

Part I. Introduction

Chapter One

Recent Development and Conservation Interventions in Borneo¹

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Introduction

In the hierarchy of Indonesian and Malaysian official development priorities, Borneo occupies a unique niche. While its peoples and their local political economies are regarded as backward or uncivilised by officials, the natural resources which these same people manage are considered rich.² The combination of economic poverty and natural resource wealth provides prime sites for 'development', mostly for the good of the majority or the national good. However, towards the end of the 20th century 'development' changed direction. Through Indonesia's decentralisation policy and Sarawak's land development policy targeted specifically at Native Customary Land, 'development' has been more intensely localised than in earlier decades. One goal of this book is to draw attention to state processes at the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st centuries that appear to be responding to global economic development in ways that have dramatised the strengths and weaknesses of local political economies and natural resource management. A second objective is to address the changing histories and identities of local communities and institutions as they are reshaped, rejuvenated or weakened in the face of state and economic pressures.

This book evaluates development and conservation interventions that are taking place on the island of Borneo. Its strength lies in its attempt to evaluate change processes affecting both the Indonesian and Malaysian parts of the island (see Figure 1.1). The contributors examine changes associated with two major

¹ I wish to express my gratitude to Geoffrey Benjamin and Lesley Potter for their support and ideas for this paper, as well as colleagues at University of Malaysia Sabah, especially Ludwig Kamesheidt of GTZ, for his comments on aspects of scientific forestry, and James Alin for comments on Table 1.1. Nevertheless, responsibility for the final outcome is entirely mine.

² Examples abound. For Indonesia, see contributions to Li (1999) concerning myths and assumptions about upland peoples generally (in Borneo and elsewhere in Indonesia) in both conventional and 'green' approaches to development. In the conventional development approach, the creativity, diversity, dynamism and productivity of upland environments are overlooked as programs and policies assume a starting point at or near zero. Some 'green' approaches assume that the subsistence orientation of uplanders is somewhat detached from market production. For Malaysia, various analyses for Sarawak and Sabah, including those by Brosius (1997, 1999), Majid Cooke (1999, 2002), Doolittle (2001, 2004), describe a range of official approaches which suggest their innocence, gullibility and vulnerability due to their 'backwardness'. This in turn justifies increasing state intervention into their physical environments and social lives.

economic activities that have affected Bornean landscapes and livelihoods over the last 30 years; namely, large-scale timber and oil palm production. Reflecting conditions in the field, logging, whether legal or illegal, drew the attention of contributors from Indonesian Borneo in a more fundamental way than oil palm production. By contrast, contributors from Malaysian Borneo took greater heed of changes associated with oil palm than with timber production, without underestimating the continued impact of logging on landscapes and lives. Nevertheless, the chapters resonate with common themes across current topics enabling comparisons on important issues including customary or indigenous tenure, borders and their porosity, the potential for conflict resolution among stakeholders and the role of non-government organisations (NGOs) as intermediaries between ‘communities’ and the state.

