ON THE POLITICAL EDGE: CONSERVATION IN AN ERA OF
DECENTRALIZATION AND DEMOCRATIZATION IN
CENTRAL SUMATRA, INDONESIA

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For my loving wife, Reem Miriam Bassous, without whom this would not have been possible.
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the effects of Indonesia's decentralization and democratization reforms on Kerinci Seblat National Park, a large protected area on the Indonesian island of Sumatra. The reforms, which were implemented in the wake of the resignation of President Suharto, whose highly centralized and authoritarian New Order regime ruled Indonesia for more than three decades. The reforms have radically altered the dynamics of formal and informal politics in Indonesia. This is significant in places like rural Sumatra, where the economy is heavily reliant on primary sector activity. Thus the reforms have led to an increase in direct and indirect pressures on the park. This dissertation examines these changes from the perspective of political ecology, political economy, providing a comprehensive analysis of the structure and form of decentralization and democratization in Indonesia as well as the implications for national park-based conservation in Indonesia.
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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

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<tr>
<td>ABRI</td>
<td><em>Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia</em>; armed forces of the Republic of Indonesia</td>
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<td>AKAR</td>
<td>Aliansi Konservasi Alam Raya</td>
<td>Network of Conservation NGOs including LTA, LTB, GenesisMukomuko, ICS</td>
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<td>AMAN</td>
<td>Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara.</td>
<td>Indonesian Alliance of Customary Law Communities.</td>
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<td>BAPPEDA</td>
<td>Badan Perencanaan dan Pembangunan Daerah.</td>
<td>Regional Planning and Development Agency.</td>
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<td>BBTNKS</td>
<td>Balai Besar Taman Nasional Kerinci Seblat</td>
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<td>BKSDA</td>
<td>Balai Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam (National Resources Conservation Office)</td>
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<td>CI</td>
<td>Conservation International, an international conservation non-government organization</td>
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<td>CPNS</td>
<td>Calon Pegawai Negeri Sipil. Candidate civil servant.</td>
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<td>DAK</td>
<td>Dana Alokasi Khusus. Special Allocation Funds. Post-Suharto era funds from the central government to the regions intended for special projects.</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAU</td>
<td>Dana Alokasi Umum. General Allocation Funds. Post-Suharto era funds from central government to the regions intended for day-to-day operating expenses.</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization, an arm of the United Nations.</td>
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<td>FFI</td>
<td>Flora and Fauna International, an international conservation non-government organization</td>
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<td>GEF</td>
<td>Global Environment Facility</td>
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<td>GENESIS</td>
<td>Generasi Sungai Ipuh Sekitar di Mukomuko</td>
<td>Local NGO based in Sungai Ipuh, Mukomuko</td>
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<td>ICDP</td>
<td>Integrated Conservation and Development Project</td>
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<td>IDR</td>
<td>Indonesian Rupiah. Indonesia's currency. For this dissertation US$1 is the equivalent of 9,500 rupiah.</td>
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KKN: "Korupsi, Kolusi, Nepotisme"; corruption, collusion, and nepotism.

KPK: Komisi Pembarantasan Korupsi. Corruption Eradication Commission. A national government agency with special legal powers established in 2003 to investigate and prosecute cases of political corruption at all levels of government.

KPU: Komisi Pemilihan Umum. Election commission. These official bodies exist at the national, provincial, and district scales and are responsible for the organization and oversight of elections.

KSNP: Kerinci Seblat National Park

LTA: Lembaga Tumbuh Alami. Local NGO based in Sungai Penuh

LTB: Lembaga Tiga Beradik. Local NGO based in Bangko, Merangin

NGO: Non-governmental organization

NTFP: Non-timber forest product

PAD: Pendapatan Asli Daerah. Locally generated revenue. This refers to government funds raised by districts and province that does not come from the central government.

POLHUT: Polisi Hutan. Forest Police.

PRRI: Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia. The Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia. This was a revolt led by elements of the armed forces based primarily on Sumatra in 1957-1958.

RTRW: Rencana Tata Ruang Wilayah; regional spatial plan

SBY: Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. President of Indonesia from 2004-2014, the Reformasi era's first directly elected president.

SDO: Subsidi Daerah Otonom. Autonomous Region Subsidy. A New Order era funding mechanism for districts and provinces granted by the central government.


