

Failure of Government Owned Food Estate Projects In Central Kalimantan

by
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ABSTRACT:- The Indonesian government has reactivated National Strategic Projects, namely projects implemented by the Central Government, Regional Government, and/or Business Entities which have a strategic nature for growth and equitable development in the context of efforts to create jobs and improve community welfare.

One of these projects is the Food Estate Program, which has been started since around 2018 until now, in Central Kalimantan Province, but has now stopped, because it is thought to have failed. There are many factors that cause failure, including regulatory conflicts between Presidential Regulations and related Ministerial Regulations, making implementation difficult, especially dealing with permits which are not easy.

People who own land object if their land is exchanged for land in another location, or even forced to change the type of crop. Apart from that, the provisions for the Food Estate project are protected forests and non-production productive forests, which are not burdened with permits. In fact, there are many conditions that must be met in all Minister of Forestry Regulations. Deforestation and global warming have caused flooding in several areas in Central Kalimantan. This requires sophisticated processes and technology.

The landowner community objects if their land is exchanged with land in another location, or even forced to change the type of plant. In addition, the provisions for the Food Estate project are protected forests and productive forests that are not in production, which are not burdened with permits. In fact, there are many requirements that must be met by all Forestry Ministerial Regulations. Dengan adanya deforestasi dan pemanasan global telah menyebabkan banjir di beberapa wilayah di Kalimantan Tengah. Hal ini membutuhkan proses dan teknologi yang canggih.

Key Words : National Strategic Project, Food Estate, Spatial Planning, Regional Planning, Funding.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian nation needs to realize that the area of rice fields is shrinking, many productive rice fields are changing function. President Joko Widodo continues to remind his staff to strengthen the food production side to ensure that people have easier access to meet their basic food needs. If access is open, food security is strengthened. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) also reminded all countries to maintain their food production management, especially after the pandemic which has had an extraordinary impact. Dependence on imported materials will cause food security to decline.

The government has launched a food estate project to produce food that is increasingly declining. The food estate is located in Central Kalimantan, precisely in Pulang Pisau Regency and Kapuas Regency. The long-term program is in the form of steps to provide new land, rehabilitate existing land by improving facilities to support land productivity, especially in terms of irrigation and drainage in swampy areas.

The location was chosen because it is close to the Indonesian Capital City (IKN). In addition, compared to other locations, such as South Sumatra, East Kalimantan and Merauke. Actually, this location was pioneered during the era of President Suharto, but was not continued, due to the difficulty of building a water system. As time went by, it was felt that 30 years had passed, this project was not running, while the land at the location had been converted into an oil palm plantation. Starting around 2021, President Joko Widodo began to think about the need to build food security, because food security has become part of national security.

The government is trying to realize the food estate as a food area, the food area has shrunk, including rice fields. The development of a food estate is a large-scale food business, through a series of activities by utilizing natural resources through human resources by utilizing capital, technology and other resources, and will produce food products to meet human needs in an integrated manner including food crops, horticulture, plantations, livestock and fisheries in a forest area. The pandemic has stopped, it does not mean that the food crisis does not exist,

but the impact of the pandemic until today in certain countries there is a food crisis, fortunately the pandemic did not last long, because it would have caused a food crisis throughout the world. Referring to Presidential Regulation Number 3 of 2016, as amended by Presidential Regulation Number 109 of 2020, in Attachment number II number 8, it is stated that there are 10 (ten) programs included in the list of national strategic projects, namely:

- (1) Electricity Infrastructure Development Program list of projects;
- (2) Economic Equity Program;
- (3) Border Area Development Program
- (4) Toll Exit Access Road Development Program
- (5) National Tourism Strategic Area Development Program'
- (6) Waste Processing Installation Development Program into Electrical Energy;
- (7) Smelter Development Program
- (8) National Food Provision Improvement Program (food Estate)
- (9) Super Food Development Program
- (10) Regional Development Acceleration Program/Economic Area Development Acceleration

From these programs, one of them is the Food Estate Program, which is carried out outside Java, namely Central Kalimantan. This place was chosen for the balance and equality of development, which has always focused on Java alone. In fact, the food estate is not only carried out in Central Kalimantan, but also in several places, including in the southern part of Papua. For this food estate project, an area of approximately 2,000,000 hectares is needed. (Walhi Data 2021). Of course, the implementation of the food estate will involve forest land, so there will be massive deforestation. It should be considered that if the food estate project requires such a large area of land, of course it will take conservation forests and protected forests, to realize the food estate. The government also firmly wants to immediately realize the food estate, because the government's consideration is that currently protected forests are no longer fully functioning as protected forests. According to Article 19 of the Regulation of the Minister of Environment Number 24/Menlhk/Setjen/Kum.1/10/2020 concerning the Provision of Forest Areas for the Development of Food Estates, it is stated:

- 1) Provision of Forest Areas for food estate development with (1) Provision of Forest Areas for food estate development with a mechanism for determining forest areas, production areas in accordance with Article 2 letter b, is carried out on
 - Protected forest areas, and/or
 - Production forest areas
- 2) Protected forest areas referred to in paragraph (1) letter a, no longer has a full protective function, in accordance with the provisions of the laws and regulations.