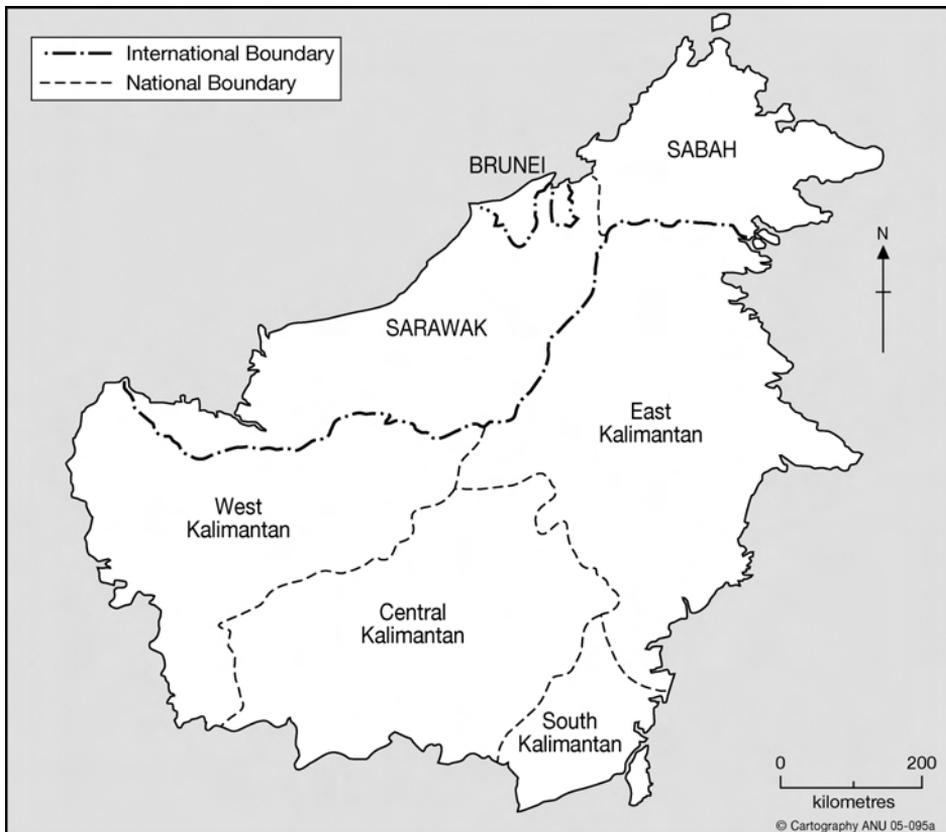


Figure 1.1. Map of Borneo with international borders and national divisions

The authors in this volume have benefited from recent theoretical debates in political ecology, development studies, environmental sociology and social anthropology. Such debates have produced a more critical examination of development, in particular top-down (state-driven) development (Ferguson

1996), of concepts concerning 'community' (Agarwal and Gibson 1999), identity and difference (Li 2003), and of conservation agendas themselves (Brosius 1999). Although benefiting from the philosophical standpoint of post-developmentalism (Rahnema 1992; Escobar 1995), the contributors are consistent in their position of adopting a critical engagement with *alternative development* approaches. This means unpacking notions of 'community', 'participation and empowerment', 'local capacity building and partnership', to name but a few (Friedmann 1992; Brohmann 1996). This engagement is particularly potent since some of the authors are or have been directly involved in implementing these notions on the ground, and therefore experienced the 'unpacking' process directly as they worked in projects supported by NGOs (Deddy, Vaz and Eghenter, Chapters 5, 7 and 8).

From Timber to Oil Palm: State-Driven Development and its Effects on Forests and Customary Land

A decade ago the Bornean territories of Indonesia and Malaysia were described as resource frontier regions (Brookfield et al. 1995). In such regions, 'development' was concerned with economic growth through the export of basic commodities, and the export level had to be maintained even if the commodities changed. In the Bornean context, the export commodities were those that were dependent on the exploitation of natural resources. Timber was produced mainly for export and, once exhausted, was replaced by oil palm. The markets for raw logs and plywood were mainly those of East Asia: Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. In the last decade additional demand for timber came from China and, to a smaller extent, Thailand. Unlike the markets of Europe and, to a lesser extent, the United States, the Asian markets are not pressured into taking account of issues of sustainability, given the relative absence of a strong NGO watchdog movement that the former countries have to contend with.

From the 1970s to the mid-1990s all three regions experienced a period of 'resource boom' (Ross 2001). Booms are characterised by windfall profits during shifts in market price, and because of cheap supply sources (free-standing trees at nominal charges as well as cheap labour) it was possible to capture high 'rents', which represent the margin of profit over and above normal business profit (ibid.). Commodity booms produce a 'get rich quick' mentality among businessmen and a 'boom and bust' psychology among policy makers.

The boom period can be gauged by examining statistics for tropical hardwood production, especially for raw logs. In 1975 Sabah produced 10.1 million cubic metres (mcm) of raw logs, Sarawak only 2.6 mcm and Kalimantan 12.4 mcm. By 1979, which was the peak production year before Kalimantan began its switch to plywood, the four Kalimantan provinces (East Kalimantan being the most important) produced 17.1 mcm, with Sabah and Sarawak producing 9.5 and 7.5 mcm respectively. Sarawak's annual production in the late 1980s averaged 18.8 mcm (ITTO 1990), while raw log production in Sabah stood at 11 and 9.5 mcm

in 1988 and 1989 respectively (Chala 2000). In terms of exports of raw logs, Sabah's peak seems to have been in 1977 and 1978 (12.3 and 12.4 mcm respectively). These were also the years of peak production in Kalimantan (13.7 and 14.9 mcm respectively). Sarawak lagged behind and only exceeded Sabah in 1984, with 9.2 mcm produced in that year. By that time Kalimantan no longer exported raw logs, but converted them into plywood. During the 1980s, Indonesia, especially Kalimantan, became the world's leading exporter of tropical plywood (Brookfield and Byron 1990). The boom, which continued into the 1990s, had severe effects on the forest resource base.