TRHS: Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra. The name of the World Heritage Site including Kerinci Seblat, Gunung Leuser, and Bukit Barisan Selatan national parks.
UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

VOC: Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie, Dutch East India Company

"I don't care about animals, lions, tigers, bears, or whether they live or die. I don't care about trees, how many there are, or about 'the lungs of the Earth'. I care about people," my informant told me. I'd heard sentiments like this from numerous people living and trying to make a living around Sumatra's Kerinci Seblat National Park. After all, the park is bordered by more than 400 villages where the primary occupation is farming, and the primary means of getting ahead, be it to pay for school fees, medical expenses, or a new cell phone, is through agricultural expansion: opening up the forest to clear land for new fields. These farmers resent the park because it is off limits to them; they live next door to it but it is illegal for them to grow crops, gather non-timber forest products (NTFPs), or hunt, regardless of the scale of the activity, within the park. Add to this the fact that many people around the park claim that when its boundary markers were placed between 1992 and 1995 they were cut off from their swiddens and rubber and cinnamon gardens as well as their supply of manau, rattan, and other forest products.

What made the statement remarkable is that it was uttered by the bupati (district headman) of one of the fifteen districts and administrative municipalities surrounding the park in his official capacity as the elected head of the district. This open and almost rebellious defiance of the central government's policies would have

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1 Manau is a type of vine used for a variety of purposes similar to rattan.
2 The districts are the middle level in Indonesia's five-tier administrative hierarchy (national-provincial-district-subdistrict-village). Administrative municipalities (kota) are horizontally equivalent to districts in this hierarchy.
been unheard of during the authoritarian reign of Suharto, when district headmen were extensions of the central government's top-down pyramid structure of power. After Suharto's fall in 1998, however, the Indonesian government swiftly passed sweeping reforms that decentralized significant powers to the nation's 400-plus districts (these laws and their enabling legislation along with the associated processes are referred to collectively as desentralisasi) while simultaneously empowering the districts to choose their own leaders (part of a related set of laws and processes known as demokratisasi). These reforms taken together have dramatically altered the political landscape as well as the language and strategies of political contestation in Indonesia.

This self-described "number one person" continued to narrate the ways in which the park burdens the people of the district: small farmers are prevented from expanding their fields to increase produce and augment their incomes; the district is forbidden from opening up roads through the park which would increase commerce and improve access to markets; the rich mineral and geothermal resources within the park can't be developed and taxed, and so the district is at a competitive disadvantage compared to other districts that don't have part of their territory sequestered within a national park. As our conversation continued, I asked the bupati for his take on the thousands of encroaching farmers that had illegally moved into the park in his district. While the forest of Sumatra have traditionally been ravaged by politically well-connected illegal logging networks (McCarthy 2006), this phenomenon has declined in recent years. The new face(s) of forest degradation and clearance belong to the thousands, tens of thousands of small-scale farmers now farming in this and other
parks. "Do the people colonize the park, or does the park colonize the people," he asked rhetorically in response.

The district headman's defiance and animosity towards the park is well known. He campaigned on a platform promising villagers that if they elected him, he would allow them to open up fields in the park, a promise he would have no legal authority to fulfill. During his tenure the headman has also called for roads to be constructed through the park, which stretches more than 350 kilometers from north to south along the spine of the Bukit Barisan mountains. A glance at a regional map helps one to understand his point of view: because there is only one route through the park it takes twelve hours to reach the provincial capital, and seven hours under the best conditions to reach the nearest port. For the farmers of the district time is money; longer trips mean higher transport costs not only for outputs but also for inputs, as well as increased spoilage on the way to market their produce. For everyone else this lack of access inflates the price of everything ranging from gasoline to instant noodles to electronic goods. Data from the district's statistical yearbook adds further support to the headman's objection to the park's existence: last year the district was only able to fund 4% of its own expenditures, with the balance coming from the central government. Along with their new powers, the districts now also bear greater responsibility for funding their own operations. That means that while the districts are now free to chart their own course of development, they must raise the funds to implement any policies or programs themselves. Central government transfers come with significant restrictions, and so districts look to increase their locally-generated revenue (pendapatan asli daerah, PAD) as a way of increasing discretionary revenue.
spending targeted at district-specific programs. On Sumatra this is typically done by attracting mining investors or agricultural conglomerates who develop expansive oil palm plantations. But for this district this potential is limited by the existence of the park.

As I leave the bupati's office I notice that my motorcycle is hovering on empty. I swing by the Pertamina\(^3\) to fill up but notice that there is a line several dozen bikes deep, waiting for the truck to come and refill the station's holding tanks. I decide to head instead for one of the predatory gas profiteers across the street who charge double for fuel. The time saved is definitely worth the extra US$1.50.