In this way, protected forests that no longer fully function as protected forests can be used as food estate land. So the Government will build a food estate on protected forest land, and partly on production land. This strategic plan has received strong protests from various organizations or institutions, for example Non-Governmental Organizations, Advocates' Professional Organizations, the Forum for the Environment, or *WALHI* for short. This rejection reflects that the food estate project does not provide welfare for the people in the protected and production forests affected by the project. Rejection was carried out at press conferences and through other media. This rejection is a serious concern for the Indonesian people, especially those living in Central Kalimantan.

The government in this case is very reckless, because it is a big project, which involves such a large area of protected forest and production forest, the food estate costs are also very large, it has never been socialized to the surrounding residents, the impact has not been thought about, the forests have already been cut down, after the land was cleared from such a large number of wood plants, a very large budget has been spent, the project has stopped, due to the refusal of residents, and local government officials also do not support the food estate project which is in process, there are still many problems that arise over the food estate project. As a result, the food estate project failed completely and could not be continued.

II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

What are the main factors that caused the failure of the food estate project?

III. LEGAL BASIS

- Law no. 41/1999 concerning Forestry
- Presidential Regulation Number 3 of 2016 concerning National Strategic Projects
- Presidential Regulation Number 109 of 2020;
- Regulation of the Minister of Environment and Forestry No.P.24/MENLHK/KUM.1/10/2020;

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- Republic of Indonesia Government Regulation Number 42 of 2021 concerning Facilitation of National Strategic Projects
- Regulation of the Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs No. 7 of 2021, as amended by Number 9 of 2022, and amended again by Regulation no. 21 of 2022 and the latest change is Regulation Number 7 of 2023 concerning the list of National Strategic Projects

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

Observers of the Food Estate Program are of the opinion that the amount of land plotted as Food Estate areas has stagnated.

Cassava plantations have stalled, thousands of hectares of rice fields have not been harvested in Central Kalimantan.

In order to prevent the threat of a food crisis, President Joko Widodo initiated the Food Estate program in various regions, including Central Kalimantan. Two years running in Central Kalimantan, the result: failure. Cassava plantations covering an area of 600 hectares have stalled and 17,000 hectares of new rice fields have not been harvested.

A search by BBC News Indonesia together with the non-governmental organization Pantau Gambut found that the National Food Barn project in this area only triggered new problems, flood disasters became more widespread and prolonged, and forced the Dayak people to change their planting habits.

Ministry of Agriculture officials admit there are shortcomings in the implementation of the food estate program. But he said the food barns in Central Kalimantan had not completely failed.

Meanwhile, Ministry of Defense officials claim that the decline in cassava plantations is due to the lack of budget and regulations for the formation of the Strategic Logistics Reserve Agency.

However, if there is certainty about the allocation of funds from the 2023 APBN, management of the cassava plantation will continue. (BBC News Indonesia, March 15 2023)



Source: opinions about Food Estate in Central Kalimantan - Search (bing.com)



Condition of heavy equipment (the excavator used to manage and level the land in the Food Estate area is now not functioning, the equipment has even sunk in the peat soil)

Source: [Corn food estate in Central Kalimantan 'forced to cover up failure of cassava plantations' - Why do activists and scientists doubt it? - BBC News Indonesia](#)

BBC News Indonesia, 30 December 2023.

The corn Food Estate project worth IDR 54 billion in Central Kalimantan is considered 'forced to cover up the failure of the cassava plantation project'



Greenpeace Indonesia and **Walhi** Central Kalimantan found corn plants in polybags on food estate land in Gunung Mas Regency

(Source: [Corn food estate in Central Kalimantan 'forced to cover up failure of cassava plantations' - Why do activists and scientists doubt it? - BBC News Indonesia, visited 6 July 2024\)](#)

Environmental activists said that the corn commodity planted on food estate land in Gunung Mas, Central Kalimantan, was forced "in order to cover up the failure of the cassava plantation project which was stalled at the hands of the Ministry of Defense".

The environmental activist considers that corn commodities that are "forced" to be planted on land that is predominantly sand "do not grow very well".

On the other hand, the Ministry of Agriculture claims that, from the results of experiments that have been and are currently being carried out in Gunung Emas, Central Kalimantan, it is "optimistic" about the corn plantation food estate project worth IDR. 54 billion "could go either way".

An official at the Central Kalimantan Agricultural Standards Implementation Center (BPSI) told BBC News Indonesia that the land in Gunung Mas, Central Kalimantan was "unable" and "hard" to plant cassava, because the land is mostly quartz sand which has almost zero nutrients.

