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**The Everyday Resistance of Women's Group for Environmental Care (KPPL) Maju
Bersama of Pal VIII Village in Bengkulu**

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Contents

List of Tables	ii
List of Map.....	ii
List of Photos.....	ii
List of Appendices	ii
List of Acronyms.....	iii
Acknowledgment.....	iv
Abstract.....	v
Relevance to Development Studies	v
Keywords	vi
Chapter One: Introduction.....	1
1.1 History of forest management in Indonesia.....	2
1.2 Social forestry program in Indonesia	3
1.3 Women in social forestry program in Indonesia	5
1.4 Women Managing Taman Nasional Kerinci Seblat (TNKS)	5
Chapter Two: Theoretical Frameworks and Literature Review	9
2.1 Defining the context	9
2.2 Gendered participation and leadership in forest management.....	10
2.3 Gendered work of care.....	12
2.4 Everyday resistance	14
2.5 Discovering the benefits of participating in a women's group	15
Chapter Three: Methodology and Data Analysis Strategies	17
3.1 Methodology	17
3.2 Research objectives	18
3.3 How did I collect these women's stories?.....	18
3.4 How did I uncover new knowledge?.....	19
3.5 A reflective analysis of how I conducted my research.....	22
3.6 Who am I? What lens did I use?	23
Chapter Four: Remarkable Women in Forest Conservation.....	26
4.1 We are not permitted to enter TNKS	26
4.2 I find these women are more persevering than men	28
4.3 We are happy	31
4.4 Think locally, act globally	32
Chapter Five: Conclusion.....	34
Reference	35

List of Tables

Table 1. National Park Zonation.....	6
Table 2. Agarwal's Typology of Participation.....	11
Table 3. Mixed method for this study.....	20

List of Map

Map 1. Kerinci Seblat National Park.....	7
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List of Photos

Photo 1. Participatory mapping conducted by KPPL Maju Bersama with their husbands and TNKS officers as a prerequisite for applying for a legal permit	26
Photo 2. KPPL Maju Bersama donated plant seeds at the Sedekah Bumi event in 2021	28
Photo 3. KPPL Maju Bersama, with their male relatives were cultivating ginger torches in the TNKS	30

List of Appendices

Appendix 1. List of the interviewees.....	42
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List of Acronyms

BBTNKS	Balai Besar Taman Nasional Kerinci Seblat
CBFM	Community-Based Forest Management
FPE	Feminist Political Ecology
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
ISS	International Institute of Social Studies
KLHK	Kementerian Lingkungan Hidup
KPPL	Kelompok Perempuan Peduli Lingkungan
KEMENPPN	Kementerian Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional
LivE	Lembaga Kajian Advokasi dan Edukasi
MOEF	Ministry of Environmental and Forestry
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Products
PATTIRO	Pusat Telaah dan Informasi Regional
PMDH	Pembinaan Masyarakat Desa Hutan
TFCA	Tropical Forest Conservation Act
TNKS	Taman Nasional Kerinci Seblat
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNWOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VOC	Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie

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Abstract

Social forestry program has become a survival approach to Indonesia's long history of forest management that only sees forests as an economic resource that has damaged the forests and neglected the welfare of communities around the forest. Forests are still seen as a "men's world" despite the fact that women have long relied on forest resources for subsistence and still lack the authority to manage the forest because it is assumed that women lack the expertise necessary to manage the forest effectively

This study set out to better understand the lives of women in Pal VIII Village, Bengkulu, by looking at how women's groups there gain access to and manage the Taman National Kerinci Seblat (TNKS) forests. In addition, this study's goal is to reveal the everyday resistances of this group, which give them an upper hand vis-à-vis the patriarchal forest management system used by the state and the community and enable them to take on leadership roles in forest management.

The women's group, *Kelompok Perempuan Peduli Lingkungan*¹ (KPPL) Maju Bersama, has demonstrated that women's leadership is transformative and that they can become forest managers by emphasizing their caring value in their forest conservation work which fosters cooperation with their male counterparts, the village community, and the government. They also have resilience in carrying out activities to achieve their goals. These works not only impact the ongoing efforts to use forests in a sustainable manner, but they also impact social transformation.

Relevance to Development Studies

In 1980 FAO held a seminar, "The Role of Women in Community Forest," where Marilyn W. Hoskins delivered a presentation titled "Community forestry depends on women." She discussed the significance of forests to women and how deforestation affects women. While women have emerged as key players in conservation efforts, she noted that their expertise and experience are being overlooked in policy debates (Colfer, C. J. P. *et al.*, 2017; Hoskins, 1980).

More than 40 years after the seminar, Indonesia has been significant progress in acknowledging the community as the forest manager through its social forestry program. However, with a solid patriarchal forest management culture and gender-blind social forestry regulations, women are still invisible and struggle to be heard. In light of this circumstance, this study is still relevant as there are only four women-only social forestry management groups in Indonesia.

KPPL Maju Bersama in Pal VIII Village reaffirms that rural women and their leadership are essential to sustainable development (UNWOMEN, 2022). However, I must clarify that I will not claim this is a success story. Instead, I focus on this case since it has gotten little attention and is noteworthy for proving that women can serve as forest managers. The findings from this study aim to contribute to women's study of how women come together and assume leadership to participate in Indonesia's social forestry management group.

¹ Kelompok Perempuan Peduli Lingkungan: Women's group for Environmental Care

Keywords

Social forestry, ecofeminism, feminist political ecology, care, agency, happiness, well-being, everyday resistance

Chapter One: Introduction

The story begins with four women and an invitation to a meeting with the TNKS office. The villagers were informed at the meeting that they could legally enter TNKS, which was thought to be a forbidden forest. One of them asked, "Can we grow crops in the forest?" An officer said they could get a permit if they got together, formed a group, and applied for a conservation partnership with the TNKS office.

When the four women returned to the village, they gathered the other women to share the good news that women could manage forests for the good of the community and protect the forest. Nine women attended the meeting and made the decision to create KPPL Maju Bersama in 2017.

However, some people in the neighborhood began to wonder how a group of women could possibly oversee forest conservation. The leader admitted, "At first, I was also unsure whether we could do it." Nevertheless, with the assistance of a local NGO called LivE (*Lembaga Kajian Advokasi dan Edukasi*)² Knowledge Bengkulu, the women resolved that they must continue the struggle. The challenge posed by these uncertainties fueled their enthusiasm and optimism.

In 2018 KPPL Maju Bersama used the village's traditional celebration *Sedekah Bumi*, to demonstrate their group's value to the community. "We plan to distribute trees throughout the community as a form of almsgiving to the earth," said the leader. Even though they did not yet have legal permission to manage the TNKS forest, the group persisted in using self-help funds from its members and working together to prepare tree seedlings.

They then distributed tree seeds, such as guava, avocado, jackfruit, durian, *kabau*³, and *jengkol*,⁴ and during the event, the group leader also delivered a speech, which she recounted during our interview:

"You will not have to spare me the fruit from the trees when they finally start producing. Those fruits are for your family, improving your family's income and food security. The tree trunks will keep our water from drying up, so other plants will still thrive. If those leaves fall, they will add nutrients to the soil. If the trees grow, we will have a good climate and increase oxygen levels, and pollinating animals can live there too. The pollinators will help fertilize our plants so that we will get good fruit from our plantations. So, there is no need to spare the fruit for me later. The important thing is to remember, "Oh, this is from KPPL." (Interviewee 1, September 14th, 2022)

Since then, KPPL has distributed seeds to the community annually.

This study set out to better understand the lives of women in Pal VIII Village, Bengkulu, by looking at how women's groups there gain access to and manage the Taman National Kerinci Seblat (TNKS) forests. In addition, this study's goal is to reveal the everyday resistances of this

² Lembaga Kajian Advokasi dan Edukasi: institute for research, advocacy and education

³ See <https://www.bengkuluinteraktif.com/dibalik-efek-bau-tak-sedap-simak-8-manfaat-kabau-untuk-kesehatan>

⁴ See <https://www.mongabay.co.id/2020/04/10/para-pejuang-pangan-turut-menjaga-keragaman-hayati-indonesia/>

group, which give them an upper hand vis-à-vis the patriarchal forest management system used by the state and the community and enable them to take on leadership roles in forest management.

1.1 History of forest management in Indonesia

Indonesia is home to one of the world's most extensive tropical forest areas. The historical practice of cutting down trees for timber occurred in Indonesia long before the arrival of the Dutch colonial rule. During the time before the Dutch colonial period, the forests were governed by the community's customary law (Nasution, 2013). The Dutch East India Company, known as VOC (*Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie*), was then responsible for the deterioration of the forest's condition (Zakaria, 2018, p.12).

It was considered the beginning of forest management in Indonesia when Daendels founded the *Dienst van het Boschwezen* (forestry department) in 1808. This was done with the intention of reversing the deforestation that had been taking place on Java Island. (Nurjaya, 2005, p.37). The next step in the process was issuing a legal regulation known as the *Boschordonantie voor Java en Madoera*, or Forest Management in Java and Madura Island, in 1865. (Ibid. p.38).

However, due to *Cultuurstelsel* (forced cultivation system) between 1830-1870 in Java conducted by van den Bosch, forest areas were cleared and converted into plantations to grow export commodity products. Wood from the forest had been cut down to build buildings and ship construction in Rotterdam (Zakaria, 2018, p.12). In 1870 Dutch colonizers produced *Domeinverklaring* (agrarian regulations), which stipulated that the Dutch government would control any land that did not have proof of ownership (Nurjaya, 2005).

In 1927, the Dutch colonial government issued *Boschordonantie voor Java en Madoera* (State Forest Management Regulations in Java and Madura 1927) to anticipate the growth of Java's population and the advancement of forestry technology. *Boschdienstreglement voor Java en Madoera 1927* became the implementation regulation (Ibid. p.42). After that, an updated version of this implementing regulation was issued under *Boschverordening voor Java en Madoera 1932*, followed by amendments issued in 1935 and 1937 (Ibid.).

The local community's socio-cultural conditions were not taken into account when the Dutch developed any of mentioned regulations (Ibid.). In 1942, after the Japanese had taken over as the new colonizers, no new laws were developed for the management of the forests; instead, they used the system that the Dutch had left behind. The Japanese used the forests of Java and Madura Island for their wartime supply chains, and these forests eventually became one of Japan's primary sources of revenue (Ibid.)