"What happened this time?" I asked the evil profiteer, an 11-year old girl.

"There was another landslide that washed out the road and so the trucks have to go the long way," came the response. I was not surprised by her answer; landslides are not uncommon in this wet, mountainous region, as the constant tectonic grinding that has slowly built these mountains is counteracted by the nibbling eroding action of the constant equatorial rainfall, but most people attribute the frequent washouts of the small four-meter wide lifeline that serves to connect this town to the larger world to uncontrolled and illegal logging of the steep slopes above the road. The logging most likely is part of the problem, but the balance is the road itself; road construction in central Sumatra involves bulldozing a path through the mountains, utilizing

\(^3\) Pertamina is the name of the state-owned petroleum company. Virtually all gas stations in Indonesia are Pertaminas.
innumerable unreinforced switchbacks and leaving staggeringly steep, unbuttressed roadcuts through the deeply-weathered regolith that comprises the mountains.

Later that night I found myself discussing the seemingly intractable dichotomy of conservation verses economic development over a plate of sate Padang with a friend that runs a local conservation non-government organization (NGO). Sitting on the curbside, I told him about the events of the day.

"We like to think that our leaders are elected by us, by people now. But that is not true. They are elected by money," he explained, launching into a now-familiar explanation of the money politics that characterizes campaigns for district offices in this new era of decentralization and democratization. This explanation goes that while there have been some positive outcomes of decentralization, it mainly has led to the decentralization and local proliferation of the old pattern of KKN, or korupsi, kolusi, dan nepotisme ("corruption, collusion, and nepotism")⁴ that was so characteristic of the despised Suharto regime. Now though it seems that the Suharto regime is not so despised anymore.

"It's the same as it was before," says my friend. "We need a strong leader from the military to enforce the rules⁵. The same with the park. The local leader doesn't care about the park because he wants roads and development. But not for people, but so he can give contracts to his friends, his cronies, the ones that gave the money so he could be elected." He goes on to reiterate to me all the locally-essential ecological services provided by the park. I recognize this as part of the new line adopted by

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⁴ This slogan was popularized by Amien Rais, head of Muhamdiyah, one of two massive, national-scale organizations for Muslims. When Suharto fell Rais emerged as a reformist leader on the national stage.

⁵ I frequently heard this common sentiment described commonly as SARS, or "Sindrom Aku Rindu Suharto" ("I miss Suharto syndrome").
conservationists and park staff alike; this appeal to the local is an attempt to make the park relevant locally in the context of the decentralized political regime.

This day was a nutshell of the *problematique*\(^6\) I'd been investigating for the past few months. This dissertation, which is the result of my fieldwork and analysis, focuses on the effects Indonesia's decentralization and democratization reforms have had on Kerinci Seblat National Park. The story has familiar themes; people versus parks, conservation versus development, the global versus the local. The difference, though, is that Indonesia's decentralization regime has rebalanced each of these dichotomous struggles. My dissertation is about understanding the changing relationship between not only people and nature, but also between different levels of government; I believe this topic is important not only for conservation and democratization, but for the future of Indonesia. The conflicts we see at Kerinci Seblat National Park are a microcosm of the challenges facing not only conservation in Indonesia, but the nation itself as it forges a new identity amidst decentralization reforms.

\(^6\) I have always found Fikret Berkes's term useful for describing complex geographical problems. Berkes (2006) defines a *problematique* as "a constellation of issues that need to be considered at higher as well as lower scales; have a large social content; interact and intersect with one another; tend to be inherently in conflict; and require long time horizons".
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION: CONSERVATION AMIDST DECENTRALIZATION

1.1 Introduction: The Lungs of the Earth

The Indonesian archipelago is a site of tremendous biodiversity stemming from its tropical location. The country is expansive geographically; its more than 17,000 islands span a distance greater than that separating Los Angeles and New York City. The islands also bracket the boundary between two biogeographical realms: the Indo-Malayan region in the west, covering the islands of Sumatra, Kalimantan, Java, and Bali, and the transition zone of Wallacea which covers Sulawesi and the smaller islands of Nusa Tenggara Timor and bears distinct biogeographical characteristics distinct from the Australasian region in the east (Haeruman 1988). The livelihood of the people of most parts of the archipelago is and has always been predominantly agricultural; the rich soils deriving from the volcanic origin of the islands contribute to high agricultural yields. Agriculture continues to be a growth industry both at the individual scale as farmers seek to improve their lots, and at the corporate scale, with vast regions being converted to plantation agriculture.

