**SIALANG HONEY PRODUCTION:**

**BALANCING NATURE AND WELL-BEING**

**(CASE STUDY IN TESSO NILO NATIONAL PARK)**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Tesso Nilo National Park was appointed as a national park based on the Decree of Ministry of Forestry Number: SK.255/Menhut-II/2004 dated 19 July 2004 and Decree Number: SK 663/Menhut-II/2009 dated 15 October 2009. The park is habitat of Sialang trees which are home of Forest Bee (Apis dorsata). In this area, honey collection becomes an integral part of local culture. It relates to local wisdom in maintaining sustainability of the forest (Arsyad et al, 2011). Research has shown that existence of traditional knowledge supports conservation (Popova. 2013).

Therefore, this paper will explore traditional knowledge used in management of Sialang Honey and provide information regarding challenges in its implementation. This information is very important to help related stakeholders formulating better extension and regulation in accommodating local people and park’s conservation.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This research used literature review. Selected papers were used to acquire information regarding Sialang honey production and its problems. Discussion with other party was also done to evaluate available information.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Sialang Trees Distribution**

According to Malay Riau Tribe, sialang trees refer to trees used as bees’ hive. Types of Sialang trees include Balau (Shorea atrinervosa), Ara (Ficus spp), Meranti (Shorea spp), Kempas (Koompasia malaccesis), Rengas (Gluta rengas), etc (Anggraheni, 2012). There are at least 490 sialang trees in Tesso Nilo National Park. Each tree has 10 – 15 hives and estimated can produce 80 – 500 kg of honey. Therefore, total potential honey production is around 7.500 – 25.000 kg in one time harvest (Arsyad et al., 2011).

Figure 1. Distribution of Sialang Trees in Tesso Nilo National Park

Source: Arsyad et al., 2011

**Traditional Knowledge in Managing Sialang Honey and Trees**

Below is summary of traditional knowledge applied by local in managing honey sialang. This indigenous knowledge has been long practiced and depicts sustainability.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| No | Aspect | Traditional Knowledge |
| 1 | Ecological aspect | * Harvesting honey is done at certain period and criteria * Clearing area near sialang trees and tree base/trunk is watered with diamond water * People believe honey is inhabited by spirits therefore it must be protected * The protection of sialang trees is done up to area of two hectares |
| 2 | Community involvement | * Involving group of local people for collecting and sharing result (mutual cooperation) |
| 3 | Institutional Support | * There is customary institution and law which protect sialang trees and forest area. This customary law not only binds local communities but also companies |
| 4 | Sustainability technique | * Torch materials to drive bees away is bark of Dellenia exenia tree which is safe does not kill bee * The stairs and ropes used for climbing last for a year |

Tabel 1. Traditional Knowledge in Managing Sialang Honey

Sources: Syafii and Yennita (2016); Sari, et al. (2014); Anggraheni (2012); Arsyad et al (2011)

**Ecological, Social, and Economical Challenges**

Sialang Honey production has been well developed especially after the formation of honey farmer group. However, Sialang trees still face some threats due to illegal logging, land conversion, and deforestation (Puspitasari, 2016). This problem has caused change in micro climate which affects honey production (Perial et al., 2013). To overcome this problem, implementation of integrated natural resources management and law enforcement need to be well realized.

From economical perspective, market of Sialang honey is still limited and it must compete with other well-known honey such as Sumbawa and Sentarum honey. Limited source of electrical energy has also caused delay in packaging (Anggraheni, 2012). Improving brand image and gaining support from the government to create market is crucial.

Nowadays, some farmers harvest honey at daytime which drive bee away from Sialang trees. They also prefer to cultivate palm oil (sari, et al, 2014). The younger generation has begun to abandon the tradition of harvesting honey that may someday be lost (Anggraheni, 2012). Therefore, local administration and government should promote their tradition as part of cultural identity.

**CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS**

Preservation of Sialang trees and its adherent culture is important to protect the park and local culture. To achieve this, related stakeholder must jointly collaborate to formulate better regulation. To ensure the sustainability of bee production, market should be widened and cooperation needs to be done with more parties.

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