(Source: [Corn food estate in Central Kalimantan 'forced to cover up failure of cassava plantations' - Why do activists and scientists doubt it ?](#) – BBC News Indonesia, published 30 December 2023)

V. PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Quoting from previous researchers, sourced from: [tirto.id - Pantau Gambut](#), the Central Kalimantan Forum for the Environment (WALHI), and BBC News Indonesia released a study of the results of a joint investigation regarding the cassava Food Estate project in Central Kalimantan carried out by the Ministry of Defense. The study is entitled Volume 2: News about the Food Estate Project in Central Kalimantan After 3 Years.

VI. CONTENTS:

In a written statement received by Tirto on Wednesday (15/3/2023), the Campaigner for Peat Monitoring Wahyu A. Perdana said that one of the findings in the field that prevented the project from proceeding was the sinking of an excavator on peat soil. Initially, the team conducted a check via satellite imagery in Mantai Hulu Village. The results showed that forest land covering ±237 hectares around the verification point of the extensification location had undergone land clearing.

"At the same location, the team also found heavy excavator equipment that had sunk into the peat soil around the extensification area because the characteristics of the peat soil were unable to support the weight of the excavator itself," said Wahyu. The study also highlighted the issue of crop failures on the Ministry of Agriculture's Food Estate land. Wahyu said that the ideal rice harvest should produce at least four tons per hectare.

"The statement contrasts with the Ministry of Agriculture's claim that productivity from unproductive rice field intensification activities in Central Kalimantan reached 3.5 tons of dry milled rice per hectare in 2021," he said.

"In Tewai Baru Village, the cassava tubers produced are small in size resembling carrots, yellow in color like turmeric, and taste bitter. According to a study, the bitter taste of cassava indicates a high cyanide content," he added.

In addition, Wahyu said that the study conducted by the three institutions found allegations of waste of state funds. He said, in Henda Village and Pilang Village, the assistance of water pipes could not be used by farmers because the manufacture of the pipes was not followed by maintenance costs and counseling on how to use them, so farmers had difficulty using the tool.

"In fact, the APBN fund of IDR 1.5 trillion was allocated for the implementation of the Food Estate throughout 2020-2021, of which IDR 497.2 billion was used for irrigation improvements including the procurement of water pipes," he said.

Not only that, the study also highlighted the massive deforestation that occurred in South Kalimantan. The implementation plan for the first phase of the Food Estate in 2020-2021 in Central Kalimantan covering an area of 31,000 hectares is divided into 10,000 hectares each in three regencies, namely Pulang Pisau, Kapuas and Gunung Mas. Wahyu said that the results of monitoring via satellite imagery showed deforestation where an area of 700 hectares in Tewai Baru Village was the largest extensification area.

"From a landscape perspective, Tewai Baru Village is part of the Kalimantan fluvial plain ecoregion landscape with alluvial soil with a sandy texture. The characteristics of this type of soil have high potential as a water regulator because its texture easily absorbs and releases water," said Wahyu.

"However, the loose soil layer is easily eroded and causes runoff carrying soil material that causes sedimentation of water channels, narrows or even closes water channels and causes flooding in the surrounding area," he concluded.

(Source: tirto.id - Socio-cultural, Reporter: Haris Prabowo, Writer: Haris Prabowo
Editor: Restu Diantina Putri, Published 15 Mar 2023)

VI. METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

The specific procedures or techniques used to identify, select, process, and analyze information about a topic. In a research paper, the methodology section allows the reader to critically evaluate a study's overall validity and reliability.

6.1. Type of Research

The type of research conducted is normative legal research. Normative legal means "a process to find a legal rule, legal principles, or doctrine, to answer the legal issues faced (Reference: Marzuki, 2010: 35) Normative Legal begins with the analysis of primary legal materials, secondary legal materials normatively, based on a conceptual approach and laws and regulations or other approaches that are in accordance with the formulation of the problem.

(Reference: Muhaimin, 2020: 129)

6.2. Problem Approach

This problem approach is used with a statute approach that refers to laws and regulations, and with a conceptual approach.

The statute approach is carried out by analyzing relevant regulations and related to national strategic projects, including the Food Estate project

The conceptual approach is a method carried out based on literature or secondary data, where in this conceptual approach it is intended to compile criteria and indicators that will be used in tracing the potential and capabilities of the planning area that are useful for planning, developing, maintaining, and building.

<https://123dok.com/article/dekatatan-konseptual-laporan-pendahuluan.yjre766z>

VII. LEGAL MATERIAL

Legal materials are anything in the form of writings, documents, manuscripts and others that are used as a source for writing scientific papers.

