

## The Impact of Termination of Cooperation between the Indonesian Government and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) on Nature Conservation

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to explain the reasons why the Indonesian government decided to cooperate with *World Wide Fund for Nature* (WWF) and the impact of the termination of the Indonesian government's cooperation with WWF on Nature Conservation in Indonesia. Data was collected through a literature study (library research) which aims to collect secondary data from books, journals, reports, official government websites, and other relevant internet sites to support this research. The data is then analyzed in three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. First, a change in landscape or the scope of WWF's performance which is increasingly being expanded. Second, WWF's activities, especially in the field of climate change, environmental and forestry law enforcement and waste management in the field, do not have a legal basis for legal cooperation. Third, violations of the principle of cooperation and violations of field work and unilateral claims that do not match the facts that occur in the field. Fourth, violations of the substance of the cooperation agreement, including through a series of social media campaigns and publication of reports that are not in accordance with the facts. The limitation of this research is that the researchers did not have time to conduct interviews with WWF to examine in more detail the impact of the termination of cooperation on nature conservation in Indonesia. Subsequent research needs to use the interview method for more comprehensive results.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Government of Indonesia, in this case the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) decided on a cooperation agreement with the World Wild Fund for Nature (WWF) Indonesia which has been going on since 1998. The collaboration between WWF Indonesia and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, formerly still called the Ministry of Forestry, has been ongoing Over 20 years (WWF, 2022). WWF has been in Indonesia since 1962, with the first project in Ujung Kulon. In 1996, WWF officially became a foundation and became a legal entity with legal status according to Indonesian regulations.

Since then, there have been 130 WWF Indonesia projects related to environmental conservation and preservation. Now, there are around 19% or 30 projects from Aceh to Papua, affected by this decision (Lusia Arumingtyas, 2020). The termination of this cooperation was stated in the Decree of the Minister of Environment and Forestry Number 32/2020 dated 10 January 2020. Even though when this cooperation agreement was made through letters numbered 188/DJ-VI/Binprog/1998 and CR/026/III/1998 dated 13 March 1998 ( Joseph, 2020). Based on the agreement letter, the collaboration should last for more than three years, or 2023.

According to the head of WWF's advisory body, they deeply regret this unilateral decision by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, (Desyinta Nuraini (Bisnis.com), 2022) moreover there is no room for direct communication and consultation for deliberations to reach consensus as stated in the cooperation agreement between the two institutions (Lusia Arumingtyas, 2020). Previously WWF had tried to communicate with Siti Nurbaya, Minister of Environment and Forestry, but there was no response. WWF is still asking about the government's decision to decide on its cooperation. The Ministry of Environment and Forestry said that it had sent the first letter on March 28, 2019, stating that the Ministry of Environment and Forestry would evaluate the performance of WWF Indonesia. Then they sent another letter, on 4 October 2019 containing cooperation in the forestry sector with the WWF Indonesia Foundation. However, WWF regretted this action because the letters were only received on 7 October 2019 which contained a decision to end the cooperation between the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and the WWF Indonesia Foundation as of 5 October 2019 (Septian Deny, 2020).

Bambang Hendroyono, Secretary General of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, said that the cooperation agreement since March 1998 was no longer appropriate and had to be replaced. The decision was based on an evaluation by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry since December 2018. According to him, WWF Indonesia's performance evaluation, such as WWF Indonesia's scope of work, was not in line with work in the field. The MOU scope of work (WWF Indonesia) is only about conservation and biodiversity, but WWF's work is on all aspects including landscapes, climate change, waste and others. According to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, WWF was deemed not competent enough in carrying out its duties so that the targets set with the government were not realized.