Amidst this landscape of transformation and development are situated Indonesia’s network of national parks. The national park system has its roots in the forest and game reserves founded by the Dutch colonial authorities, but it was expanded extensively by President Suharto during his 30-year reign. The development of the park system was aided by the highly-centralized regimes, first the colonial system and then the Orde Baru ("New Order") regime of Suharto (Jepson and Whittaker 2002).
The parks of Indonesia are invaluable assets in the global protected area network and are viewed by many as part of a shared global nature heritage (Curran et al 2004, Radford et al 1998).

Kerinci Seblat National Park covers an area of 1,368,000 hectares (approximately 5,000 square miles). For comparison purposes, this is slightly larger than the Hawaiian islands of Hawai'i, Maui, and Oahu. It stretches approximately 350 kilometers north to south following the Bukit Barisan mountain range, and has a maximum width of 70 kilometers. The park's border snakes for approximately 2800 kilometers, passing through fifteen districts and administrative municipalities, covering parts of four provinces: Jambi, with 40% of the park’s total area, West Sumatra (25%), Bengkulu (21%), and South Sumatra (14%). As might be expected, the park's topography is rugged, and 86% of the land is classified by the government as mountainous, whereas 14% is lowland hills or plains.
The park is a land of superlatives. It is the largest continuous area of undisturbed primary forest in Sumatra (Werner, 2001). It is also the largest remaining habitat for the critically-endangered Sumatran tiger (*Panthera tigris sumatrae*). KSNP has the world's largest and tallest flowers (*Rafflesia sp* and *Amorphophallus titanum*, respectively). It houses the highest lake in Southeast Asia (Danau Gunung Tujuh) along with the highest active volcano in Indonesia (Gunung Kerinci). There are approximately 4,000 plant species, 180 bird species, including 39 endemic species, 144 species of mammals, of which seven are found only in the park, ten reptiles, and six primates. The park covers a variety of ecosystems ranging from lowland coastal forest to high montane forest. It is recognized as an essential link in a global network of protected areas, having been designated a World Heritage Site in 2004.

The park, though, is not an unpopulated wilderness. It is surrounded by hundreds of villages with hundreds of thousands of residents, who, as a general rule, have a lower than average standard of living and income (Moeliono 2008). Along with these people come problems; the park has experienced the whole range of "classic" national park difficulties, ranging from illegal logging and poaching to road construction and agricultural encroachment. The park struggles to keep up with the threats, but it has always been an uphill battle. Pressures on the park from district governments and local people continue to increase, and the irreplaceable ecosystems that provide a home for tigers and trees face increasing threats from a variety of sources. The changing governance regime that has resulted from decentralization and

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7 KSNP was designated along with Gunung Leuser National Park in northern Sumatra and Bukit Barisan Selatan National Park in southern Sumatra as the Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra World Heritage Site. Upon designation UNESCO's wanted to immediately place the site on the "List of World Heritage in Danger", but the government of Indonesia opposed this move (Hitchcock and Meyers 2006). In 2011 the parks were moved to the list.
democratization has greatly affected the threats facing the park. This dissertation explores why this is the case. I seek to understand the effects of decentralization and democratization reforms on Kerinci Seblat National Park, identifying the formal and informal processes that have lead to these increased pressures.

1.2 Power to the People: An Overview of the Issues

The first thread of the story involves the process of *statemaking*, or how Indonesia came to be as a centralized nation-state, since this establishes the foundation for understanding political processes impinging upon KSNP\(^8\). For the purposes of this analysis, it helps to conceptualize politics as a collection of processes happening at different temporal and spatial scales, ranging from the grand narrative of states and empires which forms the backbone of history as it is generally understood, to the mundane and quotidian actions of individuals as they seek to make their way in the world. With this in mind, "Indonesia" might be considered an idea or concept emerging from historical processes. As a country it is relatively young, its existence declared by Sukarno and Hatta\(^9\) in 1945 and acceded to by the Dutch colonial authority and the broader global community of nation-states in 1949. Before this it was for a time an idea, a dream shared by ambitious proto-statesmen spread throughout the almost innumerable islands of the archipelago. To the Dutch the "Indies" had been a marker of simplification denoting a territory understood as apart from and subservient to the greater functioning of the metropole. Over the course of

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\(^8\) There are many varied definitions of "politics." One of the most useful, which guides my analysis, is Kirkvliet's (2009:227): "Politics is about the control, allocation, production, and use of resources and the values and ideas underlying those activities".