7.1. Primary Legal Materials.

Are laws and regulations, starting from Laws, Presidential Regulations, Government Regulations, Regional Regulations of Central Kalimantan Province, Ministerial Decrees, which are related and relevant to the Food Estate Program, as one of the National Strategic Projects.

7.2. Secondary Legal Materials

Materials that provide explanations regarding primary legal materials, namely books, journals, expert opinions, research results (Muhaimin, 2020: 61). Likewise, newspaper news, as well as news on Social Media.

VIII. RESEARCH PROCEDURE

The steps taken in this research are:

- a. Collecting legal materials, related to the formulation of the problem being studied, such as journals, literature, books
- b. Making a systematic and complete inventory of laws and regulations related to the problems faced.
- c. The legal materials that have been collected, are sorted, processed and analyzed in relation to the formulation of the problem being studied, using the deductive method, namely drawing a general conclusion, until finally narrowing down to a specific one.
- d. The nature of the analysis is carried out prescriptively, namely providing arguments to answer the formulation of the problem against the facts from the research results.

IX. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The Indonesian government launched a food estate program in 2020, expected to be able to overcome the food crisis, and large-scale agricultural plantations will be established in Indonesia, especially in Central Kalimantan. Plantations of crops such as rice, cassava, potatoes, corn will overcome the upcoming global food crisis. At that time the world was hit by a pandemic.

This effort is predicted to help provide food for the country with the fourth largest population in the world. However, field investigations at the location of the food estate program in Central Kalimantan Province in March 2022 and February 2023 instead found large abandoned plantations.

Three years on, there are no rice or cassava plants ready to be harvested, and no farmers are taking care of their rice fields. Instead, wild bushes grow on these plots of land, and excavators are starting to rust. (BBC News Indonesia)



Figure 1: Land cleared for cassava planting as part of the food estate program, in Tewai Baru village, Gunung Mas district, Central Kalimantan. (Walhi Central Kalimantan)

Daniel Johan, a member of the House of Representatives from the National Awakening Party faction who sits on Commission IV of the House of Representatives which oversees agriculture, environment and forestry, and maritime affairs, said that he had visited a number of food estates in Central Kalimantan and also found the same thing, meaning that the food estate could be said to have failed. "When we went to the field, we also saw that several plantations had been abandoned," he told Mongabay at his office in Jakarta.

This finding shows that the food estate program, which is included in the list of national strategic projects, has failed, said Syahrul Fitra, a forest campaigner for Greenpeace Indonesia.

One clear indication is that Indonesia still does not have enough rice to meet domestic needs.

The goal of the national strategic food estate project in Central Kalimantan is to make the province a center for rice production. However, official data shows that Central Kalimantan's rice production has declined since 2020.

At the end of 2022, Bulog imported 500,000 metric tons of rice from Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar, and Pakistan for dwindling stocks. The government is also considering an additional 500,000 metric tons from India, when Bulog's stock is only 300,000, far from the threshold of 1.2 million metric tons.

This means that the food estate program has failed to solve the problem, the indicators are clear, said Syahrul.



Figure 2: Former Minister of Agriculture Syahrul Yasin Limpo reviewing the food estate project. (Source: Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Indonesia)

Former Minister of Agriculture in Indonesia, Syahrul Yasin Limpo assured the Indonesian people, and said "the food estate program did not fail, because it succeeded in increasing the productivity of rice plants in Central Kalimantan" (<http://www.mongabai.co.id>). However, in fact, the land claimed as the location of the food estate is a cassava plantation, and the condition is stalled, thousands of hectares of rice fields have not been harvested in Central Kalimantan. Even abandoned excavators were found, stalled and other equipment was not used.

The government under President Joko Widodo once said that it had learned from the mistakes of the previous food estate project, and promised that this initiative would not repeat previous failures. This project will include construction work such as roads and irrigation channels.

However, in fact, it cannot be denied, the food estate around Kapuas also failed, not only in Central Kalimantan, but everywhere - the majority failed.



Figure 3: Wilted cassava tubers at the food estate location in Tewai Baru village, Gunung Mas district, Central Kalimantan. (Reference: [Environmental Insights of Central Kalimantan](#))

Indications of errors are:

- (1) Inappropriate planning
 - a. The government only conducts a rapid strategic environmental assessment in project implementation, without going through a more stringent strategic environmental assessment process.
 - b. The government is required to conduct due diligence first, because the food estate is a large project, so it takes longer to complete.
- (2) Greenpeace Indonesia suspects that the cassava planting program that opened up forest land in Gunung Mas Regency, Central Kalimantan in November 2020, was carried out without an environmental assessment. It was only in February 2021 that a public consultation process was carried out as part of the environmental impact assessment process.
- (3) The Audit Board of Indonesia (BPK) also found irregularities in the food estate program. The program was planned without valid data and information. The planning itself was not in accordance with sustainable agricultural practices.
- (4) The BPK also found that the process of determining the best location for the food estate program was not in accordance with existing provisions.
- (5) Existing regulations are not in sync with each other, for example, regulations from the Minister of Forestry and the Minister of Agriculture are not in sync, especially regarding Spatial Planning and Regional Planning
- (6) Farmers are not involved by the government, even though farmers have experience and knowledge about planting cassava, as a result many cassava plants die, the soil is sandy and shallow, so the seeds are not suitable for the soil.
- (7) lack of irrigation channels. Adequate irrigation is important for types of swamp land located near rivers and routinely flooded when the water rises.