Director General of Conservation and Natural Resources and Ecosystems of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry Wiratno said that WWF Indonesia failed to anticipate and handle fires at several points of land that were the responsibility of the organization and PT ABT as the concession owner (Septian Deny, 2020). The land in question is an ecosystem restoration concession area that acts as a buffer zone for the Bukit Tigapuluh National Park in Jambi (Prasetyo, 2020). WWF did not accept the decision submitted by the ministry through a ministerial letter, according to them based on law No. 32/2009 concerning Environmental Protection and Management, providing rights and opportunities for the widest possible community to play an active role in environmental protection and management (CNN Indonesia, 2020). So WWF refuses to be said to be excessive in working because it is a basic principle that WWF has the right to participate in environmental affairs, so there is no need to be regulated in a cooperation agreement to do that.

Apart from the cooperation agreement between the government and WWF, many WWF programs in Indonesia may be affected by the termination of this cooperation. A Professor of Forestry Policy at IPB said the breakup of this partnership would cost the government, so far WWF has contributed to environmental issues in Indonesia. Problems that occurred in Riau. WWF is the driving force, Eye on the Forest whose data is for the KPK's study and is suing Perda 10/2018 regarding the problematic spatial planning of Riau. One of the strategic projects that has had an impact on this decision is the conservation of endangered species, such as the Sumatran rhinoceros in East Kalimantan, whose name is Pahu. This rhino was discovered in 2018 in the Kelian forest, West Kutai. So far, WWF Indonesia has fully supported operational and maintenance costs as well as experts in rhino conservation in the area. Unlike the Javan rhino, in Ujung Kulon National Park, which can live alone in its habitat, this Pahu is threatened because it is in a protected area. In East Kalimantan, WWF works with the community to protect and avoid external risks by fostering the community.

Another strategic project, restoration of the former logging site which became the Sebangau National Park, which is now the habitat of 600 Bornean orangutans. This area used to be a former HPH, WWF helped block the canal. There are 1,500 canal blocks, if they are not cared for, they will be damaged in a short time, maybe the wood was stolen. If the water level drops, there is a risk of fire. Departing from the problems that have occurred, this study wants to answer two big questions; (1) Why did the Indonesian government cancel the cooperation agreement with WWF? and (2) What is the impact of the termination of this cooperation on nature conservation in Indonesia?

## THEORETICAL REVIEW

### *Non Government Organization (NGO)*

Non-government organizations (NGOs) or often referred to as non-governmental organizations are part of international organizations seen from the institutional level. This organization is an organization that does not act on behalf of or involve the state. According to Craig Warketin, an NGO is a private, voluntary and non-profit association (Bakry, 2017). The International Relations Study describes that NGO refers to a group or organization whose membership and organizational activities cross national boundaries. To emphasize the transnational aspect, a number of social science and international relations scholars also refer to NGOs as INGOs (International Non-Government Organizations) (Warketin, 2005).

According to David Lewis, NGOs have five characteristics: the first is formal, which means an organization that is institutionalized in the form of regular meetings, support offices and other organizational features. Both are private, which means that they are institutionally separate from the government, although in carrying out their activities they can receive support from the government. Third, it is non-profit oriented, which means that if an NGO experiences excess funds, the funds are not allocated to owners or directors. Fourth, self-governing, which means being able to control and manage one's own affairs. Fifth, it is voluntary, if you cannot employ volunteer staff, there is at least some degree of voluntary participation in organizational management (Lewis, 2014).

This NGO terminology was first introduced in 1945 whose existence has received recognition from the international community. These NGOs are a very diverse group of organizations involved in various activities for the purpose of charity, and also later for political, religious and other purposes. According to Lynn Lawry, he described the types of NGOs which were divided based on orientation. Based on orientation, NGOs are divided into four types. The first is a charitable orientation aimed at meeting the needs of the poor.

Second, service orientation, for example focusing on health, environment, family planning, education services and other programs. Third, a participatory orientation which is characterized by self-help projects where local people are involved both in giving donations and implementing projects. Fourth, empowerment orientation, helping the poor to develop a clearer understanding of social, political and economic factors (Lawry, 2009).