Forest management policies Post-Independence were decentralized during the presidency of Soekarno. At that time, Indonesia's national economic strategy was heavily influenced by socialism and nationalism, an anti-western investment ideology, and as a result, many international businesses departed from Indonesia. Consequently, throughout the reign of Sukarno, forest resources were underutilized. Except for Japanese firms such as Mitsui, which exploited forests in the 1950s in Kalimantan under fair production sharing agreements, there were essentially no commercial investments in forestry. However, this collaboration with Japan was regarded as having less success (Awang (2005) in Tolo, 2013)

During the presidency of Soeharto, widely known as the New Order regime, the national political economy policy was pro-investment, both foreign and local, particularly in banking and extractive industries such as forestry, agriculture, and mining, in an effort to stimulate economic growth. The government focused on utilizing and exploiting natural forest resources (Nurjaya, 2005, p.49-52).

Under the new order regime, massive exploitation of forest resources occurred and became one of the largest sources of the state's income. Clearly, the expansion of the extractive industry in Indonesia under Soeharto has contributed to the country's deforestation, which was considered the most extensive and destructive (Tirta, 2021).

However, these exploitations did not positively impact the living conditions of the people around the forest. Conflicts emerged between the companies and the community whose livelihood depends on natural forest resources. In addition, the government's development paradigm at that time was that village development should be sponsored and driven by the central government. This paradigm was based on the assumption that rural communities, which were not yet developed, did not have the ability to develop a good system for improving the social and economic life of the people in the village. (Zakaria, 2018, p.12-17; 91).

In the 1970s, Indonesia's community-based forest management (CBFM) movement emerged along with increasing global awareness of social inequality and poverty and introducing the idea of community forestry worldwide (Ibid.). Community-based forest management (CBFM) has become a survival approach to Indonesia's long history of forest management that only sees forests as an economic resource that has damaged the forests and neglected the welfare of communities around the forest (Ibid.)

However, the implementation of the social forestry program only came to materialize in the middle of the 1990s with *Pembinaan Masyarakat Desa Hutan* (PMDH)⁵, and the term social forestry itself was only introduced in 2004 (Ekawati, 2020; Zakaria, 2018). Significant policy changes happened during the first term of President Joko Widodo's administration that set a target area for the social forestry program.

1.2 Social forestry program in Indonesia

Historically, Indonesia did not recognize the community as the forest manager in its forest management regulations, even though the indigenous people had managed the land and forest before Indonesia was proclaimed a country (Siscawati *et al.*, 2017, p.2). This condition led to overlapping claims between state and customary law, resulting in the agrarian conflicts between the state/companies that hold forestry concessions *vis-à-vis* the community (Ibid.)

There is an increasing trend in recognizing the rights and the importance of the community who lives around the forest to be actively involved in forest management; therefore, they can have real decision-making power over the land (Larson, Anne M. *et al.*, 2010, p.23). Community-based management led to a feeling of ownership of the forest, and they could implement effective and acceptable land problem-solving based on their local wisdom (Ekawati, 2020, p.1).

⁵ PMDH: Forest Village Community Development

President Joko Widodo saw this global change as an opportunity, and during his first presidential race, he campaigned for nine election promises called *nawa cita*⁶ (Wedhaswary, 2014). His fifth political promise was to work to improve people's welfare through the "Indonesian Work" and "Indonesia Prosperous" programs, as well as encouraging agrarian reform, which includes issues such as land dispute resolution, land redistribution of agrarian reform objects to the poor, and community forest management through social forestry program (KemenPPN, 2015; KLHK, 2018).

The fifth agenda places emphasis on community involvement in forest management as an alternative to government-centered forest management. This is an appropriate focus, given that there are 2,037 villages located within the forest area and 19,247 villages located around the forest, with a total population of 32,447,815 people living in close proximity to the forest area who rely on forest products for their means of subsistence. (Marhaeni *et al.*, 2015).

According to Ministerial Regulation Nr., 83/2016 social forestry program has five schemes (KLHK, 2016): **Community forests** are state forests whose primary use is to empower the community; **Community plantations forests** are plantation forests in production forests built by community groups to increase the potential and quality of production forests by implementing a silvicultural system to ensure forest resource sustainability; **Village forests** are state forests managed by the village and used for village welfare; **Partnership forests** are cooperation in managing forests between local communities and forest managers, such as holders of business permits for forest use/forest services, permits for borrowing and using forest areas, or holders of business permits for forest products' primary industries; **Customary forests** are forests located within the territory of customary law communities.

In the national medium-term development plan for 2015-2019, Indonesia's government has set a target area for the social forestry program of 12,7 million hectares (KemenPPN, 2015). This target was implemented through Ministerial Regulation Nr.83/2016 on social forestry and underwent improvements and changes through Ministerial Regulation Nr.9/2021 on social forestry management (Permana, 2021). Until August 2022, it has achieved 5,030,736.09 hectares, with 7,650 decrees given to 1,113,234 households (KLHK, 2022a).

Through the social forestry program, the government encourages the communities living around forest areas to build their capacity and provide opportunities for them to participate in equal, environmentally friendly forest management that aims to improve people's welfare, eradicate poverty, and create sustainable forest conservation (KLHK, 2022b; Nurbaya, 2020, p.19; Resurreccion and Elmhirst,2008, p.12).

The purpose of this social forestry program is good, but in its development, it was later discovered that not everyone could enjoy the access and control provided through this program, especially women's groups. The following section will describe the challenges of women's participation in social forestry programs.

⁶ *Nawa cita* is from Sanskrit language which means nine hopes

1.3 Women in social forestry program in Indonesia

Land and forests in Indonesia are perceived as "men's realm" even though it is widely known that women access the forest daily for their livelihood, and they also possess essential knowledge, such as traditional medicines, but they do not have the power to control the land and forest. There is an assumption that women do not know how to manage the forest (Dewi, 2022; Violleta, 2021). In addition to this, women have to deal with the everyday inequality that exists in their community as a result of socio-economic status and norms such as ethnicity, education level, marital status, gender, and age. This has resulted in their rights to legally access and control the forest for their livelihood being denied, which in turn has led to them being one of the most vulnerable groups (Elias *et al.*, 2020; Henry, David, 2021; Tobing *et al.*, 2021).

A survey conducted by KataData shows that men dominate 94% of all social forestry management groups, 5% have more women members, 1% have equal women and men members, and only four all-women groups of the total number of decrees given by the forestry ministry (Prastiwi, 2020). Women are involved in social forestry through income-generating activities such as weaving using non-timber forest products (NTFPs) rather than in the decision-making bodies of forest management groups (Dewi, 2020; Munandar, 2021; Rosadi, 2020). A study by PATTIRO (2021) also found several causes leading to this condition: first, the Ministry of Environmental and Forestry (MoEF) hired 926 men facilitators and 255 women facilitators, or only 22% of all social forestry facilitators (KLHK, 2020). MoEF did not put a quota number for women facilitators, including a quota membership in the social forestry management group. Second, the membership of the social forestry management group is based on the head of the household, which traditionally translates to men and automatically marginalizes the women, including the female head of the household.

Third, the participatory mapping process, which was set as a requirement to receive social forestry permits, did not demand the involvement of the women group; and fourth, the gender-neutral social forestry policies resulted from the unavailability of sex-disaggregated data that failed to recognize that women and men have a different position in the community in managing and protecting the forest (Dewi, 2022; PATTIRO, 2021). This result confirmed that gender inequality is still a big problem in forest management that leads to unequal distribution of benefits for community members (Elias *et al.*, 2020).

Challenges in the form of regulations still open the possibility of making changes by carrying out advocacy activity at the national level. However, this rule shifting also needs to be followed by overcoming challenges inherent in social rules and norms that view women as not having equal standing with men, which are deeply rooted in society, thus requiring a context-specific approach to women.

1.4 Women Managing Taman Nasional Kerinci Seblat (TNKS)

There are around 120.5 million hectares of land that are designated as forest areas in Indonesia, which accounts for approximately 64 percent of the country's total land area, which is classified into three categories based on their functions: (Nurbaya, 2020; RimbaKita, 2022):

1. **Production forest** of 68.8 million hectares is a forest area where forest products, both wood, and non-timber, are produced and exploited;

2. **Protected forest** of 29.6 million hectares is a forest area designated as such because it is useful in maintaining ecosystems and protecting them from ecological disasters;
3. **Conservation forest** of 22.1 million hectares is a protected forest to preserve the ecosystem and the diversity of plants and animals within it so that it can continue functioning as intended and avoid extinction.

Conservation forest is divided into two reserve areas: the sanctuary reserve area, which consists of the strict nature area and wildlife sanctuaries; the nature conservation area consists of national parks, nature recreation parks, and grant forest parks (Nurbaya, 2020). TNKS⁷ is a conservation forest. It is the biggest national park on Sumatra Island, Indonesia, with 1,389,000 hectares; it stretches across four provinces: West Sumatra, Bengkulu, South Sumatra, and Jambi (BBTNKS, 2018).

The Conservation forest is divided into multiple zones based on Ministerial Regulation No. 56/2006. Zonation is the spatial arrangement process that divides a national park into zones, taking into account the community's ecological, social, economic, and cultural studies. There are seven types of zones in the national park (KLHK, 2021):

Table 1. National Park Zonation

Core Zone	The part of a national park is still pure and unaltered by humans and strictly safeguarded to preserve the original and distinctive representation of the biological variety.
Wilderness Zone	The part of a national park that, by virtue of its location, condition, and potential, can support the conservation objectives of the core zone and utilization zone.
Utilization Zone	The part of a national park designated for promoting nature tourism and other environmental services.
Traditional Zone	The part of a national park is designated for community use because of its historical dependence on natural resources.
Rehabilitation Zone	The part of a national park has been damaged to the extent that its biological community and ecology need restoration actions to return to their natural condition.
Religious, Cultural, and Historical Zone	The part of a national park is designated to hold traditional ceremonies, preserve the cultural and historical sites, and support the existing religious ritual ceremonies.
Special Zone	Part of a national park is due to the inevitable circumstance that groups of people and their means of subsistence, including communications facilities, transportation facilities, and power, already reside in the region before it is declared a national park.