There are two indicators that are often used for gauging the environmental viability or otherwise of forestry practices. The first indicator is the volume produced by specific forest patches according to the standards set by a 'sustained yield management' formula, usually expressed as an 'annual allowable cut'. Calculations of annual allowable cut are based either on volume or 'area regulation'. Since reliable growth data are missing in much of Borneo, calculations using either method are educated guesses at best. Moreover, even these guesses are not adhered to. By many accounts, timber production in all three regions consistently exceeded the maximum annual allowable cut many times over (ITTO 1990; Chala 2000; Khan 2001). The second indicator of environmental viability is the condition of the forest after logging. This is a more difficult indicator to work with since it requires knowledge, not only of growth rates, but also of the potential regeneration of species, local soil and weather conditions, and a range of information concerning species tolerance to disturbance at local, landscape and ecosystem levels. Reliable information was largely unavailable or patchy, so management principles were at best only estimates (Majid Cooke 1999; Chala 2000). In Sarawak, Sabah and Kalimantan a 'get rich quick mentality' often meant predatory logging, quick entry without heed to management plans, and complete harvesting of a concession before the licence period expired. The emphasis on speed, together with inadequate data and site surveillance, also affected vulnerable areas such as steep slopes, not normally zoned for logging, and logging beyond the stipulated boundaries was common (Potter 1991; Majid Cooke 1999; Chala 2000; Ross 2001).

A major effect of such predatory logging was forest degradation. Today, more than two thirds of the commercial forest reserves in Sabah consist of degraded logged-over forests, with damage to soil and water quality (as well as loss of fish) so extensive that urgent measures have been required to rehabilitate them (Kollert et al. 2003). Canopy disturbance after logging in Sabah has been estimated at 70 per cent (Chala 2000: 134, citing Nicholson 1979 and Nussbaum 1995). In Kalimantan, logging opened up 80 per cent of the forest canopy (Curran 1999), damaging up to 50 per cent of timber stands in most instances (Tinal and Palenewen 1978: 91, cited in Potter 2005a). Given the ad hoc allocation of licences across the three regions, the question of how much unlogged forest is now left

can be difficult to answer. However, an indication can be glimpsed from data on Sabah, where in 1970 it was estimated that there were still 2.7 million hectares unlogged, but by 1996 the unlogged area was only 430 000 hectares (Mannan 1998).

Land conversion for agricultural development, especially oil palm estates, has been an additional factor in forest loss. In three decades approximately one million hectares of forest in Sabah were felled for conversion to oil palm, cocoa and rubber plantations (Chala 2000). In Kalimantan, between 1985 and 1997 approximately 8.5 million hectares were lost, of which half a million hectares were converted to smallholder plantations and 1.7 million to large-scale estates. The balance of 6.3 million hectares was variously accounted for as grassland, scrub and forest regrowth, or as fallow for shifting cultivation (Potter 2005a: Table 4).

Rent seizing through rampant production was made possible by the removal of legal obstacles that could have partially obstructed the process. The centralisation of authority placed the exclusive power to allocate or benefit from logging rights in the hands of individuals or ruling political parties (as in the case of Sabah and Sarawak), or among members of the Suharto family and their cronies, military officials or technocrats (as in Kalimantan) (Peluso 1992; Majid Cooke 1999; Ross 2001). The already limited access rights of indigenous peoples to land acquired through customary claims were further curtailed in 1974 when amendments to the *Land Code* in Sarawak gave individuals or institutions in government the right to extinguish land claimed under customary rights. Similarly, in Indonesia, the *Basic Forestry Law* of 1967, although loosely implemented, was strengthened a decade later through successive regulatory changes which further weakened customary access (Peluso 1992). The legislation gave the central government the authority to grant exploitation rights to private firms directly, bypassing the provincial governments including those of Kalimantan (Peluso 1992; Ross 2001). For Kalimantan, centralisation of the power to allocate concession rights had a major impact on its forests, especially since, in 1982, 67 per cent of Kalimantan's land was classified as either protection/conservation or production forest through the establishment of the *Agreed Forest Land Use Plan* (Ross 1984: 45).

