

The Changing Face of Human Security: Lesson from Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore in Transboundary Haze Pollution (THP)

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Abstract: This paper tries to analyze contemporary global issues related to transboundary haze transfers seen from the eyes of human security. This study also seeks to examine a new form of security in the era of globalization using the concept of human security to explain more in depth on the issue of transboundary haze pollution. The definition of security have enhanced these days and the proliferation of this issue has affected our daily life, so the concept of security is not only related to sovereignty, state security, and economic security. Environmental security and health security are several examples of the human security concern. Hence, the concept of human security will be best tool to examine and analyse this research. Transboundary haze pollution not only affected Indonesia as a center of the forest fire but also affected countries around it such as Malaysia and Singapore which is suffered from toxic and hazardous air coming from Indonesia's forest. As a result, deforestation put everyone into a risk globally and locally. This phenomenon happens every year and involved several NGOs and IGOs as well but it look like it will not come to an end, the lack of states capabilities to end up this problem that appear due to neglection towards that issue. As a result not only the economic sector is disturbed but also in the long term, this smoke causes respiratory health problems. This forest fire phenomenon occurs almost every year involving not only state actors, but also some NGOs, INGOs, MNCs and even state-run multinational organizations, but this effort also does not seem to deliver tangible results. How is the involvement of various actors both state actors and non-state actors in solving this problem.

1 INTRODUCTION

Transboundary Haze Pollution (THP) occurred in Sumatra's forest as well as Malaysia caused by extreme weather, drought, El-Nino, as well as land clearing with forest utilization by MNC actors. Singapore's Remote Imaging Center reports that 70% of fires are obtained from oil palm plantations. The Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) reports that it only takes a few days, especially if there are materials that facilitate the widespread fire of oxygen, the temperature (heat) of fire will make the fire unmanageable. Because of these factors that trigger the occurrence of fires that occur each year. Thereafter, the results expanded and expanded en masse, changing the economic, political and tourism sectors of the affected countries. Tan (2015) argued that there should be a monitoring system for the prevention of forest and land fires, accompanied by additional preventive methods, outside expertise and assistance and the

improvement of firefighting capability, particularly in Indonesia.

The abundance of forest functions into palm oil plantations and mining that are carried out irresponsibly by certain individuals and even corporations. Land clearing is mostly done by forest burning which is not uncommon to be a fire that is not controlled. The effects of these forest fires affect not only the existing ecosystems in the forests, the communities living around fires and the Indonesian people in general, but the smoke from these forest fires affects many sectors and is cross-border. Some of the countries affected directly are Malaysia and Singapore which are the closest to the country with fire points.

This is not consider as a contemporary issue at the moment but it still relevant as the smoke still occurred now and then. The cross-country haze that occurred in Indonesia is a classic problem that occurred since the 1990s. As a result, this haze not only affects Indonesia but also affects the neighbouring countries of Singapore, Malaysia,

Brunei Darussalam to reach South Thailand. This continuous deforestation is not only the concern of the country involved and directly affected, but also a global concern. This phenomenon occurs almost every year influenced by various factors such as extreme dry weather, *El-nino*, and not infrequently the burning of new land clearing for uncontrolled oil palm plantations. This forest fire not only creates smog crossing national boundaries, but also causes the loss and destruction of forest ecosystem which is the heart of the world.

This paper argues that THP is something that will likely to continue since it is become even more complex involving so many factors and actors. Hence, through globalization human security changes its face into so many ways, because the more the actors the higher the complexity of the issue. As for that matter, this research will emphasize more on how human security has changed in this very globalized world and the involvement of so many actors both state actors as well as non-state actors and conflict interest could create a complex problematic and new issue not only economic, social, health, law, but also environment issues. How long this phenomenon will remain and what lesson we could get from this paper. The author argue that even though this phenomenon considered as non-contemporary issue but this is important to address this case study and forecast the trajectory solutions in the aftermath. Since the governments, NGOs, IGOs and MNCs still operate themselves, there will always possibility that THP occur and there will always a way to prevent this to happen.

