

Empowerment Policy for Local Community of Fishermen in Cirebon Coastal Area, West Java Province-Indonesia

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Abstract: Along the Cirebon coastal area live fishermen who are generally poor and uneducated. They go fishing to the Java sea in the evening and go back home early in the morning. During the normal weather they can bring back fish to the coast and earn enough money for their families. Unfortunately, in the recent years during the west wind season, the wave of the Java sea reach >3 m accompany with storms so the fishermen can not go fishing for 3-4 months and they do not earn money. Another problem they meet is illegal fishing by other group who come from outside of Cirebon coastal area. In addition, the fishermen also need government empowerment policies in protection, extension and training service. Collaboration between government and fishermen and participation of fishermen to government policies are urgently required.

Key words: Government empowerment policies, collaboration, participation, Cirebon, extension

INTRODUCTION

Cirebon coastal area lies about 50 km (35 m) from the border with the District of Indramayu, the City of Cirebon and the district of Brebes in the Central Java Province. The coastal area mentioned rich in many species of fish and the availability of mangrove forest and recreation areas. In the coastal area of the Cirebon City there are 62 groups of fishermen who are generally poor and lack of education. Many children can not continue their formal education to the senior high school level. While housewives lack of competencies in supporting family income.

The coastal area where the fishermen live need to be protected from other business that can disturb local environment and their future life. In this case, the government need to learn from other places concerning deterioration of natural resources caused by miss management. It can be known that industries in many district along the North Coast of Java tend to expand and occupy the coastal areas for developing their business.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Problems: Some problems that can be trouble for fishermen such as follow:

- Illegal fishing by many actors
- Occupation coastal area by other business which can disturb the fishermen activities
- Lack of capital in developing fishing equipment
- Lack of training and extension programs required by fishermen families

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Efforts to protect fishermen from illegal fishing: The Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Unitary Indonesian Traditional Fishermen (KNTI) (Damanik, 2014) stated that 30% losses from illegal fishing in the world have occurred in Indonesia as reported by Antara News.

“So, according to the report of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, illegal fishing has caused losses worth US\$23 bln. About 30% of illegal fishing in the world occurred in Indonesia,” Damanik (2014) said on Friday. Rizal reported that illegal fishing in Indonesia has caused Rp100 trillion worth of losses to the state each year.

“The exploitation of Indonesian marine resources is a tremendous loss to the state,” he noted. Because of these losses, he pointed out that the image of Indonesia fisheries and maritime sector has become tainted because Indonesia has been tolerant enough to allow illegal fishing practices to flourish.

“We then show the world that our government does not encourage fisheries resources due to illegal fishing practices that disturb the sustainable management of marine resources”, Rizal emphasized.

He remarked that the illegal fishing trend will have negative implications on Indonesia considering the fact that fisheries are one of the key food resources of the country.

Moreover, he stated that the next government will face three challenges in the maritime sector. The first challenge is coordinating the state budget for the maritime sector by encouraging the welfare of fishermen and marine economic sovereignty (Dahuri, 2001).



Fig. 1: Small boat belong to traditional fishermen

“The second is sectoral management of natural resources that causes losses in marine and fisheries. The role and functions of the maritime sector is only calculated on the basis of economic contribution and land area as an indicator of mobilization of the state resources” he added. The third challenge faced is the lack of participation by fishing organizations, farmers and coastal people in drafting a public policy.

Efforts to protect fishermen from expanding industries and other land occupation: In this case fishermen along coastal area of Cirebon expect the government to help them in maintaining and utilizing mangrove forest. Hundreds of hectares mangrove being seriously damaged in the Northern coastal area of Cirebon, West Java. In the past 10 years. This has raised concerns among environmentalists over fears that it will result in abrasion and threaten marine life in shallow waters in the area.

Shallow water marine life can be an alternative solution for fishermen when they can't go deeper out to sea during stormy weather. Mardjuki and Drs (2012) stated out that is very important to maintain mangrove forest as a renewable natural resources as a habitat for crab, small fish, shrimp, etc., of the total of 61 km of Cirebon coastal line-53 km of which are in Cirebon regency and the remaining 8 km in Cirebon municipality <10 km are still covered with mangrove trees. The damage on mangrove clearance by locals who are mostly economically poor. They started to do so en masse in the 1980's to open new fish ponds as a result of a boom in shrimp cultivation.

Efforts to develop fishing equipment: Thousands of fishermen in Cirebon, West Java are suffering from economic hardship because of extreme weather that has prevented them from going to sea. In addition their boat are small as it can be seen at Fig. 1. By using small boats fisherman can not go the the far open sea. Fishermen, however need to change their boat to the

bigger and modern one, so they can be involved in offshore and deep-sea fisheries, in this case, they expect the program of loan or grant from central or local government.

Meanwhile, women fish in some regions inshore from small boats or collect shellfish and seaweed. In many traditional fishing communities, women are responsible for making and repairing nets, post-harvest processing and marketing.

Efforts to carry out training, extension and empowerment programs: Since, most fishermen and families are lack of education, training program in fisheries and other subjects will be important in empowering them to do fishing more properly and their families to run a small business of family. Extension program also play an important role in guiding them to be more creative in catching fish in many ways. Besides, fishermen also need to increase their knowledge in fishery law and fishery business.

In term of empowerment of fishermen, the government promote community based management in maintaining and managing natural resources (Zaman and Darmawan, 2000; Soeprijadi *et al.*, 2013). In term of economic development of fishermen, the government also supervise cooperation body of fishermen especially for doing marketing. Regularly supervision given intensively by the local government fishery institution and the local government cooperation institution.

As a part of government policy, the fourth of empowerment mentioned above need to be participated and implemented by fishermen. In this case we remember the statement of Thomas R. Dy that “public policy is whatever government choose to do or not to do”.

CONCLUSION

Empowerment of local community fishermen have been promoted by the government in many ways. At least four activities have been implemented such as avoiding

illegal fishing, keeping land of coastal area save from other occupation, developing loan and gran for fishing equipment and training and extension program not only for fishermen but also for their families. The empowerment mentioned need serious participation and responsibilities of fishermen.

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