As mentioned earlier, the dynamics of frontier development require that the export economy be maintained. Since good quality logs are now scarce, and surviving timber and plywood mills need to be sustained, part of the supply has to come from elsewhere. Wadley (Chapter 6) refers to the illegal logging taking place at the West Kalimantan/Sarawak border. As well, raw logs from East Kalimantan move into the Sabah town of Tawau (Smith et al. 2003), being allowed into the state as part of an official 'barter trade' (Chala 2000), although the deals associated with the trade may not be officially sanctioned.

Uncertainties as to the future of the timber industry meant that another crop had to be promoted in order to maintain the export industry of the frontier. The crop that filled this need was oil palm. Similar to logging, speed is a characteristic of oil palm development, especially in Sabah and Sarawak. Table 1.1 suggests that areas opened for oil palm increased by an order of magnitude in slightly over a decade.

Table 1.1. Oil palm area in Borneo, 1990–2003 (hectares)

Region	1990	1995	2000	2003	1990–2003 increase (%)
Sabah	276 171	518 133	1 000 777	1 135 100	311.01
Sarawak	54 795	118 783	330 387	464 774	748.20
Kalimantan	87 092	280 247	809 020	1 006 878	1056.10
Total Borneo	418 058	917 163	2 140 184	2 606 752	523.54
Total Indonesia	1 130 000	2 020 000	4 160 000	5 250 000	
Total Malaysia	2 029 464	2 540 087	3 313 393	3 802 040	
Kalimantan/Indonesia %	8	14	19	19	
Sabah/Malaysia %	14	20	30	30	
Sarawak/Malaysia %	3	5	10	12	

Note: figures for Sabah and Sarawak for 2004 were 1 165 412 hectares and 508 309 hectares respectively. Sources: Casson 1999, Figure 1; Direktorat Jenderal Perkebunan 1990–2004; Kalimantan Barat 2003; Kalimantan Selatan 2003; Kalimantan Tengah 2003; Kalimantan Timur 2003; Malaysian Palm Oil Board 2004; Lesley Potter, personal communication.

Table 1.1 suggests that between 1990 and 2003, Borneo became an important area for oil palm in both Malaysia and Indonesia. For Malaysia, 30 per cent of the total land covered by oil palm in 2003 was located in Sabah, followed by 12 per cent in Sarawak. For Indonesia, Kalimantan is not as important as Sumatra, but the expansion in terms of area opened to oil palm has been phenomenal. In 2003, of the 5.25 million hectares of land under oil palm in Indonesia, approximately 19 per cent was located in Kalimantan compared to 72 per cent in Sumatra. However, amongst the three regions of Borneo, the biggest leap was made by Kalimantan with a 1056 per cent increase between 1990 and 2003. Although there was a certain amount of hesitancy in oil palm investment in Kalimantan up until 1998 (Casson 1999), the pace has recently quickened. However, there are still a large number of companies who are only interested in removing the timber from lands granted to them, rather than in planting crops (Potter 2005b).

Sabah and Sarawak also registered great expansion during the same period. Sabah's oil palm area increased by approximately 311 per cent, and Sarawak by approximately 748 per cent. Sarawak has ambitions of doubling its area under oil palm to 1 million hectares by the year 2010 (Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak cited in *Daily Express*, 14 May 2005; Majid Cooke, Chapter 2). In sum, the total area planted to oil palm in Borneo for 2003 was 2.61 million hectares — 43 per cent in Sabah, 39 per cent in Kalimantan, and 18 per cent in Sarawak.

Although palm oil prices fluctuate, periods of high prices more than compensate for the bad times, so that the crop is regarded as 'green gold' by many (*Daily Express*, 23 and 26 February 2005). One explanation for the push for rapid expansion is that yield per hectare of oil palm is not increasing, and may in fact be declining (Thomas Mielke cited in *Daily Express*, 8 April 2005),³ so that in order to make maximum profit, expanded hectareage is necessary.

If centres of decision making in the frontier regions of Indonesia and Malaysia, and in the capital cities of Jakarta or Kuala Lumpur, have acted against meaningful conservation in the 1990s (Curran 1999), they are similarly positioned in the 21st century. In Sabah, so entrenched is oil palm in the development equation that a local opposition political party promised to open up more land for oil palm in order to win votes (*Daily Express*, 9 February 2004).⁴ In Sarawak, legal and administrative changes under Konsep Baru (New Concept)⁵ removed earlier obstacles to converting land claimed under customary access rights into oil palm plantation blocks (Majid Cooke, Chapter 2). In all three regions oil palm is regarded by many small farmers (though not NGOs) as an economic saviour, rather than the environmental vandal portrayed by international conservationists. Intensified localised development pushes the indigenous land movement throughout Borneo in novel directions. Under these circumstances, steering an alternative path has not been, and will not be, easy.