\(^9\) Indonesia's first president and vice president, respectively. Both are now revered as national heroes.
more than three centuries they gradually expanded their control from Sabang to Merauke. In the words of Anderson (1983: 479), "indeed, the Indonesia we know today is the exact product of the extraordinary extension of Batavia's politico-military power between 1850 and 1910." Before this though there was never any coherent thing such as Indonesia; though on occasion major empires like Sri Vijaya, Mataram, and Majapahit emerged, most of time and space was characterized by relatively locally-rooted kingdoms, sultanates, and chiefdoms. This is particularly true of Sumatra, where many riverine kingdoms rose and fell contingent partly on the relationship between upstream and downstream (hulu-hilir) groups (Andaya 1993b, Kathirithamby-Wells 1995, Reid 1993, Ricklefs 2008).

The Dutch era can be seen as the beginning of a long process of centralization. The genesis of the modern state can also be seen here as the Dutch, through various iterations of centralized policy (e.g. the Cultivation Policy, the Liberal Policy, the Ethical policy) sought to institute a uniform system of control and administration throughout the areas under their control, first with indirect and then direct rule (Anderson 1983, Benda 1966). Standardization became more ambitious over time and included the training of a specialized bureaucracy (Evers 1987, Furnivall 1956). Kingsbury (2005) highlights two key contributions of the Dutch: 1) defining the extent of the country and 2) cooperating with elites, forming a distinct administrative elite class on Java and other places through direct and indirect rule. Though the era of Dutch hegemony came to an end following the Second World War, these two aspects would continue to influence politics in Indonesia into the 21st century.

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10 Batavia was the Dutch colonial name for Jakarta.
Thus Indonesia came into being complete with some of the trappings of modern nation states, including territory, a language, and a capital, but lacking others, such as a unified, coherent vision and understanding of the identity of the new *nation*. In the early days of the new Republic, there was such an economy of ideas as to the appropriate path to take that the future of the fledgling state was at times in jeopardy of collapse or splintering into several smaller countries (Reid 2004). What, then, happened to transform this expansive archipelago from a collection of hundreds of disparate peoples and cultures into today's Indonesia? The answer to this question is central to the story of Kerinci Seblat National Park.

As previously mentioned, the first two decades of Indonesia's independent existence were at times quite tenuous. This instability ultimately led to the demise of Indonesia's visionary first president, Sukarno. Resistance to the Dutch during the revolution had been decentralized, manifested in the way that regional military commanders waged independent campaigns. There was no true centralized military command, and so when the Dutch departed there were powerful regional interests with their own military machines. Sukarno envisioned a unified Indonesian *nation*, an example of what Anderson (2006) famously described as an "imagined community," but most of his efforts were directed towards holding the country together and creating a sound political and economic footing. Sukarno's Guided Democracy (*demokrasi terpimpin*), in which freedoms were severely curtailed, did however help set the stage for what was to follow.

Sukarno was succeeded by Suharto, who immediately took steps to open the country to outsiders, making strong entreaties to the West for aid and investment
Suharto benefited greatly from contemporary geopolitical and ideological currents. This was the era of developmentalism, which entailed a particular understanding of the problems of the third. Underdevelopment was seen as a pathology to be treated by political, administrative, or economic adjustments facilitated by foreign expertise (Escobar 1995, Mitchell 1995, Schuurman 2000). What we understand now as complex, historically-contingent processes were simplified in a process that Li (2007:126) refers to as "rendering technical," involving "an arena of intervention [which] must be bounded, mapped, characterized, and documented; the relevant forces and relations must be identified, and a narrative must be devised connecting the proposed intervention to the problem it will solve". Scott (1998) similarly describes this process as "bracketing", whereby all variables except those bearing directly on a specific goal are ignored or treated as constant. "Bracketing" and "rendering technical" make phenomena "legible" (ibid) to outside authorities and amenable to top-down solutions. This approach would become a hallmark of the Suharto regime (Dove and Kammen 2001, Haris 2004).