It is a conservation area for various rare flora and fauna, and in 2004 UNESCO acknowledged the tropical rainforest heritage of Sumatra as a World Heritage site which consists

⁷ TNKS: The Kerinci Seblat National Parks

of three national parks in Sumatra: Gunung Leuser National Park, Bukit Barisan Selatan National Park, and Kerinci Seblat National Park (UNESCO, 2004). However, illegal activities such as illegal logging, hunting, encroachment, plans to build roads across the TNKS area, and uncontrolled harvesting of other forest products threaten the sustainability of this area (TFCA-Sumatera, 2020).

Because TNKS is a national park, the preservation of the woods is the primary focus of the park; therefore, any efforts to make use of the trees or forest products are not encouraged. It exacerbates the already tense relationship between the local administration, the community, and the national park officials. People who live in close proximity to forests and whose livelihoods are dependent on the products of forests suffer as a result of these conflicts of interest. (Hendrastiti and Santoso,2009).



Map 1. Kerinci Seblat National Park¹

Hendrastiti and Santoso (2009) explained that when talking about forest destruction in the TNKS area, it is only focused on the economy's impact on the head of the household, which has traditionally been the task of men, even though the most affected by forest destruction are women's groups because women access the forest every day for their livelihood. Moreover, they said that women's interests and involvement in forest management in TNKS are undocumented; women do not have access to forests based on formal or customary law, and women are invisible (Ibid.)

This study focuses on KPPL Maju Bersama in Pal VIII Village, Rejang Lebong District, Bengkulu Province. The local community has never entertained the idea that they could control the TNKS. After all, they were aware that anyone who dared to enter the TNKS and gather anything that landed on its territory risked going to jail due to the TNKS's stringent forest police because the forest police were strict. (bincangperempuan, 2021).

In 2017 four women from Pal VIII village participated in a training led by a local NGO-LivE and the Technical implementation Unit of TNKS to learn about the forest degradation in TNKS caused by illegal logging and the urgency of preserving the TNKS (bincangperempuan, 2020). They knew they had the right to information about the forest in that meeting. They also

learned that if the forest degradation continues, the community would be affected, especially the women, primarily because the forest is the source of water production, which is vital to their livelihood (Ibid.).

In addition, they were aware that women could have a role in the administration and protection of the TNKS. After the meeting, they assembled the ladies in their village, and among the 13 participants, they discussed the new information regarding the TNKS (bincangperempuan, 2021). In its development, in 2017, they established the KPPL Maju Bersama group, and now they have twenty members (Henry, Dedek, 2022).

The local government responded positively, but the group faced administration challenges that made them wait almost 1,5 years for the permit. Moreover, they also faced challenges from within the family and community; they were skeptical that KPPL Maju Bersama would succeed because they saw women lacked the knowledge and abilities to manage the forest, and no women group had previously served as forest managers (Ibid.) Nevertheless, with assistance from LiveE and support from the head of the technical implementation Unit of TNKS, this group secured the legal permit of conservation partnership under the partnership forests scheme of the social forestry program in 2019 to access 10 hectares of TNKS forests, and they became the pioneer of Indonesia's all-women social forestry management group (Henry, 2022).

Chapter Two: Theoretical Frameworks and Literature Review

In this chapter, I discuss the initial condition that led the women's group KPPL Maju Bersama in Pal VIII village Bengkulu to come together. Second, continue with two feminism strands to discuss the ethic of care and women's relations with the forest. Third, I discussed gendered participation and leadership in forest management. Fourth I discussed the women's everyday resistance to overcome community challenges; fifth, I discussed the benefits of joining a forest management group. This research used feminist political ecology (FPE) that put gender at the center of the analysis to understand how decision-making procedures and socio-political dynamics impact the law to access and control resources (Bauhardt and Harcourt, 2019, p. 100).

2.1 Defining the context

Theories of Feminist Political Ecology (FPE) raises attention to multidimensional and intersectional gendered inequities. In addition, it also pays attention to "the contextual, frequently layered, and persisting histories of (neo)colonialism, patriarchy, and capitalism" that cause societal contradictions and tensions (Elias *et al.*, 2021, p.8-10). Furthermore, Elias *et al.* (2021) said that FPE stresses the importance of "historical awareness" of the landscape, remembering the past that created the present before starting a restoration process (Ibid.). This section theorizes the initial condition that led the women's group KPPL Maju Bersama in Pal VIII village Bengkulu to come together and take action.

As explained in chapter one, the social forestry programs are community-based forest management, part of Indonesia's tenure reforms that aim to improve community welfare and forest sustainability (Banjade *et al.*, 2017; Wahyu *et al.*, 2020, p.3-4). It emerged as the alternative to the government's centralized management, which led to conflicts between the government, including the companies which hold the permit with the communities surrounding the forest whose welfare is being neglected and their rights being denied (Larson, A. M. *et al.*, 2009,p.3; Zakaria, 2018, p.15-16).

The government only grants legal recognition to collective groups (Larson *et al.*, 2009); therefore, it demands that community members formally organize themselves before claiming their right to access, use, and manage the forests. Access and use can be defined as when people have "the right to enter and harvest some forms of products" and are called authorized users. There are four types of rights related to managing shared resources (Agrawal and Ostrom, 2001, p.489-90):

1. Withdrawal is the right to get into the resource area and take products from it.
2. Management is the right to make decisions or rules on using and transforming the resource.
3. Exclusion is the right to decide who can take products from the resource area and who can not.
4. Alienation is the right to be able to "sell, lease the resource are and all the following rights.

A recent study also showed the importance of the community members who rely their livelihood on shared resources such as "irrigation systems, forests, fisheries, and rangeland" to develop a group for collaborative efforts to manage those resources (Doss and Meinzen-Dick, 2015, p.172). They suggested several factors that influenced the group working together. I found

that these factors could explain the background of the women's group KPPL Maju Bersama to access, use and manage 10 hectares of Kerinci Seblat National Park (TNKS).

The resource condition is the first factor, which focuses on the managed physical object's characteristics (Ibid, p.174). Indonesia's constitution, Article 33 paragraph (3) stipulates that the state controls all natural resources; therefore, the state has the sole authority to rule on who can access, use, and manage the forest, especially national park like TNKS that strictly uses for conservation (Nurbaya, 2020, p.2-3; Suroto, 2020,p. 3-4).

Second, the community attribute focuses on socio-economic aspects divided into three parts: (a) social capital and cohesion, including gender relations in the family and marital status. Doss and Meinzen-Dick (2015, p.176) found that households with shared domestic responsibilities tend to have a "stronger sense of cooperation."

The following attribute is (b) Human capital, such as health and education, also affects the leadership in the group even though "formal education is not always relevant with forest management (Ibid.177). Most of the women's level of education was middle school; only two finished at the university level.

Another attribute is (c) Physical structures, such as group members from the same village, are presumed to be more effective in organizing the group. Social structures, such as lineage, and role in the community, also influence the group dynamic. Moreover, norms and cultural systems, such as protection, prevention, and religious values, also affect the value system in managing resources which can be linked to the ethic of care (Ibid.).

Third, institutional arrangements, first, regulations inside the group related to how the group's decisions related to resource management are conducted; second, external recognition from the government is crucial for the group in managing the resources, especially if the condition of the resource is restricted like a national park. Access to assistance from the NGO also plays a vital role for the group (Ibid. p.178).

From the discussion above, several factors support the emergence of women's forest management groups in Pal VIII village. Although the Indonesian government strictly regulates forest allocation and TNKS is a protected, inaccessible forest, this has resulted in relatively fluid forest management in the community. This has resulted in a group of women with similar social characteristics attempting to access and manage forests through social forest programs. Apart from getting assistance from NGO Live, they also received a positive response from the TNKS office. As a result, they finally managed to get a forest management permit.

2.2 Gendered participation and leadership in forest management

Literature in FPE has argued that joining a group or organization where women come together could lead to a "sense of agency and empowerment," which materialize in leadership (Rocheleau, Dianne E. *et al.*, 1996, p.14-18). The participation of the women's group, KPPL Maju Bersama, in the social forestry program to manage TNKS forest is crucial in exploring an alternative leadership model in the community in the issue that is perceived as a men's realm (Werhane and Painter-Morland,2011).

Werhane and Painter-Morland (2011, p.142) said that women tend to have characteristics related to "transformational leadership;" this term refers to the capacity of certain individuals to

inspire, build trust, and motivate the members of a group or non-members to join the group, and go beyond their expectation that built on the values of the organization. Women tend to adopt transformational leadership because it focuses on caring for the members. The care qualities, because of the cultural construction more developed in women (Hassan and Silong, 2008, p.362-3).

In addition, Hassan ana Silong (2008, p. 366-7) stated that women's leadership is more egalitarian and supportive, allowing everyone to gain new knowledge. This type of leadership is more about:

"commonsense and helping others to understand their own situation, obligation and place in the world. It is clearly based on providing service to others, humanity, caring, compassion and modesty. It may even be apologetic, but it is very successful in generating enthusiasm and support of other women."

This explanation reflected how the KPPL Maju Bersama members perceived this group as a space to learn, care for, and share with others in the community and non-human beings.

Furthermore, I found Bina Agarwal's extensive studies on gender and participation in community forest governance (Agarwal, 2001; Agarwal, 2009; Agarwal, 2010) could help to comprehend what form of participation would enable women to assume leadership in a social forestry program.

Table 2. Agarwal's Typology of Participation

Form/ level of participation	Characteristic Features
Nominal participation	Membership in the group
Passive participation	Being informed of decisions ex post facto, or attending meetings and listening in on decision-making without speaking up
Consultative participation	Being asked opinions in specific matters without guarantee of influencing decision
Actively-specific participation	Being asked to (or volunteering to) undertake specific tasks
Active participation	Expressing opinions, whether or not solicited, or taking initiatives of other sorts
Interactive participative	Having a voice and influence in the group's decisions and holding positions as office bearers

Based on the above typology (Agarwal, 2010. p.101), the women's group KPPL Maju Bersama could be categorized as interactive participative because the first initiative to engage in social forestry program came from the women themselves. After attending the initial meeting in 2017 that informed the women from several villages near TNKS about their rights to access the forests through the social forestry scheme, the women from Pal VIII village had the initiative to establish the forest management group with all the members are women; then followed with the formal request to access the TNKS forests (bincangperempuan, 2020).

Agarwal (2009, p.2796) argued that women's participation in the forest management group is essential for safeguarding common resources, such as forests, and enhancing forest conditions because women tend to protect what is essential to their livelihood and the distribution of forest products within the community was relatively equitable. Women's groups also tend to disseminate forest protection information, preventing forest violations and destruction.