Conservation and the Search for Alternatives

The search for alternatives has engaged diverging interests and philosophies in many unruly alliances and practices, and differences are often papered over. Conservationists who regard conservation goals as non-negotiable tend to view poverty alleviation as a means to an end. From this perspective, the main objective is conservation, so that a major task is to work out the most efficient strategies to achieve this end. This has led to many income-generating projects, such as promoting the 'extraction' of non-timber forest products, and allowing for 'traditional use' zones in national parks. Poverty alleviation as a route to conservation is not a satisfactory position for those who regard development as a right in itself, and this perspective is often coupled with the notion that conservation is a 'neo-colonial' project aimed at keeping the South poor (Fisher 2000). The problem with the latter view is that 'development' here refers to

³ Thomas Mielke is the Director of an independent research organisation that publishes *Oil World*.

⁴ Because of the political and economic factors that work against parties that do not belong to the ruling coalition in Malaysia generally and Sabah specifically, the *Bersekutu* party did not win in the 2004 State elections. Although the party did not get elected, the idea of converting forest reserves to oil palm may be based on the perception that such a strategy will win votes, not lose them – something politicians would be wary about if there were a larger conservation-conscious electorate than is presently in existence in Sabah.

⁵ 'New Concept' is a term used to capture the myths around modernity and the efficiency of large-scale, commercial enterprises, especially plantation agriculture in a joint venture program involving private corporations and native peoples (see Majid Cooke 2002; also Bulan, Chapter 3).

economic development, and provides a convenient platform for supporting the suppression of other kinds of development, especially political or social development. In the hierarchy of development priorities in Indonesia and Malaysia, community development in political and social terms is at best pushed to the background, at worst something to be controlled, manipulated or watched over. The need to control political and social development finds affinity among some donor agencies — especially those who, for decades, have viewed development in terms of ‘techniques’ of economic management, such as export promotion, debt-service management, control of public spending, and market liberalisation. Donor emphasis on techniques was supported by a ‘dominant mindset that gives little consideration to socio-cultural issues’ (Nelson 1995: 162, 171), but with the discovery of ‘civil society’ this mindset might have changed, albeit in directions amenable to bureaucratic routinisation (Nelson 1995; Howell and Pearce 2001). The notion of participatory development is a good example for drawing attention to this process. Participatory development originated as a critique of the ‘top down’ development approach, which had already become routinised, especially in large multilateral aid agencies, but still tended to emphasise community participation in the implementation, rather than the design of projects, instead of formulating alternative development approaches. Smaller bilateral aid agencies may experience fewer constraints and have more options for change (Brohman 1996).

For some NGOs who view past donor efforts at promoting ‘development’ as a factor contributing to environmental degradation, new alliances with donors represent a pragmatic way of making an entry into the policy debate, despite suspicions of ‘neo-colonialism’. Touting the platform of ‘neo-colonialism’ is an easy way for some elements of the state and society to harness nationalist sentiments against activities that may lead to a questioning of existing power relations and dominant ways of ‘doing development’. In many instances, conservation efforts that emphasise ‘empowerment’ or ‘participation’ are not as effective in questioning existing power relations as the neo-colonial rhetoric. Equating conservation with ‘neo-colonialism’ is intrinsic among some NGOs of the South, so that in some instances conservation NGOs are torn between advancing the agenda of global equality and that of conservation (Khor 1993; Shiva 1993). A concern with the former often finds NGOs forming alliances with governments of whom they had previously been critical. However, such alliances are often uneasy ones, confined to specific issues and therefore sporadic. This is because, while some Southern NGOs are annoyed over what they regard as Northern NGOs’ insensitivity towards the historical roots of global inequality and environmental injustice, their own governments use ‘neo-colonialism’ to ward off international criticism regarding their suppression of political and social development. Reminding the nation of ‘neo-colonialism’ enables many regimes to pursue ‘development’ as usual.

