



**Full Length Research Article**

**LOCAL WISDOM OF BAUMATA SOCIETY IN KUPANG IN CONSIDERING THE NATURE  
PERSERVATION**

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**ABSTRACT**

A research on local wisdom in the nature preservation of Baumata has been conducted from February to March 2014. It held in the Village of East Baumata, Taebenu Sub district, Kupang regency, East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) in order to know what is the local wisdom owned by Baumata villages in the preservation of nature and environment around them. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. The data is taken by interviews and direct observation. Researchers explore the village of East Baumata to observe and conduct the interviews with community consisting of the village, traditional leaders, healers (shaman) and ordinary people. The results obtained from this study is clearly wisdom view of local communities Baumata in the preservation of nature, namely the presence of fine custom ('adat sanctions') related actions that damage the environment. Besides that all the families which surveyed, were seen planting and maintaining plants for food, medicine and ornamental plants in the yard. One other interesting thing is all the families surveyed had livestock in the household and their concepts and apply the principles of the triangle of life "mansian - mui - nasi, na bua" which means humans, livestock, and forests is an integral and mutual dependency.

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**INTRODUCTION**

**Background**

Etymologically local knowledge means wisdom of local communities. While the meaning of local wisdom is everything (values, norms, ethics, knowledge, and technology) that is owned by a group of people and which is used for overcome the problems of life. According to the Ministry of Environment, the term environmental wisdom is the official term refers to some of the terminology of traditional knowledge, local knowledge, and wisdom that describe the environmental ethics, norms and behavior toward nature found in a community (Tasdyanto, 2008: xi). Local knowledge (local wisdom) itself is defined as, a truth which has a tradition or monotonically in a region Gobyah (2003). Local knowledge is a blend of the sacred values of the Word of God and that there is a range of values.

Local knowledge is formed as the advantage of local culture and geographical conditions in a broad sense. Local knowledge is a product of past cultures that should constantly hold onto life. The value contained in it is considered very universal. Many tribes and communities that have local knowledge, especially regard to the preservation of nature and environment, especially traditional communities whose lives are highly dependent on natural resources and environmental conditions in the vicinity. They are trying to identify, understand and master to be able to use it optimally to meet their needs. Hamzah (2013) states that local community knowledge accumulated and formed in human history has a major role as a basis for the human to interact with environment. According to anthropologist term, local knowledge is local wisdom. Local wisdom is a term first introduced by Quaritch Wales. Anthropologists discussed at length the notion of local wisdom (Ayatrohaedi, 1986). Soebadio (1986) states that local knowledge is cultural identity or personality that caused the nation. A nation is able to absorb and process the appropriate disposition of foreign culture and his own abilities. While Moendardjito (1986) states that the potential region as the cultural element of local

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knowledge as it has proven its ability to survive until now. In other words, it can be said that wisdom comes from the local culture, so that local knowledge can be understood as ideas, values, local views that are thoughtful, full of wisdom, good-value, which is embedded and followed by members society. The characteristics of the local wisdom:

1. Were able to exist foreign cultures,
2. Has the ability to accommodate the elements of foreign cultures,
3. Has the ability to integrate elements of foreign culture into the native culture,
4. Has the ability to control, and
5. Was able to give direction to the development of culture.

In local wisdom contained also the cultural wisdom. Cultural wisdom itself is the local knowledge that has become fused with the belief systems, norms, and culture and is expressed in tradition and myths espoused in the long period. In the local wisdom there is an identity and the product identity and distinctiveness of identity proficiency level. But it turns local wisdom was not merely the identity and products, but also contained values (the values) as a guide for those who have lived. Local knowledge is another form of environmental ethics, or in other words the implementation of environmental ethics that reflected deep local knowledge, and is part of the cycles of human life. Local wisdom in this case is a set of understanding and knowledge gained through the process and learning by a group of people (Marpai, 2012).

Before they implement technology, they adapt with the natural resources and environmental conditions. They try to recognize the character of natural resources and the environment. Introduction, understanding, and mastery are the important steps for traditional communities living around the forest. Local knowledge is knowledge that is developed by a community of people for centuries. The existence of this knowledge is believed to be a close relationship between man and nature. Lack of respect for the human environment will prevent arbitrary act against nature. Kusnaka (2010) explains that environmental damage can occur naturally or due to human activities. According to anthropologist Padjadjaran, there is actually a strong symbiotic relationship between humans and nature.

