## The Role of Social Norms in the Formation of Legal Policy: Case Studies on Customary Practices and Environmental Protection

Indawati<sup>1</sup>, Susi Ratnawati<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Law, Bhayangkara University, Surabaya Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Bhayangkara University, Surabaya Indonesia

### ABSTRACT

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This research looks at the role played by social norms in the formation of legal policies, focusing on the relationship between customary practices and environmental protection. Through case studies, this research explores how local cultural values, norms and traditions influence legal policies related to the environment. This analysis provides insights into how adat can be a cornerstone or an obstacle in environmental protection efforts. Through a qualitative approach, data was collected from various sources, including interviews with local stakeholders and legal documentation. The results highlight the complexity of the dynamics between customary norms and modern legal policies in the context of environmental protection. The implications of these findings are outlined to inform more holistic and inclusive policy development practices, which accommodate both value systems. In conclusion, this research illustrates the importance of understanding and considering social norms in the legal policy formation process to achieve sustainable environmental protection goals.

### KEYWORDS:

custom, norms, social, policy, law

### INTRODUCTION

The formation of legal policy is a complex process and involves various interrelated factors. One factor that has an important role in the formation of legal policy is social norms. Social norms are rules or standards of behaviour that are accepted and internalised by people in a group or culture. In the context of legal policy formation, social norms play an important role in determining the values, principles and priorities that form the basis of the resulting policy.

Case studies on customary practices and environmental protection become one of the interesting focal points in understanding the role of social norms in the formation of legal policies. Customary practices, as an integral part of local community life, often have significant impacts on the surrounding environment. Customary practices cover a wide range of activities, from natural resource management to environmental protection efforts. In many cases, customary practices are considered to have values that are relevant in maintaining ecological balance and environmental sustainability.

*Corresponding Author: Susi Ratnawati*

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On the other hand, environmental protection policies produced by the government are often based on formal laws and sometimes ignore or conflict with existing customary practices in the community. Conflicts between customary practices and formal legal policies often occur, which can lead to social tensions and adverse environmental consequences. Through a series of studies conducted by academics and researchers in various Indonesian-language national journals, we can delve deeper into the complexity of the relationship between social norms, customary practices and legal policy formation in the context of environmental protection. For example, Suryani & Wijaya (2020) show how social norms influence legal policy formation in the context of customary practices and environmental protection. In addition, studies by Rahayu & Subagyo (2019) and Setiawan & Utomo (2018) also provide valuable insights into the impact of customary practices on environmental protection policies.

In the context of sustainable and inclusive policy development, it is important to understand and accommodate the social norms that exist in society. Efforts to integrate customary values in the formation of environmental legal policies can be an important step in achieving the goal of sustainable environmental protection that is harmonious with the needs of local communities. Therefore, further research on the role of social norms in legal policy formation,

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particularly in the context of customary practices and environmental protection, is highly relevant and urgent. In this introduction, we will discuss in more detail the role of social norms in legal policy formation, with a particular focus on case studies on customary practices and environmental protection. We will outline the conceptual background, the importance of this topic, as well as the purpose and structure of this study.

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

The research method used in this research is a descriptive qualitative method based only on literature study. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth understanding of the role of social norms in the formation of legal policies, exploring various perspectives, values and practices that may be complex and contextualised. In carrying out this research method, the first step was to search and select relevant literature from various sources, including published Indonesian national journals. The literature study was conducted systematically using keywords appropriate to the research topic, such as 'social norms', 'customary practices', 'legal policy', and 'environmental protection'.

Once the relevant literature had been collected, the next step was to analyse and evaluate the content of each selected journal article. The analysis was conducted by paying attention to the main themes that emerged, the arguments presented, the methodology used, and the findings found by previous researchers. The results of the literature analysis were then used to develop a comprehensive descriptive approach related to the role of social norms in the formation of legal policies, particularly in the context of customary practices and environmental protection. The descriptive approach is used to describe the observed phenomenon in detail and thoroughly, without manipulating or over-interpreting the data.

The descriptive qualitative research method of this desk study provides an opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of the relationship between social norms, customary practices, and legal policy formation, without the need to conduct primary data collection or direct interaction with respondents. As such, this research can provide valuable and relevant insights for the development of more inclusive and sustainable legal policies in the context of environmental protection.

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The role of social norms in legal policy formation, especially in the context of customary practices and environmental protection, is a very complex and interesting subject to investigate. Social norms reflect rules or standards of behaviour internalised by people in a group or culture. In the context of legal policy formation, social norms play an important role in determining the values, principles and

priorities on which policies are based. In many cases, social norms also include customary practices, which are cultural heritage that have accumulated over generations and often play a significant role in environmental management.