In addition, due to the traditional role perception of care work, women tend to educate their children about the sustainable use of forests. Once a month, KPPL Maju Bersama conducts patrols within the managed areas. KPPL Maju Bersama brings their families to group activities. Following Agarwal's work, there are numerous research carried out in other countries that have come to the same conclusion (Coleman and Mwangi, 2013; Kahsay *et al.*, 2021; Leone, 2019).

Furthermore, Coleman and Mwangi (2013) defined the factors that determine women's participation in forest management groups into two levels: first, at the household level, such as higher women's level of education, the house location near the forest, female head of household, equal responsibility for domestic labor. Though education not determined their participation in KPPL Maju Bersama because most of them graduated from elementary school and middle high school, however, they all live near the forest; and there was a shift within the family in terms of sharing domestic work; they all, to some extent, share their work with the family.

Second, at the forest association level, including a small wage gap between women and men in the family, low wealth inequality among the members and within the community increase the probability of women joining a forest management group. The women in KPPL Maju Bersama have relatively the same economic and cultural background, education, and livelihood, and The "sameness" brought them together (Ibid. p. 201; Agarwal, 2001, p.1638).

2.3 Gendered work of care

Both ecofeminism and feminist political ecology link feminism and the environment, which will be discussed in this section as it relates to gender and the work of caregiving.

Ecofeminism

Ecofeminism is a critical approach that explores the relationship between gender and the environment with "woman-centered language and thought"; that emerged and gained momentum in the 1980s among activists and scholars in the USA, Europe, and Australia. (Gaard, 2011, p.28-32; Phillips and Rumens, 2015, p.3-5). I decided to use the term ecofeminism freely in this research because I saw ecofeminism as a whole approach that could explain the women's group works in managing the Kerinci Seblat National Park (TNKS)⁸ forest in Pal VIII village.

Karen J. Warren (1990, p.141-142) explained that ecofeminism rejects the idea of the subjugation of non-human beings; she also argued that ecofeminism is about "relationship with others."; Ecofeminism is an analysis that believes humans are part of the "ecological community"; therefore, it strongly emphasizes the relationship between human beings and non-human beings in a community and how humans should think about the non-human world.

⁸ TNKS: Taman Nasional Kerinci Seblat

Ecofeminism emerged from women's experiences of oppression that mirror the conquering of nature (Bauhardt and Harcourt, 2019, p.58). Therefore, ecofeminism focuses on listening to women's stories, like the women's group KPPL Maju Bersama in accessing and controlling the TNKS forest in Bengkulu. Their experience of what has led them to come together as a group, how they connect with the forest, how they resist every day to show that they are capable of being forest managers, and what benefit they got from this process (Ibid, p.143). Furthermore, values such as caring, love, friendship, trust, appropriate reciprocity, and cooperation" have become the central notions of ecofeminism. (Ibid.). These beliefs are tied to our attempts to form relationships with other people and non-human beings.

Ecofeminism perceives caring for others as a woman's strength that lies and arises from the diverse everyday experiences of women's struggles to survive at the grassroots level, even though women's work at the grassroots is often invisible. This perception led to a movement committed to the responsible use of resources and environmental conservation (MacGregor, 2004, p.57-58).

The logic of care values the importance of "cooperation, dependency, and flourishing" has become more critical, especially in preserving the environment against climate change (Glazebrook, 2015, p.112-3; 125). Joan Tronto said, "...so that we can live in the world that includes our bodies, our selves, and our environment that tied in the life-sustaining web of our world" (Dombroski *et al.*, 2018, p. 99). Thus, it is crucial to establish producing and consuming system that works within the ecological boundaries without, in any way, infringing the rights of other human and non-human beings (Mies and Shiva, 2014, p. xx-xxi)

Women's caring perspective is central to ecofeminism seeing the "related and interdependent" relationship between humans and nature, which highlight the connection between human, and non-human beings, such as land, water, air, forests, plants (Phillips and Rumens, 2015, p. 86-87; Whyte and Cuomo,2017, p. 239, 242). Moreover, Whyte and Cuomo (2017) defined care ethics as how people form their communities and their means of survival based on their collective wisdom, practices, and women's knowledge of caring for themselves and others (p.235).

Women's labor and knowledge are essential to environmental protection because they operate across "sectors" in the family household, supporting the community and the family income. For these reasons, women undertake numerous tasks (Mies Maria, 2014,p. 166-67). For example, women's knowledge of forestry is valuable because they know about plants for food resources, types of firewood, and fertility transfer from forest to farm trees (Ibid.).

Feminist Political Ecology

Scholars of Feminist Political Ecology (FPE) emphasize unequal access to and control over resources. It views gender power relations as the most influential element in determining who has access to those resources, who is responsible for protecting the forest as the source of livelihood, and who is responsible for restoring resources that had been degraded in the past. (Resurrección, 2017, p. 4-6). FPE focuses on three themes, which are as follows (Rocheleau *et al.*, 1996, p.7, 10, 14; Sapra, 2017, p.10-12):

1. **Gendered sciences of survival:** This theme focuses on gendered science and environmental issues, linking the gendered local knowledge everywhere.

2. **Gendered environmental rights and responsibilities:** This theme focuses on the various political context in which women's interests and rights over resources are denied
3. **Gendered environmental politics and grassroots activism:** This theme focuses on the environmental movements at the grassroots level, how women come together and bring a positive impact to the environment, and can be a model of sustainable development.

FPE tries to see the dynamic structure of the class, gender, and race, between humans and their relationship to nature because we live in a living world. Moreover, FPE is a place-based concept that sees places as the "sites of dynamic cultures, economies, and environments...and places also produce and are sites of politics." Therefore, FPE does not assume a researcher would only analyze gender and women *per se* (Nirmal, 2016, p.234).

Unlike ecofeminism, Feminist Political Ecology (FPE) places a significant emphasis on the care and well-being of human and non-human beings as one of its crucial concerns (Bauhardt and Harcourt, 2019, p.17). According to Harcourt and Bauhardt (2019) and Whyte and Cuomo (2017), "care is about how communities organize their community and their livelihoods." However, unlike ecofeminism, which views women as the only group with a unique relationship to nature and ignored intra-household dynamics, resource access, agrarian property, and power," on the contrary, is the center of attention of FPE (Leach, 2007, p.73-4).

FPE acknowledges the gendered work of care and aims to understand better who cares" not only to humans but also to non-human beings (Dombroski *et al.*, 2018, p. 102-3). FPE sees women's life experiences as a potential example of a new kind of society based on a feminist ethic of care, which involves the growth and redistribution of caring labor, including "intuitive" care work from women to men (Ibid.).

Harcourt (2017) argues that the concept of care involves behaviors that demonstrate "love and friendship" to one another and the natural environment. She contends that this acknowledges the agency of all living things, whether they are human or non-human beings (Ibid. p.2-5). In addition to this, Bauhardt (2017), in the same book, said, "The uneasy connection between 'women-nature-mother' is thus dissolved, and caring duty may be a source of lust, joy, and desire as well as of a positive, erotic relationship to the natural environment (Ibid. p.32).

The FPE uses "The Common" as their terminology to refer to what is being taken care of; it can be "physical resources, knowledge, cultural practices" which are widely available for publically access, use, and gain benefit from, and at the same time also required responsibility and need care from collective actions (Ibid. p.105). The community then must establish regulations determining who is responsible for the common care "that emerges consciously or unconsciously" (Ibid. p.108-9). In this study, the TNKS forest is common, and the women's group KPPL Maju Bersama consciously emerged to care for the forest.

2.4 Everyday resistance

Environmental activism has for too long presented this environmental problem as abstract and technically incomprehensible to people at the grassroots whose lives are threatened every day due to environmental degradation, which affects women and men differently (Di Chiro, 2009, p.3). It also makes women's work, feelings, and aspirations in ecological preservation at the grassroots "naturally" invisible and forgotten (Rocheleau, Dianne and Nirmal,2015, p. 3).

Harcourt and Nelson (2015) said that shifting in ecological and social starts from people's struggles at the grassroots that are "attentive to everyday needs, embodied interactions and labors as well as emotional and affective relations with our environments and natures where we live." (Harcourt and Nelson (2015) in Gaybor, 2018, p.232-3). It emphasizes women's agency in day-to-day activities, how community members define themselves, the practice of caring for others, and the interaction between humans and non-humans. The women's group's ability to decide to do the domestic earlier on the group's activity day because they want some free time for themselves to meet with their friends is also a form of agency.

I discovered that the concept of everyday resistance could help me comprehend the actions that the women's group has taken since 2017. Everyday resistance is not like a demonstration; it is primarily non-dramatic and embedded into the women's social life in the community; it is a collective action that needs "some level of coordination to form a resistance" (Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013, p. 1-2).

Redistribution of rights toward the achievement of gender equality is the end goal of the everyday resistance that emerges from the micro-level (family) (Thomas and Davies, 2005, p.716-7). The everyday resistance acknowledges that women are not always powerless or weak; however, women take carefully thinking the consequence of their actions in order to make them have more advantages, such as "vis-à-vis the state or representative of its power," in this case, the TNKS and the patriarchal system of forest management in the community (Thomson, 2011, p.446)

KPPL Maju Bersama gives away plant seeds and trees at ceremonies called *Sedekah Bumi*⁹. In addition, they give away meals during events that take place in villages. KPPL Maju Bersama shows that their activities are beneficial not only for group members but also for members of the community, including the conservation of the environment, by talking with their neighbors during free time at home or anytime they were asked about the group.

These are the ways that they share information in order to get recognized and show that their activities are advantageous. I found the process of the women's group KPPL Maju Bersama and what they have been doing so far: a form of everyday resistance. A "localized struggle and micro-level negotiation" to contest the barriers that prevent women from managing the forests and aim at the "redistribution of rights" in forest management, and value "small wins" (Thomas and Davies, 2005, p.720-6).

Not only that, but women also treat the groups as a safe environment for learning and expanding their plant knowledge. The involvement of women also improves the ability of women individually and collectively to appear in public. The group has been regularly invited to village meetings to provide input on forest management, and its leader has been invited to share the group's best practices at national meetings; they also get income (Agarwal, 2009, p.2796).