However, this relationship is often disturbed due to the act of the government and private institution. One tradition of keeping nature in NTT is a tradition for the people of Banu Puna in South Central Timor (TTS) which Banu is a tradition or some sort of ban so that people do not go into the woods and cut down a tree, encroachment or hunting and fishing all within forest. For people who violate this rule will be sanctioned customary form of fines, which pay money or cattle. Much local knowledge easily understood as part of a specific ethnic identity. Data and facts collected by field researchers and NGO activists from various corners of the archipelago has been proved that, indigenous areas of natural resource management is managed autonomously by the indigenous communities were able to preserve. Thus reality is a sign that the future sustainability of the natural resources in Indonesia is in the hands of the sovereign people maintain indigenous knowledge and practices of natural resource management. Most of the indigenous peoples proved capable

of supporting life and their own safety as well as support services and community socio - ecological nature for the needs of all creatures, including humans. One of the communities that applying local wisdom in preserving nature and the environment is rural East Baumata in Kupang, NTT in the form of fines and the indigenous plant, nurture the plants and animals in their domestic environment. Based on the background of the research problem is how the wisdom of local communities in East Baumata takes the preservation of natural surroundings?. The objective of this research is to recognize and to know the local community in East Baumata in preserving the natural surroundings.

### **Research Focus**

That is the focus of this study is local knowledge include knowledge and values contained in the rural communities in the East Baumata in preserving the nature around them.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This research was conducted in the village of East Baumata in February- March 2014. The research is descriptive qualitative research which are researchers explore the village of East Baumata to observe and conduct interviews with community consists of the villages, traditional leaders, healers (shaman) and the ordinary people.

### **Research Instruments**

Instrument is the researcher's own research, respondents, structured interview sheets, stationery and documentation tools include cameras and video recorders.

### **Data Collection Techniques**

Data was collected through observation and interviews with the respondents, as well as in-depth interviews with sources who know about the subject of research. To test the validity of the data researchers triangulate the data to match answers with some respondents and experts such as researchers Anthropology Indigenous Tribes East and some members of the Group of Indigenous Baumata.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Baumata East Village is one of the villages of the districts Taebenu Kupang regency, East Nusa Tenggara. Taebenu Sub District is a district directly adjacent to the city of Kupang and inhabited by many tribes as tribes of East Dawan, Helong tribe, tribal Rote, Sabu, Flores and some parts outside NTT entrants such as Java and Bugis. The dominant tribe is the tribe of East Dawan and is linked with the history of the 17th century in which no ethnic group originating from the mountains Taebenu Mollo then Kupang well received by the king and placed in Baumata and establishes the kingdom Taebenu. In the administrative Indonesian government makes this region as districts Taebenu (Luitnan, 2012). Baumata East Village is one of the 8 (eight) Taebenu villages in the district with an area of 19.77 km<sup>2</sup>, and 2.254 people, with a population density of 352 people / km<sup>2</sup> and strategically located in the middle because the district and has many natural resources such as water and forest resources with the potential

of wood as well as medicinal plants (BPS District Kupag, 2013). Because the dominant tribe is the tribe of East, the everyday language is the language of the people of Timor with Indonesian accent inserted Kupang. The main source of livelihood is agriculture wetlands and dry land in accordance with the existing natural conditions with simple agricultural equipment with still maintaining a pattern of mutual cooperation in clearing, planting, and harvesting. Dry land farming dominated palawijaya plants such as maize, beans and rice. Additionally Baumata society in general as well seek "Mamar". "Mamar" is generally garden located near the IAR spring planted crops as economical as banana, areca nut, coconut, jackfruit, and some types of crops simultaneously. Traditional agriculture is highly dependent on weather cycles, because the rainy season is quite short cycle. For sedentary agriculture such as paddies, people generally begin after the rainy season begins around January or February. As for dry land farming starts with clearing land and burning that began around July or August. While planting usually begins in December.

From the observations and interviews were conducted on the East Baumata society can be seen that the general public Baumata have a good knowledge of the plants and animals that are in their environment and have knowledge of the environment by keeping well and not ruin it. It can be seen that all the plants around the yard well manicured and planted in groups by function, such as ornamental plants merged fellow ornamental plants, herbs planted together vegetable crops. Although not particularly care for the fertilizer or watering routine but respondents said they maintain the plants in the yard by planting and maintaining order is not dead or broken. Of public interviews conducted with respondents can be seen that all respondents recognize plant species planted around them and know most of the benefits. Most of the plants were planted crops are food crops such as cayenne pepper, eggplant, tomato, banana and ornamental plants as aesthetic. Also on the grounds are generally planted perennials also economic value such as jackfruit, cashew, Kosambi, guava, rose apple, sugar apple and sour soup. In addition, most also grow herbs like turmeric, ginger, galangal, "kencur" grown for medical purposes as well as meet the needs of the kitchen and the excess outcome sold.