Under such conditions, a marriage between international conservation NGOs and donors may be a strategic move for entry into a recipient country, but the marriage is also fraught with the danger of 'co-optation' through routinisation (Howell and Pearce 2001: 94–7). For some national NGOs, cooperating with donor agencies is a way of taking the agenda of conservation (which in the South is inseparable from issues of social justice) out of restrictive state control into the international arena (Nelson 1995). In this case, the environment becomes a safe mechanism for advancing issues of citizenship and a mildly disguised critique concerning government accountability and transparency. In general, NGOs currently have more freedom and a higher status in Indonesia than in Malaysia, where the governments tend to be very suspicious of them (Eldridge 1996; Majid Cooke 2003a; Weiss 2003). However, this role for NGOs in Indonesia is very new — during the Suharto regime they were quite restricted in their activities.

In situations where states are not sympathetic to conservation, then creating strategic alliances with state institutions and donors adds additional and much needed clout to NGOs. Casson (Chapter 4) writes about options available to new administrative districts (created as a result of Indonesia's regional autonomy law) in pursuing 'development' objectives (strictly economic) and in preserving 'old ways'. Acquiring relative independence means new responsibilities: the district treasury has to be filled, poor infrastructure upgraded, and long-term planning for sustainable development put in place. Casson's chapter is interesting in a number of ways. It describes a Kalimantan local district government's attempt at more responsible management of resources, and the ways stakeholders — including government officials, community and private sector representatives, *adat* or customary leaders, as well as donor agencies and NGOs — align themselves with one another. The chapter takes issue with the common-sense view about the enhanced potential for conservation in a more decentralised system of decision making. At least in the initial years of autonomy, the district of Kutai Barat showed little evidence of being more environmentally responsible in its development plans than when administration was more centralised.

Exposed to only one form of development, many rural communities have internalised development in economic terms, negotiating top-down and unequal power relations, producing effects that may be detrimental to social and political development, albeit not always of their own choosing (Li 2001; Majid Cooke 2002). In such a scenario, social and political development appear relatively unimportant, and conservation then finds a difficult terrain. Wadley's 'borderlanders' (Chapter 6) are expert negotiators of state boundaries dividing Sarawak from West Kalimantan, which are made porous through kin, labour and commercial networks. As a result, state borders may not carry the nationalistic meaning they are supposed to have. Because of such networks, 'illegal logging' by community cooperatives takes on a different meaning.

Working with Malaysian logging concessionaires (*tukei*) is not an issue for these cooperatives because of their intermediary position as borderlanders.

At the community level, another way of dealing with unequal power relations is to engage in activities which, to outsiders, may appear detrimental to the communities' own survival in the long term. Vaz's work (Chapter 7) unravels entrenched views about 'harmonious' communities whose identities are inextricably linked to their environment. The weakening of Lundayeh control of land held under Native Title at Long Pasia produced a divided community. Some groups resorted to ways of earning a living that were tantamount to rendering their land vulnerable to exploitation by outsiders. They did so by providing outsiders with access to local hunting areas or fishing spots and by allowing destructive methods to be used. The once open borders between Kalimantan and Sabah, which allowed Lundayeh families to maintain their kinship links, became less porous as relatives returning from Kalimantan and elsewhere were no longer accorded access to ancestral land.

On Being Indigenous

The word 'indigenous' has been deflated of meaning when political leaders in both Indonesia and Malaysia claim that, given the multitudes of ethnicities and identities in the two countries, 'everyone is indigenous'.⁶ Denying ethnic difference may be useful in processes of mobilising allegiance to or support for political centres, and of underplaying localistic attachments to place. As an analytical category, being indigenous is linked with several characteristics, two of which are important for our purpose. Indigenous cultural traditions are associated with an attachment to place most likely derived from not having a migratory family history. Such traditions are further characterised as an attitude of not being able to objectify place, or of not being able to regard place as a commodity (Benjamin 2002, 2005). It is this attachment to place, and a relative inability to treat home places as an exploitable commodity, that accounts for individuals' lack of economic competitiveness, while those who are culturally exogenous, because of a migratory family history, are able to objectify and thus exploit place. For example, the popular marketing of ecological tourism depends on an individual's capacity to regard her/his surrounds as a commodity, implying the build-up of cultural or emotional distance between individuals and their environment, sufficient for them to regard their environment as a marketable product. However, an attachment to place cannot be taken for granted; it exists

⁶ There is an interesting point being made about being indigenous that has to do with cultural content (see Benjamin 2005). Indigenous attitudes and orientations, according to Benjamin, 'are coded in the habitus of daily life, and transmitted tacitly rather than by formal teaching... embedded in patterns of language-use, kinship, religious action, customary clothing, music, or vernacular architecture. Inheritance, not innovation, is the mode of cultural communication in such cases, and the *gemeinschaftlich* will far outweigh the *gesellschaftlich* as the locus of authority' (Benjamin 2005: 7). However, what the political leaders are engaging in here is what Benjamin refers to as 'indigenism'.

in varying degrees of intensity among individuals. Paradoxically, in the search for alternatives, the attachment to place has been a useful starting point for those involved in the indigenous land-rights movement, as it has been for the environmental movement.