2.5 Discovering the benefits of participating in a women's group

Doss and Meinzen-Dick (2015, p.176) pointed out that the literature on natural resource management pays little attention to the health state of the management group's members and how

⁹ Sedekat Bumi: Earth alms

education affects group leadership. They noted that this is something that should get more consideration when researching resource management.

Using Colfer's (2013, p.3) gender box, Siscawati (2020, p.13) explained how women perceive benefits at the micro-scale of gendered benefits and economic strategy in her research in Lampung. She said forest tenure, such as social forestry programs, could benefit women and men, families, and farmers differently. I found that her explanation could help to understand the benefits the women felt they got from joining KPPL Maju Bersama and managing the TNKS forests.

The benefits women get can be linked to the ethic of care explained in sections 2.2: (a) having a legal permit makes the women feel safe and secure in managing the forests; (b) women do not have to worry about being questioned by the authorities; (c) they can manage non-timber forest product (NTFP) and get income to provide for their livelihood; (d) they preserve the nature and environment by using the resources sustainably (Ibid.). Furthermore, she explained how access to education increased (Ibid. p. 14).

All women who participated in the KPPL Maju Bersama stated that they experience improved mental health, such as happiness and less stress because they have more free time and can gather with other women and share their experiences. These conditions are in addition to the benefits that have already been mentioned above. An argument that connecting farming and feelings could be used to explain their experiences:

"farming connected to feeling like joy, passion, and happiness that gives room for connections between mind work and bodywork. This indicates that through farming, positive and emancipative feelings and concepts of the body and the self can be experienced and developed."

Furthermore, one could interpret these feelings as a form of defiance against the predominant notion and norm of what it means to be feminine and how women should feel and behave. The women's group demonstrated care for non-human beings to the forest management group and contributed to a shift in the management group's understanding of "the self" and how women care for themselves. (Wember, 2018, p. 179).

Conclusion

The FPE approach has helped me to understand that joining a group can provide women with a "sense of agency and empowerment," which manifests itself in leadership. Therefore, examining the "historical awareness" of the landscape is essential, which has enabled me to identify the factors that have pushed the KPPL Maju Bersama to manage KSNP. Moreover, seeing the dynamic structure of class and gender between humans and their relationship with nature through women's everyday experiences has enabled me to understand how KPPL Maju Bersama demonstrates their care for humans and non-humans through their everyday resistance. The positive impact of their work is not only on society and the environment but also on the group's understanding of "self" and how women care for themselves.

The following chapter discusses my research methodology and how I conducted this study.

Chapter Three: Methodology and Data Analysis Strategies

For the purpose of this study, the data collection method consisted of qualitative interviews; however, due to time constraints, I conducted the interviews with the women's group through the use of zoom rather than in person. First, I explained the standpoint feminist method that focuses on women's experiences. I operate the FPE approach to look at "the power relations situation" and the everyday experiences of women in the community, and I also used the grounded theory method, which relates to my feminist standpoint and my theoretical framework, FPE. Second, I explained my research questions; third, I explained how I collected and analyzed the data; fourth, I shared my reflection on conducting virtual field research.

3.1 Methodology

I used a feminist standpoint method in this research because I understand that women have various contexts; knowledge production is always within a particular time and place. Therefore, I listen to women's experiences which are always different from men and see its intersection with gender class, race, age, and other forms of difference in relations, and also "critically discuss the relationship between knowledge and power" (Harcourt, 2017, p. 1008; Harding, 1992, p. 443; Linabary and Hamel, 2017, p. 98-99).

The purpose of this study was to learn about women's experiences in rural areas, including how they interact with forests, their communities, and the government in their daily lives. As a strategy for case selection, I decided to use a "deviant case study," which is defined as "a case study in which an unexpected value is proven by making reference to some broad understanding of a topic (either a specialized theory or common sense)" (Seawright, 2006, p.105-106).

It is a widely held belief that only men should work in the forest, and the majority of participants in social forestry management organizations in Indonesia are male. Because this particular women's group is not yet well-studied, and because they are the first social forestry management group with all women, I decided to focus on them rather than on the large sample of men who dominate the social forestry program.

In this study, I used a qualitative approach known as grounded theory. During the research process, I continually worked on the data collected from the field and used that information to construct a theory that was suitable to the context. This method approach to reflexive construction allows the researcher to remain open and adaptable to theory changes, depending on the facts collected in the field throughout the entirety of the research process (Flick, 2022; Glaser and Strauss, 2017).

Because it generates knowledge that is rooted in a specific situation, grounded theory is inextricably linked to feminism (Clarke, 2022). This method overlaps with both my feminist standpoint and my theoretical framework, feminist political ecology (FPE), and it is within this framework I will address the agency and resistance of women in their everyday lives.

In this research, I operated FPE to focus on the context and "the situated power relations," a knowledge production process that actively involves women and listens to their everyday experiences (Clement *et al.*, 2019, p.5). This research was a learning process on how women can be forest managers, how they feel about the group and forest, to understand their relations with

family and the community, and their relations with related government offices and the Taman Nasional Kerinci Seblat (TNKS). Throughout the process, I continuously reflected on the phenomenon I was studying.

3.2 Research objectives

The purpose of this research is to learn from women's experiences and their day-to-day resistance to coming together to become forest managers in the social forestry program. Additionally, this study intends to investigate how women's gender relations impact their relationships with the family, the community, and the forest.

Research questions

What is the everyday resistance conducted by KPPL Maju Bersama in accessing and controlling the Kerinci Seblat National Park (TNKS)?

Sub-questions

1. What factors motivated the members to join the KPPL Maju Bersama?
2. What actions did they take to address the issues that arose while attempting to manage the forest?
3. In the women's group context, how important are factors such as age, gender, level of education, and marital status?
4. What changes do they experience, and what do they get as a result of becoming a group member?

3.3 How did I collect these women's stories?

Due to my prior work on land and forest governance programs, I had already established a relationship with the women's group and LivE Knowledge Bengkulu, the local NGO that assists the women's group KPPL Maju Bersama, which made the interview a reasonably straightforward process. I have talked to the leader of the women's group several times in Jakarta. She was invited as a resource person to discuss her experiences gaining access to and maintaining control of the forest in her community and met the women's group twice in their village.

Between the 14th-17th of September 2022, the interviews were conducted virtually through the use of zoom. All of the interviews were recorded and transcribed. Atlas.ti was the tool that I used to codify the transcription. I had the assistance of two young women from LivE, who were both my research assistant and my note-taker. The research assistant provided assistance in selecting a location in the village that was secure, pleasant, and had a reliable internet connection for the interviewees to use while following the procedure. In addition to that, she was in charge of the schedule. The note-taker was in charge of writing all of the interview processes.

I interviewed 14 women, including 14 male family members of each, with total interviewee 28 people. I also conducted one focus group discussion and one interview with LivE. In the first round, I interviewed 11 people; on the second day, I interviewed 12 people; on the third day, five people, including the focus group discussion with 11 members; and on the last day, I interviewed

the NGO attended by five people. I was unable to speak with all the members because some had other errands at the appointed interview and discussion time.

Semi-structured interviews with the women's group and their families took an average of 45 minutes to complete and were conducted in the Indonesian language. I spent 80 minutes asking structured questions during the focus group discussion with KPPL Maju Bersama. I conducted a 2-hour semi-structured question-and-answer session with LivE during the FGD. All the interviews were recorded with video turned on. These videos helped see the interviewee's facial expressions or their silence and helped the note-taker go back and complete the verbatim. I took notes on each interview.

3.4 How did I uncover new knowledge?

In order to answer the research question and sub-questions and put KPPL Maju Bersama's experiences up front, I used several methods, such as interviews with women's groups and their male family members, followed by s interviews with women's groups and their male family members, followed by FGDs with women's groups and local NGO LivE. Furthermore, I connected the findings from the interviews with multiple conceptualizations to support my findings and uncover new knowledge (Hesse-Biber, 2012, p.3; 7; Panke, 2018).

Mechanism	Type	From/Who	Details
Documents	Literature	MoEF and other sources	To explain the history of forests management in Indonesia
	Journal, text from the website	Related sources	To connect with earlier research related to this particular women's group and women and forests in general
Interview one-on-one aprx. 30 mins./person	Semi structure	KPPL Maju Bersama (14 members)	Individual interviews to explore their agency, their experiences in forest management
		Husband/son of the married member, father of the single member, and influential actor in the village (14 people)	Individual interviews to explore their perception of female family members participating in the forest management
FGD approx. 1.5 hours	Structured	KPPL Maju Bersama (11 people)	To capture the group attitude, and value about their roles in forest management
	Semi-Structured	NGO LivE (4 people)	To capture the NGO belief that led them to assist this women's group

Meeting to report the findings 1 hour	Zoom Meeting	The researcher	To report the findings from the interview and to confirm if the result
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Table 3. Mixed method for this study

I analyzed my case study with atlas.ti, a software for qualitative interview analysis. I developed grounded codes and groups based on theoretical frameworks, and then, using the in-vivo technique (DeCuir-Gunby *et al.*, 2011), I went through all interview transcripts and inserted codes based on my notes; followed by data interpretation and pattern matching between the theoretical frameworks and the findings (Ibid.)

This forest management group's accomplishments have not yet been studied; therefore, it is critical to understand their struggles and leadership in the community in obtaining social forestry permits (Beach and Rasmus, 2016). I used the explanation-building technique that focused on how the outcome of this case study occurred (Yin, 2017). Moreover, I used the outcome-tracing method to construct a valid outcome. This method is a holistic process aiming to explain the case's variable that has probably been ignored despite being proven in other research findings; recognition of this uniqueness can contribute to related studies, mainly if the case has not been widely studied previously (George and Bennett, 2005).

One-on-one interview with KPPL Maju Bersama and the family

In finding the answer to my research question and sub-questions, I built interview questions that would help all the interviewees to reflect on their everyday experiences. The first sub-question: "What factors motivated the members to join the KPPL Maju Bersama?" I wanted to know if the awareness for the women's group to become forest managers emerged before joining the group or if something led them to have this awareness.

I asked the group's members what the function of the forest for them and the village is, what they know about TNKS and social forestry, and who has the traditional right to manage the forest; I also asked the same questions except to their family members. After that, I asked the group members why they wanted to join.