General Baumatanes put a table in front yard of the house and put the result of excess food to be sold to people who pass through the area. Plants commonly referred to as a plant for traditional rituals are bananas, commonly used as a common fruit brought and consumed when no traditional party like woo, marry and thanksgiving. In addition as well as the Indonesian and Timorese society in general, people cannot escape Baumata tradition "betel nut" at every opportunity either daily or for certain ceremonies such as "Natoni" (welcoming guests), traditional ceremony and celebration. Betel nut is put on the spot webbing made from dried wild pandanus baskets rectangular form commonly called "aluk" containing betel (manus), areca ("Puah") and lime powder. Unlike the Indonesian society in general, the Timorese society do not use but his betel leaf shaped amentum (panicles), betel nuts fresh or dried and mixed with the powder of sea shells that make mixing red color to the blood. Also in Timorese society tradition betel nut and probably the entire eastern Indonesia does not recognize sap "gambier" (*Uncaria gambir*)

as a complement to the betel nut is commonly used in the western region of Indonesian society. Betel and areca then become a part of almost all traditional rituals Timorese society. Betel Pinang became a symbol of greeting and respect for others. By giving betel and areca to someone you represent reverence and respect: "You are my best friend. Let chewing betel nut together!". Betel nut is like cigarettes and candy for the community and it consumed at any time and has the effect of addiction for those who consume it. All respondents keep a pet in the household. And general pet is kept pigs, goats, cows and chickens. Pigs are animals that are kept all the respondents who used the animals for the benefit of indigenous rituals, where all the traditional procession like Thanksgiving, fines, propose, get married and mortality require pigs as animal food sources." *"ketong selalu piara hewan terutama babi karena mau upacara saja mesti pakai itu hewan, jadi mesti taro satu ko dua di rumah karena kalau beli mahal"* (Y. Manu, 56 tahun). We always foster animal pig especially for ceremony only because it would have to wear the animal, so it should put one or two at home because if you buy it is expensive "(Y. Manu, 56 years). The meaning of the sentence is that we always maintain the animals, especially pigs for each traditional ceremonial use of pigs as a symbol, and cheaper than buying if maintained.

According to the indigenous Timorese experts in interviews with researchers associated livestock is known that all the people of East families must preserve animals in their households, although only a chicken. Most Timorese family will keep pigs, goats and cows, as they relate to the identity of the Timorese family. So everyone Timorese who are married will preserve at least one type of livestock either for the purposes of animal food or economic interests (Gregor Neonbasu, Personal Communication date 28-2-2014). Local wisdom is seen in society Baumata is like most people of Timor island known concept of the triangle of life "mansian - munit - nasi, na bua" which means humans, livestock, and forests is an integral and inseparable and mutually dependent. Principles of ecosystem and networks of mutual life living and support is greatly appreciated. Humans interpret the benefit of livestock and forest, foraging in the forest animals and humans maintain forests. If one of these three elements separated it will give the impact of other elements. Technically, some forms of biodiversity in the province, especially the island of Timor is still has a significant contribution in the rehabilitation of land, management of forest resources and environment.

With the wisdom of the local community is very appreciative Baumata plants, livestock and forests as something that must be maintained. When researchers asked certain medicinal plants are referred to as "the roots" that grow rare and far from the settlement, the investigators shaman cannot bring the plant is taken to be made on the grounds of plant herbarium collections are rarely found. That attitude almost all respondents possessed certain related plants where they are preserved and not arbitrarily in treating plants. Lack of respect for plants, animals and natural beauty of the forest makes awake and could be seen that all the overgrown plants useful and really kept as a source of food, medicine and economics. Respect is also associated with the attitude of people who consider religious nature is a manifestation of God's power. Traditional rituals associated with the maintenance of the public realm lived Baumata is "One M gratitude" as a form of

thanks for the harvest by offering crops to be eaten together in a celebration party. In addition when open land also held a kind of ceremonial "blessing " to invite the pastor and the church board to say prayers and eat together for the person or family who will help open and working farmland. In this rule, it mentioned how the size of fish that may be caught. With these traditional rules, the fish become protected, so there is a chance for the fish to breed, so that the environment was getting better. Local knowledge of each different tribe differs from each other in accordance with the socio-cultural conditions and the type of the local ecosystem. Studies that have been conducted Nababan (1995) in 4 provinces (East Kalimantan, Maluku, Papua and East Nusa Tenggara) showed that although the local wisdom that belongs to the local community systems are different from each other but in general can be seen the principles of traditional wisdom respected and practiced by indigenous groups, among other things:

1. Still live in harmony with nature obey mechanism whereby human beings are part of nature itself that must be kept in balance;
2. Whereas a particular forest area is still exclusive as procurement of rights and / or joint ownership (communal property resources), known as indigenous territories that binds all citizens to safeguard and secure from outsiders;
3. Systems and governance structures of indigenous knowledge provides the ability to solve the problems they face, including the various conflicts in the utilization of forest resources;
4. The System allocation and law enforcement to secure the customary common property resources from overuse, either by themselves or by people outside the community;
5. Mechanism more equitable distribution of the results of the "harvesting " of natural resources that belong together can reduce social jealousy in the community.