2 METHODS

This paper use qualitative explanatory research methods as well as literature review. This study refers to some of the previous studies that address issues and related phenomena. The data obtained will be sorted out to be classified in accordance with the materials needed in the research, then conducted in-depth analysis and associated with the concept that has been prepared to further be drawn conclusions in order to answer the formulation of research problems. Human security concept used to picture the changing definition of human security in globalization era. According to UNDP (2015) in the 21st century human security is where unilateral actions by single states are inadequate to deal with threats which occurred on the global level involving interactions occur along geological, geographic,

climatic, biological, and social systems. In addition, the author use Transnational Capitalist Class (TCC) which argued by Leslie Sklair. Sklair (2002) argues that there are some treasons which affect the states and global corporations not necessarily can stop the pattern of consumerism happening at the global level because they are part of them.

3 RESULTS

After the end of the Cold War and the era of globalization the definition of security has shifted more broadly, so the concept of security not only deals with countries without armed warfare, ceasefires and more state-centric military forces. Traditionally, the concept of national security refers to the capacity of a sovereign state to withhold a military invasion within the scope of territorial boundaries. However, security threats and insecurity are broader in scope, including human security, environmental security, and economic security. As a consequence the problems of poverty, welfare, education, environmental degradation, injustice and humanity are discussed in security issues in the global era which then led to the concept of human security (Scholte, 2000). Human security is generally defined as the guarding of the major vital matters in all aspects of human life that can enhance the fulfillment of human needs, preserving the vital and fundamental freedoms for human existence and development (Nakanishi, 2017). Lohman, *et al* (2007) Transboundary Haze Pollution caused by forest fires in Kalimantan and Sumatra causes not only financial, social and environmental losses to Indonesia. However, the smoke haze caused by forest fires also has a negative impact on neighbouring countries, namely Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, Singapore and South Thailand. The impacts intended in this paper may be the direct and indirect impacts felt by Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore and even global civil society in general. As reported by The Diplomat (2015), that the case is perpetrated by many irresponsible corporations and is not a case that can be resolved by the sovereign state where the forest fires occur.

The ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Hazard Pollution (AATHP) meets to discuss the case and propose for the establishment of a national, regional and international effort and cooperation to prevent, monitor, mitigate land and forest fires and control THP. Through the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) some ASEAN member countries ratified this agreement in 2003 and Indonesia

became the last country to ratify in 2015. Singapore also create Transboundary Haze Pollution Act which is a policy that criminalizes the perpetrators behind forest fires whose smoke reaches Singapore. There are so many agreements upon this issue yet it still can solve the problem occurred. However, these initiatives continually fail to effectively mitigate haze. This article argues that this failure is due to the influence of patronage politics in the sector, which is linked to the ASEAN style of regional engagement that prioritises the maintenance of national sovereignty. NASA and CIFOR show 21% THP caused by MNCs, 79% of cases are much more likely to come from fires on land owned or rented by small holders. Although El Nino is no longer considered a controlling factor, the consistency of smoke haze problem is caused by the massive expansion of palm oil plantation in the peat area. Large scale peat growth has occurred due to inherent land rights plaintiff (Antara News, 2015).

4 DISCUSSION

Environmental degradation and health problem was the main issue regarding THP. However, as for environment degradation and lack of resources in ASEAN, the main reason is "massive industrialisation activities of Asia in the world economy" (Vervoorn, 1998). THP's contribution significantly adds to the long list of global environmental degradation and impacts on transnational social and economic issues. As reported by (The Diplomat, 2015) that the case is perpetrated by many irresponsible corporations and is not a case that can be resolved by the sovereign state where the forest fires occur. It requires active involvement of the Indonesian, Malaysian and Singaporean countries and the international community in halting this annual forest burning activity. It is not the responsibility of one country but it is the duty of all parties involved either directly or indirectly to participate in the prevention of such global environmental and climate issues.

Regardless of the insufficient standards of administration, badly manage of the rules and law enforcement both at local and international level, the economic interest is one thing that make this issue ongoing. The local courts are also lacking of the awareness related to regulations and laws required to prosecute those which caused the fire in the first place. Nevertheless, do take into account that there is also conflict interest in the countries involved. The main obstruction is due to the lack of institutional

ability to overcome fire forest issues. Especially, the law enforcement in Indonesia which remains tremendously weak regarding legal exploitation by corporations (Maulidia, 2006). Since Indonesia is the biggest source and major factor of forest fire which causing the haze in ASEAN region. Indonesia has the largest rain forest and palm oil plantation throughout ASEAN but it has lack of infrastructure and legal law. This kind of environment will likely beneficial for corporations to take for granted. This has always been the corporations and the lack of capability of the countries involved that make this issue keep going. For instance, the corporations are neglecting the environmental degradation issue and such for the sake of their own profit. Many legal and illegal land burning were supported by these giant companies. Hence, exploitation will keep going and inevitable in the corrupt institution, low environmental awareness and law enforcement scarcity especially in Indonesia as the biggest palm oil plantation forest. The demand of the palm oil based products is higher in the marketplace. Consequently, many corporations will likely need the raw material and use it to produce products needed by the customer.