If we look at Law Number 32 of 2009 concerning Environmental Protection and Management, especially Article 2 and Article 4, the Food Estate program is already contradictory, because this Law states that as a Strategic Environmental Study, the Food Estate program should be planned well, this is the responsibility of the State, concerning sustainability and continuity, balance, integration, benefits, and others. The planning in question, among others: environmental inventory, namely activities to find out the conditions in an area, whether it has the potential for natural resources, both biological and non-biological. Apparently, this has received less attention from the Government.

Planting cassava must be adjusted between the soil and the seeds to be planted. Local farmers are much more experienced in how to plant good cassava, its seedlings, fertilizers and so on. Even planting rice, farmers have never been given training on how to cultivate the prepared land, resulting in crop failure, and rice stocks running low, forced to import.

This type of swamp is near rivers and on the coast, affected by the rise and fall of sea levels, which dominates the landscape of Central Kalimantan.

Janang Firman, Advocacy Manager of Walhi Central Kalimantan, questioned why the strategic environmental study process was without a strict study, if the government is really serious about the food estate program.

Chay Asdak, a professor of watershed management at Padjadjaran University, said: "The food estate program should be designed carefully. It needs to consider the hydrological conditions of the landscape so that failure can be avoided.

So if the government wants to use science as the basis [of the food estate program], then the organic hydrological system should be followed"

Susilawati, a swamp rice researcher at the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), said it was still too early for the food estate program to produce results that were as productive as rice fields in Java.

"If you want [the food estate program] to succeed immediately within three years, then it can be done with optimal land, not in newly opened swamp land," she said as quoted by Tempo.co.

Daniel said the DPR had voiced its concerns over the lack of planning in the food estate program. "We have opposed [this program from the start] because the study was incomplete," he said. "It turns out the land is not suitable. There are no plantation managers. If there are people, they do not understand good agricultural practices."

X. FUNDING.

According to Presidential Regulation Number 3 of 2016, concerning the acceleration of National Strategic Projects; there are 3 (three) financing schemes:

- 1) Through the APBN/APBD, or BUMN,
- 2) Through Government Cooperation with Business Entities in Provision of Infrastructure
- 3) Through investors, so that the completion of National Strategic Projects does not depend on the Availability of budget allocations in the APBN/APBD



Figure 4: Land cleared for the food estate program in Kapuas Regency, Central Kalimantan. (Reference: Walhi Central Kalimantan).

Former Minister of Agriculture Syahrul Yasin Limpo once said: "The food estate program did not fail because it succeeded in increasing rice productivity in Central Kalimantan, namely from less than 2 metric tons to 4 metric tons per hectare.

However, he admitted that his ministry had not yet achieved the latest rice planting target for the food estate program in Central Kalimantan. In the Dadahup area, Kapuas Regency, the government is targeting the development of 1,020 hectares of new rice fields, but so far only 200 hectares have been implemented.

The solution to this problem is not to build large-scale plantations that will clear most of the forest and worsen global warming. The impact will be detrimental to the agricultural sector because extreme weather will occur more frequently and intensely.

When the Government's Food Estate Ambition Harms Farmers in Central Kalimantan

Because of the government's recommendation, farmers in the Central Kalimantan food estate are actually at a loss. They are asked for land three times a year, even though they usually do it twice. (Reporter: Vincent Fabian Thomas, Published 7 Feb 2021 12:00 WIB),



Figure 5: President Joko Widodo (left) accompanied by Defense Minister Prabowo Subianto (at that time) inspecting the land that will be used as a Food Estate or new food barn in Kapuas, Central Kalimantan, Thursday (9/7/2020). (ANTARA FOTO/Hafidz Mubarak A/nz)

Many farmers complained about the food estate program, because the government asked for three planting periods in a year, when in fact it should only be twice. The government wants the planting period to be accelerated to November-December, when in fact farmers usually only plant again in March-April of the following year. (source: Head of Belanti Siam Village, Pandih Batu District, Pulang Pisau Regency, Central Kalimantan, Amin Arifin, as reported by tirto.id)

Farmers whose land is included in the food estate program complained about a decrease in rice production and even resulted in crop failure. The cause is none other than the government's wrong recommendation.