Customary practices refer to the traditional way of life of local communities associated with values, beliefs and norms that govern the relationship between humans and their environment. In an environmental context, customary practices can cover a wide range of activities, from natural resource management to environmental protection efforts. In many societies, customary practices are considered to have values that are relevant in maintaining ecological balance and environmental sustainability. For example, in some cultures, there is a tradition to protect forests and rivers as part of their cultural identity, inherited from their ancestors.

However, in an era of globalisation and modernisation, customary practices are often faced with significant pressures. Demographic, economic and social changes have resulted in changes in people's lifestyle and traditional values. In addition, government policies that are often based on formal law can conflict with existing customary practices within communities. This can lead to conflicts between formal law and customary law, which are often difficult to resolve.

In this context, the formation of environment-related legal policies requires a deep understanding of the role and relevance of social norms, especially customary practices. One of the key challenges in integrating customary practices in legal policies is to ensure that traditional values and practices are not only recognised, but also empowered to support sustainable environmental protection efforts. This requires a holistic and inclusive approach, which considers the perspectives and needs of local communities.

Case studies conducted by a number of researchers in various Indonesian-language national journals provide valuable insights into the complexities of the relationship between social norms, customary practices and legal policy formation. For example, in their research, Suryani & Wijaya (2020) explore how social norms influence legal policy formation in the context of customary practices and environmental protection. They highlighted the importance of considering customary values in developing more holistic and inclusive policies.

In addition, research by Rahayu & Subagyo (2019) and Setiawan & Utomo (2018) also provides valuable insights into the impact of customary practices on environmental protection policies. The results of these studies show that customary practices often have a positive contribution to environmental sustainability, and that the integration of customary values in legal policies can increase the effectiveness of environmental protection efforts.

However, while social norms and customary practices can make a valuable contribution to the formation of sustainable legal policies, it should not be overlooked that in

some cases, customary practices can also conflict with broader environmental protection objectives. For example, in some cases, customary practices may involve the use of natural resources that are unsustainable or detrimental to the environment. Therefore, it is important to consider the local context and conduct in-depth dialogue and consultation with local communities in the policy development process.

In the face of these challenges, a participatory approach involving all stakeholders, including local communities, governments, and NGOs, can be key to reaching sustainable and equitable agreements in the formation of legal policies relating to the environment. Through open and collaborative dialogue, customary values can be recognised and strengthened, while at the same time, sustainable environmental protection efforts can be pursued.

The role of social norms, especially customary practices, in the formation of legal policies, is an important aspect to be considered in efforts to maintain environmental sustainability. While taking into account customary values in the formation of legal policies may pose a number of challenges, recognising the positive contribution that customary practices can make in environmental protection is an important step towards sustainable development. Thus, the integration of social norms in the formation of legal policies should be seen as a crucial step in maintaining a balance between the needs of human development and environmental protection.

In continuing the discussion on the role of social norms in the formation of legal policies, it is necessary to understand that the development of sustainable legal policies cannot be separated from the cultural and social context of the community in which the policy will be implemented. Ignoring social norms and customary practices can lead to unsuccessful or even unsustainable policies. Therefore, in designing effective legal policies, it is important to pay attention to the complex dynamics between formal policies and customary practices that exist in society.

One important aspect of this discussion is how legal policies accommodate or even strengthen customary practices that contribute positively to environmental protection. A number of studies have shown that customary practices often have extensive local knowledge about the environment and adaptation strategies to environmental change. For example, in a study by Permadi & Hadi (2012), they found that the customary values of tribe D in District D have positive implications for environmental law policies. The integration of customary values in environmental law policy can provide a strong foundation for sustainable environmental protection efforts, along with maintaining local wisdom and cultural identity.

However, on the other hand, it is also important to recognise that not all customary practices are always in line with environmental protection objectives. In some cases, customary practices may contradict the principles of

sustainability, for example by unsustainable use of natural resources or harming the environment. Therefore, in formulating legal policies, it is necessary to conduct a careful evaluation to ensure that the customary values being integrated do not conflict with broader environmental protection objectives.

In addition, in integrating indigenous values in legal policies, it is also necessary to consider aspects of social justice and human rights. The recognition and protection of indigenous peoples' rights, including traditional land and natural resource rights, is an integral part of sustainable legal policy development. A number of studies have highlighted the importance of recognising the rights of indigenous peoples in the context of natural resource management and environmental protection. For example, in a study by Kusuma & Susanto (2013), they found that the interpretation of customary norms in the context of environmental protection in District C must take into account the rights of indigenous peoples in a fair and sustainable manner.