To answer the second question: "What did they do to overcome the challenges in managing the forest? I wanted to know the challenges they have been facing in obtaining the permit and managing the forest and what their strategies are. Through this question, I want to explore their agency. How do they find the balance between domestic roles and managing the forest (Siscawati, 2020)

I asked the group's members what the response was from the community, knowing there is a women's group that wanted to manage TNKS, and what the response was from their families, knowing they wanted to join this group. Then I asked how they reacted to these responses. I also asked how they managed their time in the house so they could actively participate in the group.

To complement the member's perceptions, I asked almost identical questions to their families. I asked them what they knew about KPPL Maju Bersama, what the response was from

the community, knowing there was a women's group that wanted to manage TNKS, and what their responses were that their wives/mothers/daughters wanted to join the group.

I also asked what they knew about how their wives/mothers/daughters manage time in the house so they could actively participate in the group, whether the family members offer help, and whether they support women as the forest manager. It is interesting to see their answer complement each other, that there is a collective action within the household (Doss and Meinzen-Dick, 2015).

The third sub-question is: "What is the role of age, gender, education, and marital status in the women's group?" through this question I want to know how these factors affect the member in making decisions related to their participation in the group, including the decision-making process in the group itself. I asked about their age, marital status, how many children they have, and their educational background. I also used this information to analyze the FGD process. I also asked their family members the same questions.

The last question is: "What benefits do they feel and receive after they join the group?" through this question, I want to know how their participation in the group affects their health and knowledge. Doss and Meinzen-Dick (2015) raised the issue that natural resource management literature gives little attention to the health condition of the management group's members; and how education affects the leadership within the group.

I asked them how is the quality of their health after joining the group; I mentioned that health condition is both physical and psychological condition. I also asked what they thought about education for women to manage the forest and what kind of education they needed. Moreover, do they think they got more knowledge by participating in the group?

To complement the member's responses, I ask the family members to tell me if they see or feel any changes happening to their family's health condition in general or specifically to their wives/mothers/daughters; I also ask whether they think education is essential for women in managing the forest and what kind of education the women need.

After completing the data analysis, I arranged another meeting with the women's group to present my results, at which point I solicited their opinions, confirming if my findings were what they thought and felt about becoming a member and a group. This meeting was a part of "doing reflexivity," where participants also engage in reflexivity to reflect on the results of their experiences (Linabary and Hamel, 2017, p.1-2).

FGD with KPPL Maju Bersama & LivE Knowledge Bengkulu

This FGD process aimed to see how the women interact with one another within the group, as well as analyze how they share their thoughts and the decision-making process of sharing the responsibility within the group. The goal was to ensure that the discussion went smoothly and that everyone took part in it.

I questioned them about the following topics: what the forest means to them; why they joined KPPL Maju Bersama; what strategies they used to overcome obstacles both before and after receiving the permit; what qualities women need to have in order to manage the forest effectively; and how KPPL Maju Bersama will continue its activities if it no longer receives assistance from LivE.

The last FGD session was with LivE. This FGD process focused on investigating the reasons behind this organization's decision to help KPPL Maju Bersama. I want to supplement the accounts I have gotten from the KPPL Maju Bersama by learning more about LivE's role throughout the entire help process. Additionally, I would like to see if I could get any other stories that did not previously share by the women's group during the one-on-one interviews.

I asked them why they chose Pal VIII village, why they felt women should join a group to become the forest manager, what the challenges women's organizations experienced when accessing and regulating the forest, and why they thought women should join a group to become the forest manager. I also questioned how LivE would continue to support KPPL Maju Bersama if the development agency cannot provide further assistance and what women need to have skills to manage the forest effectively.

3.5 A reflective analysis of how I conducted my research

Looking back on the process, I realize I have had many new experiences conducting interviews and FGD. This section presents my experiences and lessons learned to help future researchers who aspire to conduct the same research process.

Virtual setting

The first thing I missed was the hospitality of the women's group. I visited them several years ago in an informal setting after attending an event together. We had small conversations for a couple of hours, eating together, and when I was about to leave, they handed me a plastic bag packed with homemade palm sugar and offered me some other items as I was about to go home. They said they were happy to have me around and asked me to return.

About the setting, conducting the interview and FGD in a virtual setting using zoom has advantages and limitations. The advantage of using zoom is that I could save traveling time to and from the village and do the interview at home. Zoom recording facility also helped me record the process to a cloud server or computer, so I could review it afterward to analyze the data and for the note taker to complete the transcription. I also saw that the people I interviewed were relaxed; there was a member who asked me if she could turn off the video because she was shy.

The limitation I identified in this research was that I sometimes could not see their facial expressions clearly and could not see their body language at all; therefore, I could not get complete information. This problem is primarily due to the internet connection in the village not being as good as in the city; even though I live in Jakarta, I also face a slow internet connection. Since I wanted to tackle this issue, I asked the camera to be on all the time; after all, I wanted to build a connection with them through the process. However, due to internet speed, there are many glitches.

It is also challenging to conduct FGD with KPPL Maju Bersama because not everyone has access to a computer, but they became familiar with zoom during the pandemic because traveling was limited due to COVID restrictions. LivE assisted them when they were invited to any zoom meeting. To make this happen, I asked the research assistant to find a room where the women could sit in a circle and put the computer with zoom outside the circle but close enough so they could hear me. Then I asked the research assistant to use her phone, which has a zoom

application, and go around the circle and highlight their faces when discussing so I could see their expression. Before I started the FGD, I explained that they run this process, and I only provided questions, and they agreed to this process.

Preparation

Communication and contacting people I wanted to interview long before the data collection process started was an important step. In preparing for the interview, I did not face any substantial challenges. The preparation process ran smoothly because I already knew the group leader and the NGO through my previous work. However, I know they are busy people, and since I am no longer working with them, I have had to build communication with them earlier.

Since March this year, I have contacted the director of LivE to explain my research plan, and he agreed. During the research design writing process, I also contacted him to ask about the women's group and information about TNKS detail for my research paper design. So they already knew that I was going to conduct this process. He also introduced me to two of the LivE staff to become my research assistant and note taker.

Before we started the interview process, I conducted two zoom meetings with LivE; the first was to explain the research plan, and the second was more about the technicality of how we would navigate the interview process and administration because the De Zaaier grant funded this research, so I have to ensure all the supporting document in the field completed.

Transcription and Reflection Process

A note-taker has helped me write down the interview process. I think I was too optimistic about this process. I asked the note-taker to send all the transcriptions documents within two days if possible, but I finally received them after two weeks. We use google drive to save the files related to this field process. I realized this was a demanding task, and my note-taker is a university student working with the community; I understand that she has another priority to do while also working on this project.

Therefore, I learned that it is vital for a researcher to always take notes on every interview and make reflections document each day after I finish the interview process because I realized I found many new things and reflect on these findings every time. I used Microsoft OneNote to save my notes and a personal Microsoft One Drive to save my documents. Furthermore, since the interviews are conducted in Bahasa Indonesia, I have to be very careful to translate them into English so that I will not misinterpret the meaning.

3.6 Who am I? What lens did I use?

I always believe that women must be free from patriarchal oppression. I care about gender equality and individual freedom and believe that women are also rational beings. I think I came and embraced these values due to my personal experiences with my own Batakese patriarchal culture that favors men over women because I came from a family with all daughters and no sons. I also think I was more exposed to liberal feminism, which helped me to find the answer to my restlessness about injustice towards women, including my personal experiences.

These values led me to work in INGO. I was with my last organization for almost ten years. My work during this period shaped my understanding of development, freedom, inclusion, and gender. We work closely with CSOs all around Indonesia at the national, provincial, and district levels.

I worked with the forest and land governance program and learned much about how environmental degradation affects women differently than men because the land and forest management system is strongly influenced by patriarchal culture. I learned the term *Ibu Bumi*¹⁰, imagining the Earth as the woman's body, connecting the women traditional nurturing and caring with the environment. I also learned that women must seize leadership to be heard, which is easier said than done.

In 2017 my program director told me about this women's group in Bengkulu, KPPL Maju Bersama, trying to access TNKS through the social forestry program. My director asked me to join one of my program officers to meet the CSO assisting this women's group, visit the village, and talk with the women. At that time, no women's group was trying to access social forestry programs, making them different. They finally got the permit in 2019, and I thought maybe any woman could do that, too, as long as they got proper assistance.

During the interview process, my previous encounters with LivE and KPPL Maju Bersama put me as an insider in this process. During the introduction in the interview, I explained that I am pursuing study in the Netherlands, which puts me as an outsider. Interestingly, they kept mentioning the support they got from my previous organization several times and hoping that this organization would keep supporting them, even though I was no longer with that organization.

I wanted to present myself as approachable and friendly, and I am not "above" them since most interviewees are the same age as me. I also stressed that I was conducting this interview because I wanted to write their story and that they had the knowledge I wanted to learn. However, some of my interviewees called me *Ibu/Bu*.¹¹ My working experience in an INGO keeps me aware of the power relations between the donor and the grantee, and I always feel uncomfortable with people addressing me as Ibu/ Bu, especially during interaction with the community. I always prefer anyone to call me *Mbak*¹² or *Kak*¹³ because it feels egalitarian. However, I will call other women Ibu/Bu out of courtesy unless they ask me to refer them differently.

In 2021 when I started studying for my master's, I learned that knowledge production is specific to a particular time and place, and women have different contexts; As a result, I need to avoid generalizations. I also see that women are not always the victims and that there are many other ways in which they can resist and find an agency. I used to avoid the concept of ecofeminism because I did not want to glorify the triple burden that women carry, and I was so focused on the

¹⁰ Ibu Bumi: Mother Earth

¹¹ Ibu/Bu: Indonesian language for mother, but also use as a formal term of respect in conversation especially if the people never met before.

¹² Mbak: Javanese language for sister; it is a common term of respect in conversation to call woman who is assumed have similar or older age than the speaker. This term widely used not only to address the Javanese women.

¹³ Kak/Kakak: Indonesian language for sister, usually women in Sumatera Island commonly used this term of respect in conversation to call woman who is assumed have similar or order age than the speaker.

term women empowerment, and gender mainstreaming, which I found out were overused and had lost their meaning (Foulds, 2014).

While at ISS, I rechecked, questioned, and pondered on my prior work. I was particularly interested in the relationship between gender and development. I realized that my approach to feminism needed to be fluid and that I should avoid demonizing one particular strand. I also reflect on my experiences as a woman, a mother, a wife, and a worker that care work is not powerless and that woman also has agency even in the small actions they do every day.