Technological developments have resulted in NGOs growing and bringing positive influences to the life of the international community. This shows that the strength and role of NGOs and their transnational movements have a great impact on policies in a country. Such organizations are concerned, for example, in the environmental field such as Green Peace, WWF and so on. WWF as one of the first NGOs to operate in Switzerland on April 29, 1961. Then it expanded throughout the world and one of them was Indonesia. The existence of WWF has an orientation towards the environment which is focused on nature conservation.

### ***Cooperative Concept***

According to international relations studies, cooperation has a definition according to scholars. Robert Keohane said that cooperation occurs when actors (states and non-state actors) adapt their behavior to the actual and anticipated preferences of other parties through a policy coordination process (Keohane). This concept implies that the behavior of each actor is directed at several common goals. Second, cooperation gives the parties profitable benefits or rewards. Meanwhile, according to Joseph Frankel, countries will carry out cooperation if the benefits obtained are greater than the consequences that must be borne (Keohane, 2006).

According to Daniel Frei, he described the differences in international cooperation in two basic approaches, namely the public choice approach and the public goods approach. Frei, by emphasizing the public choice approach which is based on the behavior of international actors by presenting countries, international organizations, multinational companies and so on, is understood as an attempt to maximize the use and function of each with the constraints and certain considerations. Meanwhile, the public choice approach emphasizes the types of cooperation and participation that arise in international relations, despite the fact that there are no real results or benefits that can be expected by countries in international cooperation and participation (Keohane, 2006).

International cooperation can also occur because various kinds of national interests of various countries and nations cannot be fulfilled in their own country. International cooperation is also the other side of international conflict as part of the international aspect. In other words, international cooperation can be formed because international life covers various fields such as ideology, politics, economy, social, environment, culture, defense and security (Perwita, 2006). This raises diverse interests resulting in various social problems. To find solutions to these various problems, several countries have formed an international partnership. The implementation of this collaboration shows state and non-state, this is represented by the Ministry of Environment and WWF. Even though this collaboration provides benefits for Indonesia, especially in nature conservation or concern in environmental issues. Instead of other aspects causing conflict, namely by deciding cooperation unilaterally by country representatives without any explanation that can be accepted by WWF.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The type of research used in this paper is qualitative research with secondary data analysis. Qualitative research is a research method that is descriptive in nature, uses analysis, refers to data, and is analyzed using theory associated with case studies. According to Bogdan and Taylor, quoted in Nugrahani, qualitative research is a research procedure that is capable of producing descriptive data in the form of speech, writing, and behavior of the people being observed (Nugrahani, 2014). While the data collection technique in this study was through library research which aims to collect secondary data from books, journals, reports, official government websites, and other internet sites that are relevant in supporting this research. Data was analyzed in three

stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion or verification (Walliman, 2010).

## RESULT

### *Cancellation of cooperation agreement between the Government of Indonesia and WWF*

WWF as a non-governmental organization/non-governmental organization (ORNOP) working in the environmental field and focusing on conservation, research and environmental restoration was founded by a British biologist known as Sir Julian Huxley. This was because at that time many British people were hunting animals in Africa which caused many animals in Africa to be endangered. Then WWF has a network (networking) almost all over the world. WWF in Indonesia itself was founded in 1962 which legally and incorporated in 1996 with the status of a foundation (Kolit). For approximately 50 years, WWF Indonesia has collaborated with government agencies, non-governmental organizations, universities and community leaders with the aim of promoting sustainable development and nature conservation. Collaboration with the Indonesian government, especially the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, has been established since 1998 with a focus on nature conservation, but after more than 20 years this collaboration was interrupted for certain reasons. According to David et al. (2016) NGOs can be said to be a form of social movement organization playing a role and strategy in order to encourage equality of power relations between the government, companies and citizens. Therefore WWF can play a strategy in establishing relations with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry as a representative of the state to advocate for environmental preservation. Besides that, it can also play a strategy to build a cross-country network to focus on the environmental sector. Therefore, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry should be used as a partner for cooperation or building relationships for one purpose for the environment. However, what happened was the opposite, not the relationship that occurred, but a cooperation decision.

The Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) terminated the technical cooperation agreement with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Indonesia. The termination of this cooperation was carried out because WWF Indonesia was considered to have violated the substance of the cooperation. The termination of this cooperation relationship was stated in Ministerial Decree Number SK.32/Menlhk/Setjen/KUM.1/1/2020 dated 10 January 2020. In the decree, it was explained that so far the Ministry of Environment and Forestry had collaborated with WWF Indonesia in the program to conserve biological natural resources. and its ecosystem in Indonesia (Permana, 2020).

The Director General of Conservation and Natural Resources and Ecosystems (KSDAE) of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) Wiratno explained that there was a discrepancy between the results of the work

of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the targets that the government wanted to achieve at this time, so the government cut off cooperation with WWF Indonesia. This collaboration between the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and WWF Indonesia has been going on for approximately two decades and is based on the cooperation agreement No. 188/DJ-VI/BINPROG/1998 dated 13 March 1998 Jo MoU No CR/026/III/1998. (Rakhmad Hidayatulloh Permana - detikNews, 2020).

According to Wiratno, forestry issues, whether related to forest and land fires (Karhutla), conservation and biodiversity restoration (Kehati) need clear and measurable solutions in the field. The issue of forest and land fires (karhutla) in the WWF Indonesia ecosystem restoration concession area was also the trigger for Minister Siti's decision. PT Panda Lestari, a subsidiary of the WWF Indonesia Foundation, holds a majority stake in PT Alam Bukit Tigapuluh (PT ABT) in Tebo Regency, Jambi. PT ABT's concession area reaches 35 thousand hectares (Betahita, 21 February 2020). According to Elis, in the 2019 forest and land fires, 100 hectares of land burned in PT ABT's concession. The majority of the burned lands were areas that had been encroached upon and logged massively to be planted with oil palm and rubber illegally by other parties. The KLHK saw the karhutla as a form of WWF Indonesia's inability to manage its concession land. WWF Indonesia has also carried out social media mobilization on an ongoing basis. WWF Indonesia is considered to have negated efforts and discredited the government, in this case the Ministry of Environment and Forestry.

The partnership decision between the Government of Indonesia and WWF has gone through the evaluation results of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, there are several points that became the basis for terminating the collaboration. First, the implementation of cooperation in the field of conservation and forestry on the basis of a cooperation agreement has been expanded in scope by the WWF Indonesia Foundation. Second, WWF Indonesia's activities in the field of climate change, enforcement of environmental and forestry laws, and waste management in the field have no legal basis for cooperation. legal (Permana, 2020).

Third, the existence of violations of the principle of cooperation and violations of field work and making unilateral claims that do not match the facts on the ground are at a very serious level by the WWF Indonesia Foundation. WWF Indonesia worked in several locations without the knowledge of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry. In the view of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, several WWF Indonesia activities are illegal because they do not have permission from the ministry (Betahita, 21 February 2020). There is a work overclaim by WWF Indonesia and no mutual respect for the government.

Fourth, there was a violation of the substance of the cooperation agreement, including through social media campaigns and the publication of

reports that did not match the facts, which were carried out by the WWF Indonesia Foundation. According to Wiratno, regarding Karhutla which is a serious and complicated problem, it is not enough to solve it by merely imaging, inviting artists or public figures. He is of the view that one of the target discrepancies is related to the failure of WWF Indonesia and PT ABT to deal with forest and land fires in their concession in August 2019 (Kunjana, 2020). This concession is an ecosystem restoration concession area which, among other things, acts as a buffer zone for the Bukit Tigapuluh National Park in Jambi covering an area of 400 thousand hectares. This national park is one of the remaining habitats for the endangered Sumatran tiger and elephant. The WWF concession is the only ecosystem restoration concession that was sealed by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry due to forest and land fires.