At the same time, Suharto took over at a time when proxy wars defined the existential struggle between East and West, and heightened fears that the vast, resource-rich archipelago would become yet another falling domino colored perceptions of the emerging autocrat in the United States and Western Europe. Along with development aid and investment came military hardware and a tacit decree of noninterference with matters seen to be internal affairs, which more or less gave the Suharto regime carte blanche to institute draconian policies aimed at cementing its hold on power (Anderson 1983, Crouch 1979). These policies included the
elimination of opposition political parties (Antlov 1995, Samson 1973) and the promulgation of the dual-function doctrine (dwifungsi) for the military, which ensured that they would have a role in political process at all scales from the central government on down to the village level, a role which not-so-subtly blended tasks of guidance and pacification (Kimura 2012). The result of this was the establishment of a vertically-articulated pyramid of power emanating from Jakarta and penetrating down to the most far-flung village in the archipelago. Direction came in the form of uniform directives from central government ministries enacted by a standardized, professional bureaucracy through a political-administrative structure that facilitated authoritarian control. The sophistication of this approach enabled the process of centralization to reach its apex under Suharto.

An important factor that facilitated Suharto's centralization project (as well as the subsequent decentralization era) was the structure of Indonesia's economy and the presence of a vast wealth of natural resources throughout the archipelago. While Suharto was both constrained and afforded opportunities by Indonesia's historical economic trajectory, which positioned it definitively at the disadvantaged pole in the global ordering of core and periphery (Wallerstein 1974), his actions and policies to a significant degree have also impacted current conditions as well as future possibilities in Indonesia. In other words, today there exists a strong economic path dependency that is rooted not only in the actions of the Dutch, but also in the structure of the Suharto regime and its management of natural resources. This path dependency entails an ongoing economic reliance on primary sector activity and in many ways
directly and indirectly impacts KSNP. More generally, it strongly affects political contestation throughout the archipelago.

The primary interest driving the Dutch colonial adventure was extractive enterprises. Whereas in the pre-colonial era, particularly on Sumatra, upstream peoples exercised significant control over whom they traded with, the Dutch established the precedent of exploitative extraction, with the lion's share of profits accruing to distant masters. In the latter part of their reign, the Dutch began encouraging plantation agriculture and market-oriented production, thereby establishing a trajectory of dependence on primary sector activities and vulnerability to the shocks of global markets for commodities. Commodity dependence persisted after the departure of the Dutch, and throughout the Sukarno and Suharto eras industrialization as well as infrastructural investments were largely confined to Java (Agustina et al 2012). This meant that, for most people on Sumatra and in particular those in the areas around what would eventually become KSNP, the key to prosperity lay in accessing the riches that could be extracted from the earth itself. The reproduction of the social order as well as aspirations for wealth both were contingent upon expanding the area under cultivation and tree crops, a pattern that is still relevant today. But in addition to encouraging this economic trajectory, the Suharto regime instituted formal policies and informal practices that would create a template for the years to come, and would foreshadow eventual conflicts over access to land and resources. These political-economic changes began in the 1970s and were driven by two important and related processes.
The first of these was opening up the country for investment and trade. Suharto's ambitious program of development-centralization depended on funds earned in international markets. Early on in his rule Suharto nationalized virtually all forests in the country with the passage of the Basic Forestry Law of 1967\textsuperscript{11}, placing them under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture. This facilitated the large scale logging of forests on Sumatra, Kalimantan, and other so-called "outer islands" (Barr 1998). Revenues went straight to Jakarta, and few benefits accrued to rural residents of the outer islands that had been displaced by logging concessions. Shortly after the logging boom, "empty" lands began to be converted to plantation agriculture, benefiting both the large corporations and in many cases the Javanese transmigrants that moved en masse to Sumatra (and the other outer islands) to work in the plantations (Ekadinata and Vincent 2011).

The second process concerned determining access to the new concessions. In many cases it was the military officials that had been put in charge of the district and provincial governments of the outer islands (Robison 1978). These officials were given these positions to both reward those loyal to Suharto and to help control these peripheral areas, which were perceived to harbor separatist elements (Antlov 1995, Barr 1998, Dauvergne 1993). Inherent in these appointments was tacit permission to use state resources as tools of patronage. Governors, mayors\textsuperscript{12}, and district headmen with military backgrounds could establish cooperative arrangements with regional

\textsuperscript{11} This landmark law gave the state control over 143 million hectares (approximately 74% of the country's total land area), allowing the Ministry of Agriculture to determine and allocate rights of access and exploitation (Arnold 2008, Barr 1998).