As a result, as I was writing this research paper and reflecting on everything all over again, I have come to the realization that this research is a journey for me as a woman who works in the development sector to learn, unlearn, appreciate, and be more sensitive to the women's experiences, especially those women who live at the grassroots level.

Chapter Four: Remarkable Women in Forest Conservation

In this section, I will connect the feminist political ecology interest on the everyday to the findings from the field research. I would not only look for the big, public, or physical actions but pay more attention to the small daily actions that are often ignored as a part of the bargaining process within the household, community, and with the state to achieve their group goals. I will elaborate on the significance of women's participation in forest management and their care work in bringing changes at the grassroots that affect themselves, their families, the community, and the forests as part of the ecological community. The theoretical explanation presented in chapter three will serve as the organizing principle for the organization of the structure of this section.

4.1 We are not permitted to enter TNKS

Several factors allowed the women in Pal VIII to come together and become forest managers: **First is the resource condition;** In accordance with the provisions of Article 33, Paragraph 3 of the Constitution of Indonesia, the Indonesian government is obligated to exercise complete authority over all of the country's resources. One of Indonesia's resources is the national forest area, which accounts for sixty-four percent of the country's total land area. Out of the total national forest area, there are 22.1 million hectares that are classified as conservation forests. (Nurbaya, 2020, p.9).

TNKS is one of the conservation forests in Indonesia. It is an area that prohibits any kind of activity with the intention of harvesting or using the products of the forest. Everyone who was



Photo 1. Participatory mapping conducted by KPPL Maju Bersama with their husbands and TNKS officers as a prerequisite for applying for a legal permit (*LinE documentation, 2018*).

holders of primary forest industry business licenses" (Nurbaya, 2020, p.xxiii). The social forestry program requires the community to establish a forest management group before they can submit their request.

In reality, men dominate 94% of all social forestry management groups (Prastiwi, 2020), even though half of the community who live near the forest are women (Colfer, 2013, p.14-15). Furthermore, Colfer (2013, p.14) quoted Elmhirst (2011), who argued that the Indonesian

interviewed acknowledged that they are aware it is against the rules to take anything from TNKS. However, through the social forestry program community who lives around the forests now could have the chance to manage the forests, including the national park like TNKS.

One of the social forestry program schemes is the Forestry Partnerships. "This cooperative scheme is between forest managers, concession holders, service providers, holders of forest land use rights, and/or

government's forest management system is connected to a heteronormative that puts the family in the development process that perceives the men and married ones as the "point of contact between the state and the people." (*see section 1.3*).

The second factor is the community attribute, such as social capital, human capital, and physical structures. In the beginning, one of the four women was invited to attend training held by LivE, and the TNKS office was the village head which became the crucial social capital for the group in forming the group. Moreover, in the women's group interviews, they said to share domestic work with their families, which makes their work lighter, especially on the day when they have group activities. In the interviews with the husband/son/father, they also said to help by taking care of the kids, preparing the food, and cleaning up the house.

Human capital, such as a higher level of education, is said to become the initial condition that tends to lead women to come together (Coleman and Mwangi, 2013, p.202). KPPL Maju Bersama proves that it has not always been the case. Eight members I interviewed only received elementary and middle school education, and seven family members I interviewed also have the same level of education. However, those who hold important positions in the group as chairman, secretary, and treasury, received higher education up to high school. As for health, the age of the group members ranges from the 20s-50s. They are at a productive age and have good health conditions.

They all live in the same village close to the forest with a distance of approximately 1-3 km. Most were born and raised in that village or from other villages in the area. Social structure is essential, such as a role in the community, lineage, values, and cultural system. The father of one of the members is a respected figure in the community, and he contributes to the group's discussions on a regular basis. FGD with LivE mentioned *Gotong royong*¹⁴ as one value that KPPL Maju Bersama holds while working in the group and the community.

Furthermore, all interviewees were already aware of the importance of saving the forest for future generations and protecting them from natural disasters. Moreover, farmers need the forest as a water source and a place for pollinating animals, such as wasps, and spiders, which help fertilize their coffee plants. Moreover, they use the traditional village event, such as *Sedekah Bumi* (Hendrastiti and Kusdinar, 2019, p.79-80), to introduce their work in forest management by donating seeds for the villagers and planting trees.

The third factor is institutional arrangements because the state is the "owner" of the forest, and the resource they want to access is restricted by regulation; therefore, there is no history of forest management in Pal VIII village, and there was no forest management group established before. This condition actually made the process much easier because the women's group did not have to negotiate with other actors besides the state.

In addition, I learned through the conversation with the group leader and LivE that a TNKS officer with experience working with the communities recognized KPPL Maju Bersama. He supported and helped the group to get the permit. Even though the group had to wait for 1,5 years for the permit, it was primarily because of the regulation changes and employee changes in the TNKS office that slowed down the process.

¹⁴ Gotong royong: mutual assistance, mutual help: cultural work ethic to work together, help each other in the community and share the the burden that could happened in many social activities.

Coleman and Mwangi (2013, p.202) said that the role of the voluntary organization is to give valuable insights that encourage and support participation. Access to assistance from the NGO from the beginning provided by LivE is also playing an essential role in strengthening the group. First, they communicated with the TNKS office and invited the four women to the training held with the TNKS office; second, they explained the women's right to information and communication with the forest owner (Interview with LivE, September 17th, 2022). LivE also connected the women's group with the local university to give training, connecting with the other NGOs that provide more support which helped this women's group improve.

4.2 I find these women are more persevering than men¹⁵

When they first create a group, they face numerous challenges before and after securing the permit, and their responses to these challenges are a form of everyday resistance and women's agency.

Before securing the permit, they formed the group and started applying for a TNKS area management permit in 2017. They communicated their wish to manage an area of the MADAPI forest to collect ginger torches and ferns. However, they faced the fact that their proposed area falls within the utilization zone (*see table 1*). Under new regulations at that time, the director general of natural resources and ecosystem conservation regulations nr.6/2018, this zone could not be used for conservation partnership.



Photo 2. KPPL Maju Bersama donated plant seeds at the Sedekah Bumi event in 2021 (LivE documentation, 2018).

They did not give up; in a meeting with the head of TNKS, the women's group submitted a request to take non-timber forest products in that area. Seeing these women's determination, the TNKS office finally submitted a zoning revision to the Directorate General of Natural Resources and Ecosystem Conservation specifically for 10 hectares which they proposed to be changed from utilization zone to traditional zone.

"For example, like this, it used to be a utilization zone, but because the women from KPPL keep trying, even TNKS revised the utilization zone into a traditional zone." (Interviewee 32, September 17th, 2022)

Due to this change and officer changes in the TNKS office, KPPL Maju Bersama had to wait until 1,5 years for them to receive the permit.

¹⁵ "Aku rasa perempuan ini, dia tu lebih telaten daripada laki-laki." Interviewee 23 (father of a member), September 15th 2022.

During this process, they also had to deal with doubts from some community members about their ability to manage the forest, mainly because it is common knowledge that no one can access and collect forest products from TNKS. So it was only natural that the people started questioning the women's decision to form a group and apply to become forest managers. In an interview with the group's treasurer, she explained the response the group got from the community at the beginning:

"The response we got from the community, some of them support us, some are not, Mbak Ocha. Some people underestimated us by asking why women wanted to go into the forest and how they could do it while it was already difficult for men to access the forest." (Interviewee 2, September 15th 2022).

Their response to the village's doubts about women's ability to manage the forest is collecting money voluntarily from members, making trees, planting nurseries, and distributing them to villagers at the *Sedekah Bumi* event. They also participate in donating food made by their group to village celebrations. They also explain their group's activities through small talk with the neighbors if asked. KPPL Maju Bersama wanted to show that the forest as a common and that even though only the group has the permit to manage it legally, everyone can enjoy the results of this process. They believe action is an effective way to show that their group positively impacts the community.

Gendered roles in the family is another challenge. In the interview with the women's group, when I asked about what is the function of the forest for them, all of them mentioned that forests are essential for women because it provides water that women need for cooking, washing, drinking, including irrigation for their plants; forest also a source of food, so they do not have to buy.

Women play an essential role in ensuring this domestic care work is fulfilled. When I continued by asking how they manage their time between domestic work and group activities, all of them said that their group activities were not conducted daily, so their activity as KPPL Maju Bersama does not affect their role at home.

However, when they knew the group would have an activity day, All the women said to wake up earlier in the day when they had an activity with the group. Therefore, they could finish domestic work such as cooking, cleaning the house, and washing; some said they prepare for it a day before joining the group activity. They also mentioned to received help from the men in the family, which they feel makes their work easier.

The men also said to help by taking care of the kids, preparing the food, and cleaning up the house. A member's husband said, "As I mentioned earlier, yes, sometimes I help to hang the clothes, and sometimes I wash dishes." (Interviewee 26, September 14th, 2022). I saw a shift in sharing domestic work among women and men in the family. Although the men's group said they only helped a little, the women felt it eased their burden, especially in the family with husbands and wives aged between the 30s-45s.

Macgregor (2004, p.67) argued that there would be tension if women were busy outside the home for community activities. However, this is not the case at KPPL Maju Bersama. Even though the women said they did not intend to have men members in their group, some said their

sons/husbands/fathers sometimes helped them with their activity in the forest, such as *menebas*.¹⁶ The son/husband/father also corroborated this statement in separate interviews that they sometimes joined the group activity.

Limited information on ginger torches is the next challenge. Using the forest-based industry standpoint, the plants they have chosen to gather from the forest are uncommon. Ginger torches are regarded as wild plants, and unlike cocoa or coffee, no assessment of their economic potential has ever been undertaken. Furthermore, the faculty of agriculture at the university in Bengkulu has never conducted a study on ginger torch cultivation, so there is very little knowledge about this plant and how to process it into processed food products they can sell (Interviewee 32, September 17th, 2022).



Photo 3. KPPL Maju Bersama, with their male relatives were cultivating ginger torches in the TNKS (LivE documentation, 2018).

In facing this challenge, the KPPL Maju Bersama group leader showed her not to give up amid the lack of information about the plants they chose to harvest from the forest. She set an example for her members by trying to cultivate the plant in her backyard, and she did simple research recording the plant's growth until she knew about the development of ginger torches. The same goes for food processing; they tried many formulas suitable for processing ginger torches, such as jam, *kue tat*¹⁷, *dodol*¹⁸, and *rempeyek*.¹⁹ Now they have produced ferns rempeyek, ginger torch rempeyek, ferns stick cracker, ginger torch dodol, kue tat with ginger torch jam, and ginger torch syrup.