The termination of the partnership was stated in the Decree of the Minister of Environment and Forestry Number SK.32/Menlhk/Setjen/KUM.1/1/2020 concerning the End of Cooperation Between the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and the WWF Indonesia Foundation. From the decision letter stipulated by the Minister of Environment and Forestry Siti Nurbaya on January 10 2020, there were three points of cooperation that were declared to have ended. First, the cooperation agreement between the Ministry of Environment and Forestry c.q the Director General of Forest Protection and Nature Conservation and the WWF Indonesia Foundation Number 188/DJ-VI/Binprog/1998 and Number CR/026/III/1998 dated 13 March 1997 and all implementation of the cooperation. Second, all cooperation agreements between the Ministry of Environment and Forestry involving the WWF Indonesia Foundation. Third, all the activities of the WWF Indonesia Foundation together with the government and regional governments which are within the scope of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry's duties, affairs and authorities.

The Ministry of Environment and Forestry has taken a number of steps towards the WWF Indonesia Foundation's activities as a partner, alliance, or contractor in government cooperation projects (bilateral friendly countries), such as cooperation with the Governments of the United States, United Kingdom, Norway, Australia, Germany, the Netherlands, France, Singapore , Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, and other countries, as well as multilateral cooperation. The first step, all work units of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry must report the foreign technical cooperation activities and end them.

If the activities of the WWF Indonesia Foundation as a partner/alliance/contractor of the government/embassy/government donor agency are incomplete or partial, then all activities of the WWF Indonesia Foundation will become the responsibility of the embassy/government donor agency. In the letter, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry will conduct a special evaluation of the financing aspect and it is planned to carry out a thorough and or gradual audit by BPKP and/or BPK RI regarding the subject of conservation, wildlife (wildlife), landscape, climate change, carbon, ecosystem



restoration, and waste management. "We plan to conduct a thorough and or gradual audit by BPKP and/or BPK RI regarding the subject of conservation, wildlife, landscape, climate change, carbon, ecosystem restoration and waste management," (Prasetyo, 2020). All work units of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry that have cooperation and have activities with the WWF Indonesia Foundation are required to report all their activities in stages to the minister until April 2020.

According to Wiratno from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, the letter of termination of cooperation has been submitted to the WWF Indonesia Foundation in writing. The collaboration between the Director General of Forest Protection and Nature Conservation and WWF Indonesia was declared ended and not valid since October 5 2019. Meanwhile, WWF Indonesia Media Relations Specialist Karina Lestiarsi said that a copy of this decision was received by her party on January 23 2020 (Kunjana, 2020). It's just that WWF regretted that it was not given the space for direct communication and consultation and held deliberations to reach a consensus as stated in the cooperation agreement (PKS) between the two institutions.

This decision is detrimental to WWF's reputation, which has been active for more than 50 years in supporting conservation and sustainable development efforts in Indonesia. Nevertheless, the WWF Indonesia Foundation respects this decision and hastened the process of handing over work programs affected by the termination of the PKS to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, both at the national and regional levels in accordance with applicable regulations.

#### *The impact of the termination of cooperation on nature conservation in Indonesia*

After working together for 20 years, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) cut ties with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Indonesia. WWF assesses that the decision was made unilaterally by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry because there was no dialogue. WWF Indonesia Advisory Board Chairman Kuntoro Mangkusubroto said the news came suddenly. This is because the cooperation agreement since March 13, 1998 should still be valid until 2023 (Betahita, February 21, 2020). Since the beginning WWF Indonesia was not involved in the evaluation process of the cooperation. According to the acting chief executive officer of WWF Indonesia, Lukas Laksono Adhyakso, WWF did not receive any evaluation results from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry. Minister Siti's decision has had an impact on WWF Indonesia's work program.