\textsuperscript{12} I use the English "mayor" as a translation for \textit{walikota} to refer to the head of an administrative municipality, which in the administrative hierarchy is parallel to the district or \textit{kabupaten}. Mayors then are of the same rank as district headmen or \textit{bupati}.
military commanders to cut and sell timber and other commodities, a process that has been referred to as the "franchising of corruption" (McLeod 2000:102).

In short, wealth on the outer islands was reserved for centrally connected elites, rather than local communities. The marginalization of local resource users, which began with the Dutch, was further advanced by Suharto's New Order and is emblematic of a number of issues that arise from the political ecology literature, from which my analytical framework draws heavily. First of all, local systems of production have been absorbed into larger networks and incorporated into state development plans, which is manifested in increased pressures of exploitation and environmental degradation (Robbins 2004). Concomitant with this is increasing poverty and social dislocation at the local level. Secondly, the enclosure and appropriation of resources causes increasing scarcity, which can increase conflict between groups (ibid).

In addition to the marginalization aspects, the historical reliance on primary commodities has helped to determine the realistic options that are available to policymakers and political leaders on the island of Sumatra (and elsewhere in Indonesia). Gellert (2010:28) notes that many characteristics of the "extractive regime" that financed the New Order have been carried over to the post-authoritarian era. Gellert further notes two important aspects of the extractive regime that appear to have persisted: 1) natural resources form a significant basis for production and accumulation of value and 2) the extractive regime is resilient economically and politically and can withstand crises and last for years if not decades.
The rigidly centralized New Order came to an end in 1998 with the toppling of Suharto. After this, Indonesia's legislature underwent a transformation from being a rubber-stamping body providing a facade of representativeness to the Suharto regime to being a truly representative assembly directly elected in popular elections with legitimate power. This new era quickly came to be known as Reformasi, and parliament began passing a series of sweeping laws that would reconfigure the relationship between the different levels of government. The most important of these laws were Act 22 on Regional Governments, which transferred to the districts decision making authority in a wide range of areas that had formally been the jurisdiction of the central government, and Act 25 on Fiscal Balances, which dramatically altered the fiscal relationship between the regions and the central government. The earliest round of Reformasi laws also allowed for the direct election of provincial and district representative assemblies.

In simple terms, the locus of power shifted from the executive to the legislative branch and the sweeping reforms transferred unprecedented powers to the district (kabupaten) governments. Authority over key public services as well as 2.5 million staff were shifted to the hundreds of districts along with greater control over local resources. Along with these new powers, though, came new responsibilities. For example, the districts were tasked with raising a greater proportion of their operating funds, which had previous come from several block grants administered by bureaucrats in Jakarta. Decentralization reforms also made district headmen and representative assemblies directly elected, whereas during the Suharto years they had been appointed by the central government. Thus in one fell swoop the subnational
levels of government in Indonesia went from being upwardly accountable to the Suharto regime to being downwardly accountable to their constituents. This is significant because since colonial times these officials had essentially been the agents of the central government (Malley 2003). Under Suharto in particular the district headmen played a dual role as regional political leaders and representatives of the central administrative regime in the districts, but in the decentralized era they would theoretically be responsive to local concerns.

### Table 1.1: Major decentralization laws discussed in this dissertation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Law</th>
<th>Function</th>
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<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Act 22 on Regional Government</td>
<td>The foundation of administrative decentralization providing the legal basis for the transfer of power to districts over virtually all domestic government functions to the districts. Also makes regional (provincial and district) legislatures directly elected by constituents and headmen and governors chosen by legislatures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Act 25 on Fiscal Balances</td>
<td>Creates new formulae for center-region transfers of funds and rebalances government revenues from natural resources. Stipulates the types of revenue raising authority devolved to regions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Regulation 129 on the Formation of Regions</td>
<td>Lays out procedures and requirements for establishing new districts and provinces. Allows for administrative proliferation (chapter 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Act 32 on Regional Governments</td>
<td>Revises and replaces Act 22/1999 in order to reassert central government authority in some aspects of government. Also makes governors and district heads directly elected by constituents and re-establishes the hierarchical relationship between districts and provinces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Act 33 on Fiscal Balances</td>
<td>Revises and replaces Act 25/1999 to clear up ambiguities concerning regional finances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Regulation 78 on the Formation of Regions</td>
<td>Revises and replaces Regulation 129/2000 in an attempt to slow down the creation of new regions by establishing more rigorous requirements.</td>
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</table>
These changes are part of a broader *regime shift* in which socioeconomic coalitions, political institutions and public policy profiles have all changed (Pempel 1998). *Reformasi* has meant that political contestation has been reinvigorated at the district level and the incentives for aspiring elites at the subnational level have changed. Initially the reforms were positively received, as they ushered in an era of hope for the country. *Reformasi* represented a roadmap away from the predations and abuses of the Suharto years. However, as the implementation of *desentralisasi* became more and more confused, optimism yielded to cynicism. Many observers (e.g. Carnegie 2010, Hadiz, 2003, 2004) noted cases where the old Suharto-era elites were able to creep back into power and that the reform movement had been compromised, again marginalizing those that suffered the most under the New Order and who had been the driving force behind the protests that led to Suharto's resignation. In other locales observers have noted a true decentralization and reassertion of local control, but with a lack of administrative and bureaucratic capacity.