The principles developed in the community and the accumulated experience of the findings of the public for hundreds of years. Therefore these principles also are multi -dimensional and integrated within religious systems, social structures, legal and customary institutions or institutions concerned. If indigenous communities could prove them able to survive with the existing local system, might be applicable in the management of natural resources in the form of natural resource -based conservation of indigenous and at the same time to stop the destruction of indigenous peoples across the archipelago. To preserve nature and environment of indigenous communities Baumata have agreed since 1979 and continues to be improved every traditional meeting held once a year each October by involving elders, community leaders and village. This law is known as "customary sanction". According to Yacob Humau who is also the Chairman of Baumata customary and village elders, the traditional sanctions Baumata binding on all members of society regardless of race and social levels. In brief, a few grains of the traditional sanctions related to environmental safeguards system are:

1. Society forbidden to cut down trees and take the wood in water varying from branches, if caught will be penalized in the form of custom one (1) pigs, 50 kg rice, and money 500.000.

2. Society must bind and secure the livestock around the compound of the plant itself so as not to damage other people. If there is a pet that will be found to destroy the "money ropes "of Rp. 250,000
3. Feed livestock such as grass, sorghum and others planted themselves and should not take the property of others, if caught will be fined Rp. 750,000

The high fine, according to the informant is customary as a precaution so that people actually obey. Since the implementation of the traditional sanctions, the local branch of a water fountain resident strongly protected from illegal logging to stay awake. Besides plant communities safe from the invasion of animals because all animals tied up and placed in the yard of the property itself. In the 1970s the cattle is one of the pests eating the plant because it allowed residents and damage crops. But since the implementation of the sanctions is customary at this time such an event has been very rare (Jacob Humau, personal communication date 1-3-2014). Regional branches of the water in question is located on the upstream forest river has a spring that serves as a good citizen of water supplies for drinking and agriculture. Based on the observations of the researcher, the forest was quite tight and maintained by the dominant plant species are Teak, Katsambis, Cashew Nut and several types of palms such as palm, palm wine and mother-of-pearl. The water flowed into agricultural land and managed by Agency Management, Protection and Maintenance of Water.

Local knowledge is a community -based socio-cultural potential for revitalized, enriched, strengthened and developed as a new foundation for change the best policy for the purpose of ecological sustainability. With the ability and social completeness friendly to nature, indigenous society is believed to have sufficient capacity to rehabilitate and restore the ecological damage in areas of former logging concessions and degraded lands (community-based reforestation and rehabilitation) with trees native types subsystem and commercially beneficial. According to Arif, (2002) with enrichment to communities and indigenous components for achieving the goals of economic, indigenous communities believed to be capable of:

1. Manage business commercial economy based on local natural resources that exist in the ancestral lands;
2. Regulate and control the "illegal logging" is capitalized timber barons;
3. Reducing practices "clear cutting" legal (GPA) for the purpose of forest conversion , and preventing deforestation official destructive and inequitable as encroachment permit and Forest Management (IPPH)

Although almost all respondents knew about the "traditional sanctions", but most do not pass on this knowledge to the children or descendants, because when I go down to Central Kupang SMA 2 is now named High School Taebenu, randomly asked 20 students of class X residents in Baumata this custom sanctions, only 7 students who know and understand, while the other 13 states do not know though never heard of the traditional sanctions. Of course this is not a valid result because only asked in class X and inadequate amounts, but shows a general overview of the respondents' answers when asked if they pass on knowledge related to

plants, animals and traditional rituals to their offspring, most of the respondents answered not pass on the knowledge.

### Conclusion

From the results and discussion, it can be concluded that the villagers Baumata have local knowledge about natural preservation is associated with the "traditional sanctions" explicit and agreed upon citizens and updated annually each October at the customary meeting. In addition to the well known concept of the triangle of life "mansian - munit, Nasi- na bua" which means humans, livestock, and forests is an integral and inseparable and mutually dependent. Lack of respect for plants, animals and natural beauty of the forest makes aware and could be seen that all the overgrown plants useful and really kept as a source of food, medicine and economics. Respect is also associated with the attitude of people who consider religious nature is a manifestation of God's power.

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