According to Kuntoro, there were 30 projects (out of a total of 130 WWF Indonesia projects) that failed as a result of the termination of the cooperation. The projects are located in 19 conservation areas such as Ujung Kulon National Park in Banten, Bukit Barisan Selatan National Park in Lampung, and the Kelian Sanctuary in East Kalimantan. The Kelian Sanctuary is a sanctuary for the only Sumatran rhino found in East Kalimantan.

The impact of terminating the cooperation relationship between KLHK and WWF on nature conservation in Indonesia, among others; Protected animal conservation projects that are under the authority of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) can no longer be implemented. According to Lukas, acting CEO of WWF Indonesia, there are four protected animals affected by this policy, namely elephants, Sumatran tigers, Sumatran orangutans and rhinos which are scattered in central Sumatra, South Sumatra and Kalimantan. "But specifically for wild animals, we are actually a bit worried, because we cannot immediately release them to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry without a transfer. We regret that the dialogue has not been completed" (Madrin, 2020).

Quoting the site [wwf.id](http://wwf.id), Sumatran tigers are the last tigers in Indonesia, after the Balinese tigers in the 40s and the Javan tigers in the 80s were declared extinct. The sustainability of Sumatran tigers continues to be threatened by human activities such as poaching, illegal trade and forest conversion. The Ministry of Environment and Forestry Conservation Action Plan Strategy Document in 2018 states that the Sumatran tiger population is only around 600 individuals. While the Sumatran elephants in nature are estimated to remain 2,400 to 2,800 individuals. Elephants' lives are threatened by hunting, deforestation and habitat loss, as well as conflicts with humans. For orangutans, there are 13 pockets of orangutan population on the island of Sumatra. Of these, it is likely that only three population pockets have around 500 individuals and seven population pockets consist of more than 250 individuals. As for the Bornean Orangutan, in 2004, scientists estimated the orangutan population on Borneo Island to reach 54 thousand individuals, both in Indonesia and Malaysia. The next endangered rhino in the world. Two of the world's five rhino species live in Indonesia, namely the Sumatran rhinoceros which has two horns and the Javan rhinoceros which has one horn. The population of rhinos in nature is currently estimated to be less than 300 individuals. Lukas hopes that the Ministry of Environment and Forestry is willing to have a dialogue to discuss the preservation of these protected animals during the transition period. He also said his institution was ready to help if needed during this transitional period.

Furthermore, related to the government's support for nature conservation in Indonesia to WWF will also decrease as a result of the termination of this cooperation. Of course this affects support and opportunities for conservation activities, including support from foreign partners to Indonesia. Termination of cooperation relations is a bad impact for both parties, because it indicates a failure in building a consensus between the government and non-governmental organizations on conservation. Therefore, WWF's relationship or interaction as an NGO with the Indonesian government is a record to pay attention to on how to build trust for the sake of environmental conservation in a better direction.

## CONCLUSION

The dynamics in international relations are characterized by patterns of cooperation and conflict both between countries, as well as between states and

NGOs and between NGOs themselves. WWF as a non-governmental organization is an institution whose work has received recognition and trust from the Indonesian government, especially from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry. This is marked by the fact that since 1998 WWF has officially become a partner of the Indonesian government, especially in dealing with issues that are of concern in the environmental field, in this case nature and ecosystem conservation. However, this relationship did not last long where in 2020 the government officially terminated the collaboration with WWF for certain reasons. One of them is the problem of disagreement in the realm of scope/landscape in nature conservation and WWF's focus on environmental issues which are increasingly widespread as well as violations by WWF in nature conservation projects. This of course has an impact on the protection of fauna and protected animals in Indonesia which are endangered and the Javan Rhinoceros Conservation in Kalimantan is one of the programs affected by the termination of the collaboration between the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and WWF.

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