

Land Grabbing in Indonesia

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Paper presented at the International Conference on Global Land Grabbing
6-8 April 2011

Organised by the Land Deals Politics Initiative (LDPI) in collaboration with the Journal of Peasant Studies and hosted by the Future Agricultures Consortium at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex

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In the recent years we see the fast growing phenomena of land grabbing across the world. In Africa, Asia and Latin America million of hectares of land has been taking over by developed countries through their multinational agribusiness. In Southern Laos for example 100 million hectares of land has been taken by China telecommunication company ZTE to developed cassava plantation as the main source for ethanol, In Brazil, Japan conglomerate Mitsui has bought 100 million hectares of land to produce soy bean (Grain, 2008).

In Indonesia, this phenomenon is also occurs in the recent years and it is supported by national policies. In 2008, the government issued Presidential Decree No.5/2008 on Focus of Economic Program which also includes Large Scale Investment on Food (Food Estate). The Decree is aim to gives opportunity for investors to developed food crops plantation. It becomes the foundation for the establishment of Merauke Integrated Food and Energy Estate (MIFEE), a large scale food plantation in Papua Island.

The early concept of MIFEE is to establish an integrated land management for agriculture, where in minimum 1.000 hectares of land is divided into 70 percent of food crops, 9 percent for animal husbandry, 8 percent of fish pond, 8 percent of plantation dan 5 percent for other purposes. But the implementation shows differently , the portion of plantation is far more bigger than food crops, meanwhile there is no portion for animal husbandry and fish pond. According to Investment Coordination Body District of Merauke (BKPMD Kabupaten Merauke) the areal for food crops is only 4,2 percent from the total area, far below the plan of 70 percent. It can be seen in the table below.

Table. List of Agribussines Companies in MIFEE

No	Investor Name	Area	Type of bussines/crops		
1.	PT. Bio Inti Agrindo	39.900 Ha	Palm		
2	PT. Ulilin Agro Lestari	30.000 Ha	Palm		
3	PT. Dongin Prabhawa	39.800 Ha	Palm		
4	PT. Berkat Cipta Abadi	40.000 Ha	Palm		
5	PT. Papua Agro Lestari	39.800 Ha	Palm		
6	PT. Hardaya Sawit Papua	62.150 Ha	Palm		
7	PT. Mega Surya Agung	24.697 Ha	Palm		
8	Pt. Agrinusa Persada Mulia	40.000 Ha	Palm		
Area of palm : 316.347 Ha					
	PT. Tebu Nusa Timur	12.000 Ha	Sugarcane		
10.	PT. Papua Resources Indonesia	20.000 Ha	Sugarcane		
11.	PT. Agri Surya Agung	40.000 Ha	Sugarcane		

12.	PT. Nusantara Agri Resources	40.000 Ha	Sugarcane
13.	PT. Hardaya Sugar Papua	44.812 Ha	Sugarcane
	Area of Sugarcane	: 156.812 Ha	
14.	PT. Muting Jaya Lestari	40.000 Ha	Maize
15.	PT. Digul Agro Lestari	40.000 Ha	Maize
16.	PT. Tjipta Bangun Sarana	14.000 Ha	Maize
17.	PT. Muting Jaya Lestari	3.000 Ha	Maize
	Area of Maize	: 97.000 Ha	
18.	PT. Energi Hijau Kencana	90.225 Ha	Industrial Forest
19.	PT. Plasma Nutfah Marind Papua	67.735 Ha	Industrial Forest
20.	PT. Inocin Abadi	45.000 Ha	Industrial Forest
21.	PT. Balikpapan Forest Indonesia	40.000 Ha	Industrial Forest
22.	PT. Wanamulia Suskes Sejati	61.000 Ha	Industrial Forest
23.	PT. Wanamulia Suskes Sejati	96.553, 560 Ha	Industrial Forest
24.	PT. Wanamulia Suskes Sejati	116.000 Ha	Industrial Forest
25.	PT. Kertas Nusantara	154.943 Ha	Industrial Forest
26.	PT. Selaras Inti Semesta	301.600	Industrial Forest
	Areal of Industrial Fores	t: 973.057,56 Ha	
27.	PT. Sumber Alam Sutera	15.000 Ha	Food Crops
28.	PT. Bangun Cipta Sarana	14.000 Ha	Food Crops
29.	PT. Karisma Agri Pratama	40.000 Ha	Food Crops
	Area of Food Crop	s: 69.000 Ha	
30.	PT. Muting Mekar Hijau	18 Ha	Wood Processing
31.	PT. Medco Papua Industri Lestari	2.800 Ha	Wood Processing
	Area of Wood Processing	: 2.818 Ha	
32.	PT. Cupta Beton Sinar Perkasa	1.200 Ha	Harbor developer
	Area for harbor developer	: 1.200 Ha	
TOT	'AL AREA : 1.616.234,56 Ha		

Source: Badan Koordinasi Penanaman Modal Daerah dan Perijinan (BKPMDP), Pemerintah Kabupaten Merauke, 2009

Nevertheless beyond this phenomenon of land grabbing, small peasants in Indonesia already face forcibly taking over of their land for many years. The struggle against fast growing expansion of plantation that took over millions of farmer's land. In the past 20 years there is an increasing of 6.103.679 hectares of palm oil plantation, with the average growth of 305.183 hectares per year.

In North Sumatra province, one of the province in Indonesia where the expansion of palm plantation grow most rapidly, in one year from 2009-2010 there are 275.000 hectares of food crops land converted into palm plantation.

Furthermore the climate crisis has created a new model of land grabbing. A mechanism to taking over the access and control over land with under the mask of protection of the earth has been set up under the carbon trading and REDD mechanism. Nowadays there are about 26,6 million hectares of Indonesian land or forest is being traded within this mechanism. This is not a small business, especially compare to agriculture land in Indonesia which is now around 17,04 million hectares of land. In Jambi Provinces, 9000 families of coffee growers were being evicted from their land in 2010, because the area said to be part of Conservation Park. In 2008, in the neighboring district thousands of people, members of SPI (Indonesia Peasant Union), were also evicted because their ancestral land was sold to United Kingdom under this scheme which manages by an international conservation group. There is no compensation for the lost of the families' livelihood.

The impact of this is severe for the peasants as well for the bigger population. In Indonesia the average land conversion from food crops to other functions is 100.000 hectares per year, which lead to the increasing number of small peasants and agriculture workers as well as the rural poor that grow 2,2 per cent per year which today reach 19,93 million from the total of 31.02 million poor people in Indonesia.

Facing these reality small peasants in Indonesia under SPI is continuing struggle and reclaims their land that has been taking over by foreign investors and agribusiness. In South Sumatra, peasants has taking over 1.569 hectares of their land which was grab by sugarcane plantation, in Jambi the struggle against REDD and conservation projects is still undergo. Furthermore SPI is also conducting lobby and mass rally demanding the distribution of land to small scale peasants (farmer with less than 0.5 hectare of land). According to National Land Body there are 12.418.056,3 hectares of abandon land which will be very useful if it is distributed to farm family. If one farm family receive averagely 2 hectares of land like it is stated in article 8 Regulation No. 56/1960 for minimum land for farm family, than there are 6.209.028 families that will receive the source of livelihood. SPI also building a stronger alliance with other movements, labor union, fisher folks, women, human rights defender, and consumers' organization to fight against land grabbing and uphold food sovereignty.

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