An attachment to place may, however, be assumed to be present among most groups, and attention can then be focused on their claims for access to land on the grounds of being 'indigenous'. The indigenous land-rights movement argues that one characteristic that binds most local groups who claim indigenous status is insecurity of tenure. Insecurity of tenure is the common experience of all groups dealt with in this volume. Land managed under customary access may be recognised in the various land laws of the two countries: Native Customary Land in Sarawak, Native Title Land in Sabah or land managed under *adat* in Kalimantan, because of ideologies of legal pluralism from the colonial era. But such recognition was only a minor concession to the larger process of converting all 'unoccupied land' to state land (Peluso and Vandergeest 2001). This conversion of all 'unoccupied land' (which may in fact be land left fallow) to state land is referred to as a 'fundamental error' by Majid Cooke in Chapter 2. In recent times, this 'error' has been systematically contested in the courts in Sarawak (Majid Cooke 2003b), as well as in Peninsular Malaysia.⁷ The idea is to confine access rules which are embedded in place to a few regulations that the State recognises or understands, with a view to achieving simplified titling in the long term (see Scott 1998). In all three regions of Borneo, land claimed under customary use is secure only when it is titled. In this volume, Majid Cooke, Bulan, Eghenter, Deddy and Vaz all refer to the insecurity of tenure of native land. In view of the elephantine nature of the land administration machinery, the process of titling may take decades in some cases. In the meantime, customary land remains state land and subject to 'development' at the discretion of the state.

In post-colonial times, recognition of customary access is made more restrictive, with rights and entitlements being decided upon by the state; such access becomes visible only so that lands can be targeted for 'development' at the discretion of the state, as under the Konsep Baru in Sarawak (Majid Cooke 2002). In Indonesia, it is only when indigenous groups qualify as enduring *adat* communities, engaging in prescribed 'traditional' livelihood and management practices, that they are recognised as rightful and responsible managers of their land (Li 2003; Eghenter, Chapter 8). The quest for secure title among local communities is therefore understandable.

⁷ In Peninsular Malaysia, on 14 September 2005, the Orang Asli (Temuan) won what was regarded as a landmark case at the Appeals Court against their being evicted to make way for the Kuala Lumpur Airport highway development. Referred to as the Sagong Tasi case, the Court recognised that the Temuan owned their land through customary title and ordered compensation be paid to them for being treated 'in a most shoddy, cruel and oppressive manner' (Judgement of Gopal Sri Ram, Justice of the Court of Appeal, Malaysia, 14 June 2005 — *Rayuan Sivil* No. B-02419 2002; *Daily Express*, 21 September 2005).

From a local perspective, there is an aspect of conservation interest that looks towards local groups as potential providers of alternative models for living with (as opposed to wanting to control) nature, and this can be useful for advancing claims to secure titles. The combination of local and universal interest in 'place' has been translated into a range of practices, which include research into indigenous or traditional ecological knowledge or local management systems (Berkes and Fowles 1998; Ellen et al. 2000), and participatory resource management, of which community mapping is an important part. Conservation then becomes the umbrella for a diverse range of interests.

Many lessons have been learnt about community desires for conservation. The desire is, first and foremost, fuelled by the potential for generating income (see Filer 1997). Interest in conservation comes only after the relationship between income and sustainable use becomes apparent. Benefits to stakeholders (not necessarily cash) are important incentives for conservation to be successful. However, benefits such as participation and community empowerment, regarded as important for strengthening community capacity to uphold a sustainable society in general, and sustainable resource use in particular, have proved elusive. Among the intended beneficiaries of these approaches, many may remain unconvinced. In many 'participatory' projects participation is encouraged at the implementation level, while planning remains the prerogative of an educated elite. Participation, in these settings, can usefully be viewed as a rhetorical tool designed to influence the *environment in which decision makers act*, rather than changing the decision-making environment at the local level (MacLean 2000). Even in terms of material benefits, examples from India of 'joint forest management' projects suggest that income from non-timber forest products, normally valuable to villagers, now has to be shared with the Forest Department, while villagers do all the work (Sarin 1999; Fisher 2000). There is evidence as well that a large part of the benefit from such projects is being captured by better-off people within these communities.