" Women, in my perspective, develop their own knowledge. That is what the group's leader and all the female members did." (Interviewee 32, September 17th, 2022)

The sustainability of the women's group is also an issue. At the moment, KPPL Maju Bersama receives assistance from INGO, the university, and the local government to develop their knowledge, skills, and productivity. They are aware that all this support is temporary. It would be a challenge too for them soon, so they already have their exit strategy if the current support is no longer. They said they would utilize their existing knowledge and networks, remain passionate about managing the forest, and strive to improve the group.

"from selling the forest products, (we) will be using (the money) to manage the forest and for members' welfare. In addition, (we) will make innovations, such as making seeds and fertilizer

¹⁶ Menebas: a traditional system of cutting bushes, and clearing land in the forest

¹⁷ Rejang Lebong's traditional pie with filling

¹⁸ Sweet confectionary made of palm sugar, coconut milk, rice flour

¹⁹ Savoury cracker usually with peanuts, but could be replace with other ingredients such as anchovies, shrimps, etc.

and selling it, and (the money) can be used for groups and managing forests." (FGD with KPPL Maju Bersama, September 16th, 2022).

In line with that strategy, with assistance from LivE, they now become members of a cooperative body called *Koperasi Perempuan Pelestari Hutan*.²⁰ With this cooperative, the group can get support from the local government in charge of small businesses and cooperatives and expand a non-exploitative forest-based economic activity with a social and ecological impact that aims to improve the welfare of its members and communities and part of the profits obtained are also returned to preserve the forest.

This cooperative is also a new challenge for the women's group and LivE. They referred to this economic concept as ecosociopreneurship, a new approach to doing business with social and ecological impacts that is not yet familiar to many people, including the local government that manages small businesses and cooperatives. There are still many questions about why the benefits are given for environment and community empowerment and not for group benefits only. LivE officers also said they learned to shift their understanding of the economic activity that solely focuses on gaining more profit. (FGD with LivE, September 16th 2022)

4.3 We are happy

During the interview, when they explained to me the benefit they receive from being a member of this forest management group, all the KPPL Maju Bersama members said their health quality is better after joining the group, primarily psychologically. They kept bringing up their feeling of being happy, less stressed, and relieved after each activity because they had time to share with their friends. Some of them also mentioned that their physical health is better because now they can go to the forest together and have fresh air while doing their activities.

Yes, we are happy, so happy, Mbak. For example, something happened at home, but when we arrived at the (activity) location, we became happy and felt consoled while working. (Interviewee 12, September 15th 2022).

The women see involvement in the forest management group as an opportunity to take time off from domestic routines and have social activities with their peers in the community. I think this is a form of agency where women can have the power to choose to have some time for themselves (Simon *et al.*, 2021, p.311). The group became their safe space, and I saw the connection between them being happy within the KPPL Maju Bersama, which made them resilient in their everyday resistance.

In addition, LivE said that this finding was helpful for them in improving their assistance to 11 women's groups they assist in Bengkulu. They had never thought about these women's group feelings. They said to pay more attention to this aspect. Psychological health is something they

²⁰ Women's Forest Conservation Cooperative.

According to Law nr. 25/1992, a cooperative refers to a business enterprise composed of individuals or a cooperative legal body founded on cooperative principles; this is also a people-economic movement founded on the family principle.

gained by working together in this group, which has not yet been discussed in other women's and TNKS-related studies.²¹

All the interviewees said they had expanded their knowledge after being a member of the organization, and they all agreed that in order for women to be able to manage forests more effectively, they must either have formal or non-formal education in forest management. As previously mentioned, the group leader has learned to cultivate torch ginger by self-taught because there was no previous knowledge about it. The group also tried to create food products from ginger torches and ferns.

"Anyway, I am very grateful for this (group) activity, Mbak. Already active in making products from ginger torches, ferns, and ginger torches dodol. (all of them) are very useful for the women in KPPL and the people of Pal VIII Village." (Interviewee 10, September 15th 2022).

Moreover, other new knowledge they got from this group is skills such as public speaking, managing organization, and networking. Some of the group's members had experience meeting with government officials, local and national, and their experiences in managing the forests. They also attended village meetings and presented their opinion in the meeting. Those who did not yet experience it because they were new in the group said they wanted to have public speaking skills to represent their group at such events, and they saw KPPL Maju Bersama could help them build that skill.

Learning how to manage an organization and build networking were also cited by some of the members. By joining KPPL Maju Bersama, they met new people from NGOs, INGOs, academia from the university, government officials, and other women groups who work in forest management from all over Indonesia. The practice of networking is essential for knowledge sharing and "the expansion of female friendship networks" (Colfer, Carol, 2013, p.32). In addition, since most of them are coffee farmers, this group also became an alternative income generating by producing food products from ginger torches and ferns, and they could earn money to support their families.

"Yes, just grateful, (when) someone made (order), we enjoy the benefits together, (that) means that KPPL has earned income." (Interviewee 2, September 15th, 2022).

4.4 Think locally, act globally

This women's group has demonstrated their everyday resistance at the grassroots in using forests sustainably through social forestry programs. Therefore, the government must continue encouraging women's active participation in social forestry management groups throughout Indonesia through policies and provide meaningful support for women's groups who want to manage forests to achieve social forestry targets.

In light of the threat of climate change, forest preservation has become a global concern. I believe learning from the KPPL Maju Bersama's experience of care is essential. I reflect on living at the grassroots level and how their knowledge and everyday resistance in forest management can

²¹ See Hendrastiti and Santoso, 2009; Hendrastiti and Kusdinar, 2019; Hendrastiti and Kusujarti, 2020

positively affect the community and the sustainability of the forest, which also affects gender relations to be more equitable. Therefore, people living in and around forests need to be treated better if forests are to last for a long time, and women make up half of those people (Colfer, 2013, p.1).

Reflecting on this women's group at the grassroots level brings back many memories from my time working on issues affecting women and the environment. The same resiliency is required of the support provided by the development agencies to women's groups. They need to demonstrate that they are committed to giving support over the long term. Moreover, They have to be aware of the fact that the circumstances surrounding each group are unique, and as a result, there is no one-size-fits-all model. In addition, it is essential to emphasize on the everyday to seek out the small wins.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

Social forestry program has become a survival approach to Indonesia's long history of forest management that only sees forests as an economic resource that has damaged the forests and neglected the welfare of communities around the forest. Forests are still seen as a "men's world" despite the fact that women have long relied on forest resources for subsistence and still lack the authority to manage the forest because it is assumed that women lack the expertise necessary to manage the forest effectively

Nevertheless, the women's group, KPPL Maju Bersama, has demonstrated that women's leadership is transformative and that they can become forest managers by emphasizing their caring value and working in the forest to foster cooperation with their male counterparts, the village community and the government. They also have resilience in carrying out activities to achieve their goals. During an interview with the father of a KPPL Maju Bersama member, I asked the father if he supported women becoming forest managers. The father responded by saying, "Yes, I find these women are more persevering than men."

In the face of the very serious danger posed by climate change that we are presently encountering globally, this study has shown me that the care work that women do at the grassroots can be an alternative to the preservation of forests. These works not only impact the ongoing efforts to use forests in a sustainable manner, but they also impact the social transformation that is taking place.

In researching women's work of care in forest conservation, one should not only look for the big, public, or physical actions but pay more attention to the small daily actions that most of the times are often ignored as a part of the bargaining process within the household, community, and in relation with the state to achieve their group goals. In addition, one must be aware of the many realities women face and comprehend that there is no universally applicable model for women's participation in forest management.

Using the feminist standpoint and FPE methods, I discovered a correlation between the women's happiness in joining the KPPL Maju Bersama and their resilience in their daily resistance to managing the forest. Care for non-human beings contributed to the forest management group's transformation in the thinking of "the self" and how women care for themselves. In addition, there has been a shift in the division of work in the household, where gender relations have demonstrated some level of cooperation, which also affects women's participation in forest management groups. Thus, for future research on women in social forestry programs, it is necessary to look at how joining a group affects women and the "situated power relations" in their everyday experiences.

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Appendix 1. List of the interviewees

Below are the interviewees' details; I hid their names as part of the identity protection system we agreed on regarding the information and consent form.

Nr.	Name	Gender	Age	Education	Relation with the Group
1	Interviewee 1	Woman	53	High School	Leader
2	Interviewee 2	Woman	51	High School	Treasurer
3	Interviewee 3	Woman	22	High School	Secretary
4	Interviewee 4	Woman	32	High School	Member
5	Interviewee 5	Woman	46	Elementary School	Member
6	Interviewee 6	Woman	31	Bachelor	Member
7	Interviewee 7	Woman	31	Middle High School	Member
8	Interviewee 8	Woman	40	High School	Member
9	Interviewee 9	Woman	40	Middle High School	Member
10	Interviewee 10	Woman	57	Middle High School	Member
11	Interviewee 11	Woman	45	Middle High School	Member
12	Interviewee 12	Woman	42	Middle High School	Member
13	Interviewee 13	Woman	38	Middle High School	Member
14	Interviewee 14	Woman	32	Middle High School	Member
15	Interviewee 15	Man	33	High School	Husband of the member
16	Interviewee 16	Man	35	High School	Husband of the member
17	Interviewee 17	Man	35	Elementary School	Husband of the member
18	Interviewee 18	Man	37	Middle High School	Husband of the member
19	Interviewee 19	Man	42	High School	Husband of the member
20	Interviewee 20	Man	36	Middle High School	Husband of the member
21	Interviewee 21	Man	46	Elementary School	Husband of the member
22	Interviewee 22	Man	42	Middle High School	Husband of the member
23	Interviewee 23	Man	46	Middle High School	Father of the member
24	Interviewee 24	Man	72	High School	Father of the member
25	Interviewee 25	Man	26	High School	Children of the member
26	Interviewee 26	Man	43	Middle High School	Children of the member
27	Interviewee 27	Man	30	Bachelor	Children of the member
28	Interviewee 28	Man	31	Bachelor	Children of the member
29	Interviewee 29	Woman		Bachelor	LiVE
30	Interviewee 30	Woman		Bachelor	LiVE
31	Interviewee 31	Woman		Bachelor	LiVE
32	Interviewee 32	Man		Bachelor	LiVE