Transnational Capitalist Class (TCC) by Sklair (2005) explain that consumerism culture is not necessarily made by the corporations and that is why it is their fault. But, the consumers also play a big role in captivating and prosecuting demand in certain products. As long as the demand is higher, the corporations will likely use this opportunity to gain more profit and revenue to keep running their business. The higher the profit, the higher the economic growth in the business sector. This will benefit the country in some way not to mention the degradation effect in another sectors. This cycle has been vicious cycle over the time that make it even more complicated in the national level. The government is in a bind situation. Members of this new class have connections to each other that have become more significant than their ties to their home nations and governments (The [conversation.com](#), 2017).

However, the awareness needed not only in the government level, but also in individual level. Not to mention that every individual responsible for this thing to happen. TCC works in global politics concerns the role of the globalizing professionals, the scientists and technologists on whom the whole activity is said to rest (Sklair, 2002). For instance, the corporations which has palm oil business based will likely promote and engage methods and ways to prolong the business in the long term. Consequently,

the practice such as land clearing, forest fire is consider necessary thing and that is why it is important to keep this situation.

Besides, THP that occurs each year causes as many as 200 million people to have eye infections and respiratory disorders due to the harmful chemicals contained by THP, Singapore's Pollutant Standard Index (PSI) also reported that its citizens experience unhealthy air pollution in the 95-107 range. In addition, the economic sector is also affected by THP, as much as \$ 9.4 million of losses experienced by Indonesia and \$ 263 million by Singapore, which is the majority of the tourism and transportation sectors. While the indirect impacts that can be felt both in the short and long term that deforestation in the form of forest fires for land clearing conducted in forests of Kalimantan and Sumatra contribute 40% of total global greenhouse gas (EGK) emissions that impact on global climate change because Indonesia's tropical rain forest is one of the world's lungs. This does not only cause unrest for ASEAN countries but also countries at the global level. Besides, health effects due to air impurities, air toxins such as respiratory system, cardiovascular system, nervous system, digestive and urinary system, and exposure during pregnancy are another side effects.

Apart from the government neglecting, this human security threat has a short and long term potential from the parties involved. As we define the new term of human security based on UNDP definition, in the global era the term has proliferated in so many forms. The cooperation from every actors is important so that all the efforts that has been done so far was not a symbolic effort.

5 CONCLUSIONS

THP is a new threat to human security because it can affect human freedom in this case is global civil society. Such threats include the threat of freedom of breath of clean air that affects the health, threats of freedom of desire, economic threats and further threats to environmental degradation. The limitation of human desire free from fear is the main indicator of human security. So the case is no longer an issue within the local sphere of ASEAN but furthermore it is a global problem that has global impact.

THP problem is a form of insecurity in non-traditional approaches tangible Economic Security, Enviromental Security, Social and Health Security, Biodiversity across national borders. THP efforts to resolve through the multilateral environmental

regimes, international organizations and the state have not been able to cope and stop THP because there is still economic and political interest behind it. If the country involved in Indonesia as a major contributor to THP, Malaysia and Singapore as affected countries not only ratifies the agreed agreement but also implements the results of the agreement, then this problem will most likely be resolved. Government involvement, the private sector and civil society are urgently needed in this case. The authors suggest that an agreed, hard-law THP agreement, policy and law be formulated between Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore that can be truly applied in addressing human security and environmental issues. Thus, in the case of this paper the authors conclude that globalization in the form of international regimes, IGOs, NGOs leads to an increasingly diverse insecurity not only to a peaceful, non-war state, but to create new variables such as ecological, biodiversity and environmental degradation global. Even this case is not consider new, but the problem is still there and can still occur in the near future.

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