There are additional risks to participation. Wadley (Chapter 6) has found that providing local communities with the opportunity to decide and control their own development, as has happened since the fall of Suharto's New Order Regime, may not necessarily lead to an increase in local concerns for conservation in West Kalimantan. In fact, decentralisation has resulted in a simultaneous increase in official corruption.

Specific risks can be gleaned from initiatives in community mapping. Participation through community mapping is risky and rarely a straightforward business, as Deddy observes in Chapter 5. First there is the tension between the process of map making and the need to produce maps as a product. Is it the process or the map that is important? An emphasis on map making does not contribute to community participation. The process of map making, if

participatory, should involve all members of the community, regardless of social status, age or gender. This type of participation may touch on issues of power/gender relations, and may have implications for the unresolved question of access rights among return migrants. Community mapping may bring to the surface contested claims and titles, the potential being created for the exclusion or inclusion of claims and entitlement, as Wadley found in West Kalimantan. Second, contradicting their original intention, community maps are at risk of being used for exclusionary purposes; for example, to support the interests of powerful community members in promoting destructive logging or plantation development. When maps are used for exclusionary purposes, issues of community access may be ignored, as are claims of less powerful groups against their neighbours.

Ideas about participation also underlie interest in local management systems. The subtext of the interest in local management systems is to draw attention to potential alternatives to the top-down approaches in natural resource management. Eghenter (Chapter 8) discusses the advantages of taking local management systems seriously and respecting institutional (*adat*) capacity for managing local access to resources. Where local institutions are changing or weakening from market or other forms of largely external pressure, then she recommends strengthening them. Only when local capacities are developed will participation be real. At the Kayan Mentarang National Park mechanisms have been put in place for an inter-*adat* institutional coordination body of elected members of different customary councils to actively manage the conservation area. Under this arrangement, the central and regional governments ideally act only as facilitators, advisers and providers of guidelines, or at best as participants in co-management. However, in situations where the issue of unequal power relations has not been dealt with, as in the Model Forest Management Area in Southwest Bintulu in Sarawak (parts of which were located on land claimed under customary tenure), local management systems may not be accorded the respect required for participatory management. In this instance, according to Pedersen and his colleagues (Chapter 9), groups with diverging interests (loggers and local people) could 'co-exist positively' because of the initial economic gains that emerged from the presence of logging camps, including jobs, new fish ponds, and income-generation schemes such as pepper production. In the long term, there are predictable downsides and the ever-present potential for conflict over land between communities whose priority is to have sufficient land for subsistence agriculture and logging concessionaires who are interested in timber for profitable logging.

Clearly, participation based on accenting ethnic difference has had mixed results. However, analysts have warned against the potential risks of placing too much emphasis on difference.

Indonesia has a history of popular struggles that were phrased ... not as claims of distinctive, culture-bound communities (*masyarakat adat*), but as struggles of 'the people' (*rakyat*). Is the shift of focus from people to culture, which coincides with a shift of the site of struggle from agricultural land to forests and nature, the best approach to justice? (Li 2003: 383).

This Volume

All chapters in this volume deal with the state, market and communities, but with differing levels of emphasis. Part II looks at the institutional framework that has effected dramatic changes to local histories, livelihoods and identities. The emphasis in this section is on the state and its institutions, including the law, as active agents of change. Although the effects of government policies on local communities are discussed, analysis of community strategies is not central, as it is in the second part of the book. Part III presents five case studies, three from Kalimantan (Deddy, Eghenter and Wadley), one from Sarawak (Pedersen et al.) and one from Sabah (Vaz). The case studies presented by Eghenter, Vaz and Deddy are written from the perspective of field workers who were directly involved in experiments with alternative development strategies. In summary, these attempts included building community capacity to a level where local groups could gain recognition as legitimate partners in the management of a conservation area (Eghenter), gaining recognition for local institutions and management systems through land titling (Vaz), and the practice of community mapping (Deddy). On the other hand, in their capacity as observers, Wadley, Pedersen, Mertz and Hummellose describe the domination of logging interests in local political economies and the different ways in which local communities have dealt with this domination.

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