The Purpose and Objectives of the Food Estate Program for the Government

The Government's good intentions are good, by implementing the Food Estate project, which aims to increase food production, through the development of integrated agricultural land, and to overcome the challenges of national food security, especially in facing climate change, dependence on food imports, and population growth.

The government is aware that in Indonesia agricultural land has not been developed optimally, especially in areas affected by climate change. Therefore, it is necessary to organize and develop agricultural land, so that farmers live more prosperously.

The government seeks to utilize existing natural resources by utilizing humans in the food estate program, as planners and implementers of large-scale food businesses, as stated in Presidential Regulation Number 3 of 2016 concerning the National Strategy Project, Article 1 number 1:

National Strategic Projects are projects implemented by the Government, Regional Governments, and/or business entities that have strategic nature to increase growth and equitable development in order to improve community welfare and regional development.

Meanwhile, the Regulation of the Minister of Environment and Forestry Number: P.24/MenLHK/Kum.1/10/2020 concerning Forest Areas for the development of Food Estates, **Article 1 Stipulates:**

Food estate is a large-scale food business which is a series of activities carried out to utilize natural resources, through human efforts by utilizing capital, technology, and other resources to produce food products to meet human needs in an integrated manner, including food crops, horticulture, plantations, livestock, fisheries in a Forest Area.

According to Article 1 number 11:

Forest areas for food security are forest areas specifically designated for food security interests with the development of Food estates. The forest areas in question are:

- a. Protected Forest;
- b. Production Forest

It turns out that the protected forest areas in question do not fully function in accordance with the provisions of the law. Meanwhile, the protected forest areas must have the criteria in accordance with Article 6 paragraph (1-2):

- a. not burdened with a forest area use permit;
- b. Forest utilization permit and/or other permits from the Minister, and not located in a forest area designated as a forest area with a special purpose;
- c. Burdened with a forest utilization permit, after being removed from its work area
- d. Unproductive and/or productive, and can be in areas that have or have not been reserved for land redistribution for agrarian reform.

So by understanding the regulations above, it is as if the Presidential Regulation is not in sync with the Regulation of the Minister of Forestry. In practice, there are many permits that must be carried out, which are not easy and complicated, not to mention the implementation of the Minister of Forestry's regulations, which are also difficult to implement.

National Strategic Projects

The regulation on National Strategic Projects was initially regulated by Presidential Regulation Number 3 of 2016, then amended by Presidential Regulation Number 109 of 2020, and the last amendment by In addition, Government Regulation Number 41 of 2021 was issued, concerning the facilitation of National Strategic Projects.

The implementation of National Strategic Projects is an effort to realize a just and prosperous society based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. The implementation of PSN focuses on physical and non-physical development which has an important role in increasing the economic growth of the community through a regional infrastructure development approach. "In addition to playing a role in supporting various fields of development, National Strategic Projects also play a role in supporting the growth and development of various goods and services industries and creating employment space for the wider community to support the improvement of the national economy and welfare," explained the regulation.

One of the National Strategy Projects is the National Food Provision Improvement Program/Food Estate, through the development of the Food Estate area. Meanwhile, the activity of providing forest areas for the development of the Food Estate requires a mechanism, namely changes in forest areas or changes in forest areas for food security. The forest areas in question must be forest areas that have special characteristics, namely protected forest areas and production forest areas. Its realization is not easy to implement, because:

- a. the area in question is partly inhabited, aka physically occupied by residents for farming;
- b. land replacement/exchange with residents who physically control it is needed;
- c. land acquisition is needed
- d. permits are needed, although Article 6 paragraph (1-2) of the Regulation of the Minister of Environment states that it is not burdened with forest area permits, in practice there must still be certain permits that must be carried out. This is not easy, and takes a long time.

Changes in forest area designation are not as easy as stated in the Presidential Regulation, because in fact, changes in forest area designation require:

- a. Application to the Minister with a copy to the Secretary General and the Director General;
- b. There is a statement of commitment, the contents of which are:
 - Ability to complete the boundary of the area for changes in forest area designation and coordinate with the ministry;
 - Ability to complete the Environmental Feasibility Test and Environmental Monitoring Test;
 - Ability to secure the released Food Security Forest area;
 - Ability to complete the master plan for the management of the Food Security Forest Area, which includes:
 - a) Management plan;

- b) Prepare detailed Engineering Design, related to the Food Security Forest Service, which originates from protected forests;
- Ability to complete the boundaries of the Food Security Forest Area and coordinate with the Ministry;
 - Ability to replace the investment costs of plants to the manager/permit holder
- c. Technical requirements.
- Rapid Strategic Environmental Assessment'
 - Proposal from the Applicant
 - Map of the application for Change of Forest Area Designation using a base map of at least 1:50,000 (one in fifty thousand)
 - Report and recommendations on research results for locations that have not been researched;
 - Map of the location of the Unproductive Resilience Production Forest reservation for areas in the Ministerial Decree on Unproductive HPK Reserve
- Integrity Pact:
- a) All attached documents are valid
 - b) Do not carry out activities before obtaining permission from the Minister
 - c) Be transparent, honest, objective and accountable
 - d) Do not give, receive, promise gifts/entertainment in any form
 - e) Make a permit application
 - f) Be able to face legal consequences

Director General of Forestry Planning and Environmental Management of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry Sigit Hardwinarto explained that the Change of Forest Area Designation for the development of Food Estates was carried out in Convertible Production Forest Areas (HPK).