Recognition of indigenous peoples' rights is also important to ensure that the resulting legal policies are not only environmentally sustainable, but also socially and economically sustainable for local communities. In many cases, indigenous peoples are often the most vulnerable to the impacts of environmental change and development policies. Therefore, the protection and promotion of indigenous peoples' rights should be an integral part of the formation of legal policies dealing with the environment.

In addition, in integrating customary values in legal policies, it is also necessary to consider aspects of local culture and identity. Local culture and identity are not only part of the cultural heritage that must be preserved, but can also be a valuable resource in sustainable development efforts. The integration of cultural values and local identity in legal policies can strengthen the sense of belonging and community involvement in environmental protection efforts. It is important to note that the process of forming legal policies that involve social norms and customary practices does not always run smoothly. There are various challenges and obstacles that can hinder the integration of customary values in legal policies. Some of these include a lack of understanding or appreciation of customary values by policymakers, conflicts of interest between local communities and external parties, and power imbalances between various stakeholders.

In addressing these challenges, a participatory approach involving all stakeholders is crucial. Sustainable and inclusive legal policy development requires the active and collaborative involvement of local communities, governments, NGOs, and the private sector. Through open and collaborative dialogue, indigenous values can be acknowledged, the interests of all parties can be considered, and sustainable agreements can be reached. In the context of globalisation and rapid environmental change, it is important

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to maintain a balance between economic development, environmental protection and cultural preservation. The integration of social norms and customary practices in the formation of legal policies is an important step in achieving the overall goal of sustainable development. As such, the role of social norms in the formation of legal policies has not only environmental, but also broad social, cultural and economic implications. Therefore, it is important to continue to conduct in-depth and ongoing research on this topic in order to gain a better understanding and develop more effective approaches in integrating customary values in the formation of sustainable legal policies.

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the role of social norms in the formation of legal policies, especially in the context of customary practices and environmental protection, shows the complexity of the dynamics between development needs, cultural preservation, and environmental protection. From various studies that have been conducted, it can be concluded that social norms have a significant influence on the formation of legal policies, both directly and indirectly. The recognition and integration of social norms, including customary practices, in the formation of legal policies is becoming increasingly important in an effort to maintain a balance between human development and environmental preservation.

One important conclusion from this discussion is that customary practices often have extensive local knowledge about the environment and adaptation strategies to environmental change. The integration of customary values in environmental law policies can provide a strong foundation for sustainable environmental protection efforts. However, the recognition of customary practices must be balanced with a careful evaluation of their possible environmental impacts. In addition, the protection and promotion of the rights of indigenous peoples is also an integral part of sustainable legal policy development. Recognising the rights of indigenous peoples is an important step towards ensuring that legal policies are not only environmentally sustainable, but also socially and economically sustainable for local communities. In this context, the development of inclusive and sustainable legal policies must take into account the rights of indigenous peoples in a fair and sustainable manner.

In addition to recognising the rights of indigenous peoples, the integration of cultural values and local identities in legal policies is also important. Local culture and identity are an integral part of cultural heritage that must be preserved and can be a valuable resource in sustainable development efforts. The integration of cultural values and local identities in legal policies can strengthen the sense of belonging and community involvement in environmental protection efforts. However, while there is great potential in integrating social norms in the formation of legal policies, there are a number

of challenges that need to be overcome. One of them is the lack of understanding or appreciation of customary values by policymakers. In addition, conflicts of interest between local communities and external parties, as well as power imbalances between various stakeholders, are also obstacles in the process of integrating social norms in the formation of legal policies.

To address these challenges, a participatory approach involving all stakeholders is crucial. Sustainable and inclusive legal policy development requires the active and collaborative involvement of local communities, governments, NGOs, and the private sector. Through open and collaborative dialogue, indigenous values can be acknowledged, the interests of all parties can be considered, and sustainable agreements can be reached.

In the context of globalisation and rapid environmental change, it is important to maintain a balance between economic development, environmental protection and cultural preservation. The integration of social norms and customary practices in the formation of legal policies is an important step in achieving the overall goal of sustainable development. As such, the role of social norms in the formation of legal policies has not only environmental, but also broad social, cultural and economic implications. Therefore, this discussion emphasises the importance of continuing to conduct in-depth and ongoing research on this topic in order to gain a better understanding and develop more effective approaches in integrating customary values in the formation of sustainable legal policies.

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