"With the condition that it must pass the Integrated Team study, Strategic Environmental Assessment (KLHS), and complete the UKL UPL (Environmental Management Efforts - Environmental Monitoring Efforts)," he explained.

The Change of Forest Area Designation in HPK areas cannot be carried out if it fails to pass the UKL-UPL process. In addition, it is also necessary to secure the released HPK Area.

"In the case of agrarian reform interests, the area that is ready for food crop areas can then be redistributed to the community in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations," he added.

Meanwhile, the Protected Forest area that will be used for the construction of the Food Estate is the HL area that is no longer fully functioning as a protected area, namely the Protected Forest area that is open/degraded/no longer has forest stands.

"For that reason, the protected forest area that will be used as a Food Estate area does not have to be done by releasing the forest area, but most importantly it must be done in a protected forest area that meets the requirements as a protected forest that no longer has tree stands, or the protected forest function no longer exists," he concluded.

(Source: "ANTARA", Jakarta, 2020, by PR. Wire)

With the many regulations, which are full of requirements, then to realize the land first, in the form of changing the Protected Forest Area or Productive Forest to the Food Security Forest Area has experienced extraordinary difficulties, and requires large funds. If, the regulation is ignored, because the one working on the Food Estate is not the private sector, but the Government, there are still many obstacles, related to the working mechanism to realize the Food Estate.



Figure 6: Islands in Indonesia (Food Estate Area in Kalimantan Island)

Food Estate Project in Central Kalimantan Highlighted for Many Problems

The food estate project of the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Agriculture in Central Kalimantan has various problems ranging from crop failures, alleged waste of state funds to deforestation. (Source: Reporter: [Haris Prabowo](#)

Published 15 Mar 2023 14:10 WIB, and tirto.id/proyek-food-estate-di-kalteng-disorot-karen

Food Estate Labeled a Failure, Minister of Agriculture: Not an Instant Project

The Minister of Agriculture, Andi Amran Sulaiman, assessed that the food estate or food barn requires a process and technology to become productive land.

(Source: Reporter: [Faesal Mubarak](#), Published 24 Jan 2024)

[tirto.id](#) The Minister of Agriculture, Andi Amran Sulaiman, dismissed allegations that the food estate or food barn program had failed. He assessed that the program requires a process and technology to become productive land.

"This food estate is not an instant project, it takes a process. In reality, we have 600 hectares of land that was previously not used for agricultural land. We are now working on it, it takes a process, it takes technology to make it productive land," said Amran as quoted from a written statement, Wednesday (1/24/2024). He explained that the corn harvest proved that the agricultural technology applied was right and in accordance with expectations. Furthermore, he was optimistic that he would be able to work on the food estate land because the current technology he had was advanced.



Figure 7: Aerial photo of the irrigation network to irrigate the national food estate area of Dadahup in Kapuas Regency, Bentuk Jaya Village, Central Kalimantan, Wednesday (4/21/2021). Source: ANTARA FOTO/Makna Zaezar/rwa.

The Steep Road of Food Estate is Labeled a Failure, Valid Data is the Key

Food Estate is one of the government's programs to maintain food security. Since the beginning of this sentence, it has indeed reaped pros and cons among the community.

Now, Food Estate is being discussed again, because it is considered a failure and presents invalid data. The one who revealed the invalid data of this project is the DPR Commission IV.

In CNBC Indonesia's records, this food estate project is a 'fake' project. In the sense that here the Chairman of Commission IV of the House of Representatives mentioned the project data, not the project that is fake but the data and reports regarding its production are not right.

"I was also tickled to read in the media. Fake food estate, there is no fake food estate. If it were fake, it would mean there is no food estate. But this has a food estate. What is not right is the report regarding its production," said the Chairman of Commission IV of the House of Representatives, Sudin when opening the Hearing Meeting with Echelon I of the Ministry of Agriculture in CNBC Indonesia's records.

This made the ministers speak out. PUPR Minister Basuki Hadimuljono emphasized that the food estate project had yielded results. He also rejected the statement of the House of Representatives, which said that this project had failed or contained false data. In addition, Defense Minister Prabowo Subianto (at that time) strongly denied allegations of the failure of the food barn or food estate project that was being intensified by President Joko Widodo.

Then, this certainly confused the public. What is the truth? Moreover, since the beginning this project has drawn a lot of controversy. (Source: Aulia Mutiara Hatia Putri, CNBC Indonesia Research, January 30, 2023)

Food Estate Program Ever Reaped Pros and Cons

The concept of food estate in general is a concept used to carry out integrated food development both in the scope of agriculture, plantations, and animal husbandry in a certain area.

However, what is currently being actively echoed by the government is based on the issue of food. Food estate exists as an effort to make a national food barn so that the domestic food supply does not experience a shortage.

Despite having the goal of serving the people's interests, the food estate project has drawn pros and cons in the country. The reason is, the food estate as one of the government's flagship programs claimed to realize Indonesia's food independence is considered to cause environmental, human rights, and sustainability problems.

Failure Of Government Owned Food Estate Projects In Central Kalimantan

The program, which requires quite a large cost and focuses on its implementation in areas with forest status, both protected forests, production forests, some of which are in Other Use Areas (APL) and on peatlands, has drawn criticism from various parties.

Not without reason, the rejection stems from the track record of the program in the previous regime which had recorded failure.

Meanwhile, of course, environmental issues are a major concern for those against the food estate. Many studies and even studies have proven that this national food barn program poses various threats to environmental sustainability. One example of an investigation conducted by Tempo in Gunung Mas, Central Kalimantan, together with the Gecko Project supported by Greenpeace, the Rainforest Investigations Network of the Pulitzer Center and Internews' Earth Journalism Network, which showed that in the development of the food estate, many violations of government regulations were found by private companies.



Figure 8: Photo: President Joko Widodo and Defense Minister Prabowo Subianto (at that time) review the location of the development of the food estate or national food barn during a working visit to Central Kalimantan Province on Thursday (9/7/20220). (Presidential Secretariat Press Bureau/ Laily Rachev)

According to Arif Satria, Chancellor of the Bandung Institute of Technology in a food discussion in Jakarta, the Food Estate Project must be evaluated in full to find a solution that prioritizes national food security goals rather than political interests. Meaningful involvement of the community and academics is key to ensuring that the state budget is not wasted.

He continued, the process towards implementing the Food Estate or food barn should go through academic studies and accurate data in accordance with the land conditions at the location determined by the government.

(Source: Kompas, Jakarta, Wednesday, 24/1/2024)

Suharso Monoarfa, as the Minister of National Development Planning, or as the Head of the National Development Planning Agency (BAPPENAS), has finalized the Food Estate program in Central Kalimantan Province, by stating: The objectives and targets are as follows:

The objectives of compiling the Master Plan for the Development of Food Estate/Food Production Center Areas in Central Kalimantan Province are to:

- 1) Become a guideline/reference in planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring, and
- 2) Control the development activities of Food Estate/Food Production Center Areas in Central Kalimantan Province; and Provide direction for the development of Food Estate/Food Production Center Areas based on the Thematic, Holistic, Integrative, and Spatial (THIS) approach as regulated in Article 3 of Government Regulation Number 17 of 2017 concerning Synchronization of the National Development Planning and Budgeting Process.

The target of the Master Plan is to improve accountability for planning and budgeting, monitoring implementation, and to be a measurement guide in achieving the targets for developing Food Estate/Food

Production Center Areas in Central Kalimantan Province that have been set. NATIONAL POLICY AND POSITION OF THE MASTER PLAN FOR DEVELOPMENT

(Source: Decree of the Head of BAPPENAS No. KEP.18/M.PPN/HK/03/2023 concerning the Master Plan for Developing Food Estate/Food Production Center Areas in Central Kalimantan Province)

XI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion:

Based on what has been described above, it can be concluded that the failure of the Food Estate Program as one of the National Strategic Projects in Central Kalimantan is due to:

- 1) Many agrarian conflicts;
- 2) Forest clearing activities that increase deforestation and global warming have caused flooding in several areas in Central Kalimantan.
- 3) The managers are not ready and unprofessional, due to lack of experience;
- 4) Many farmers are disadvantaged, as well as indigenous peoples, because their customary land rights are converted / changed to plant types
- 5) The Presidential Regulation on National Strategic Projects conflicts with various other regulations, especially regarding licensing which still greatly burdens the implementation of the Food Estate program, the theory and practice are different. Planning is not mature enough,,,
- 6) Equipment is not sophisticated enough and inadequate;
- 7) Non-APBN finances, so that it depends on investor funds, it turns out that no investors have come in to fund the Food Estate program;
- 8) Unsystematic working mechanism
- 9) Absence of budget and regulations for the establishment of the Strategic Logistics Reserve Agency.

Recommendation:

1. Managers should conduct comparative studies in countries where the Food Estate management system is advanced, for example in China
2. Learn technology for agriculture
3. Equipment and tools must be sophisticated
4. Human resources must be trained
5. It is better to re-evaluate and involve academic studies

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