During the New Order, in order to access the benefits of state resources, one needed to be connected in some way to the centrally-dominated hierarchy. In the *Reformasi* era, however, aspiring elites must cultivate locally-rooted coalitions which are critical in organizing votes. Thus in order to be elected, one must be seen to represent the aspirations of those below. The machine politics that has come to dominate regional elections relies on a steady flow of money, and on Sumatra money comes from natural resources and government funds (Aspinall 2005a). Thanks to decentralization, once elected, district headmen have a tremendous amount of influence over the distribution of lucrative government contracts as well as the
awarding of rights to exploit natural resources. These can then be used to enrich oneself and reward loyal supporters. As a consequence, the post-Suharto era has witnessed a flurry of primary sector activity as the newly-empowered district governments rush to exploit natural resources.

These factors are important for understanding the establishment of KSNP and its place in broader struggles over control of and access to resources. Since Reformasi began Indonesia's parks have fallen prey to increased logging, encroachment, mining, and poaching. The increase in forest crimes is rooted in the tension between local development aspirations and the global/national imperative to safeguard nature. This is the fundamental conundrum that stems from the awkward juxtaposition of decentralization and conservation. On the one hand, advocates of decentralization idealize and extol the democratizing effects of re-localization of governance and the efficiency gains deriving from redistribution of authority. On the other hand, however, environmentalists fret over the triumph of localized agendas of extraction and consumption over global needs to protect biodiversity and ecosystem services that benefit us all (Terborgh 1999). It is the “tragedy of the commons” (Hardin 1968) and the dilemma of short-term gains versus long-term losses all rolled into one. It is the problematic geography of conflicting values and valuations at differing scales, a problem that has been hitherto under-theorized and oversimplified.

Though decentralization has increased the scope of local powers tremendously, control of Indonesia's extensive network of national parks remains with the national level Ministry of Forestry (MoF) and is still administered in the top-down pattern characteristic of the New Order. In practical terms this means that the districts that
have portions of their territory encompassed by KSNP are forbidden from accessing the natural riches within the park to raise government revenues or to fuel the patronage networks as they might be in other districts. For most of the fifteen districts surrounding the park, this is perceived by the local government and people alike as an unfair burden, as some of the districts have as much as three-quarters of their territory sequestered within the park. They argue that they are at an unfair disadvantage compared to districts that are not burdened with the presence of a protected area, and this keeps them from attracting investment and thus limits their capacity for economic and social development. Moreover, many of these districts are relatively isolated, with few roads connecting them to larger cities, ports, and markets. The districts would like to build roads to open up their economies and establish new routes of commerce and trade, but according to national law this is forbidden through the park. Thus in many ways the presence of the park has served to inhibit effective decentralization. In several of the districts the government is strongly defiant of the park, challenging the central government's authority. At the local level, agricultural encroachment has increased as thousands of farmers have moved into the park to grow coffee and other cash crops.

The overall effect is that decentralization has led to an increase in both formal and informal pressures on the park. In short, decentralization has meant that practices that were during the New Order deemed illegal are becoming sanctioned at the district level, which is a reversal of a century and a half long trend of criminalization of forest utilization by local resource users (Peluso 1992). Since the relationship between the various scales of government has been altered, actors at the province, district, and
village level all seek to redefine the status, purpose, and function of forests, minerals, and other natural resources, which had previously been claimed by the central government as conservation resources. Through the use of formal and informal influence and powers, these actors seek to reterritorialize KSNP, which during the New Order was declared as a conservation territory (Zimmerer 2000) for the purposes of serving priorities established at the national and international scales. The actions of district governments as well as those of encroaching farmers are challenges to the central government's hegemony and control of resources. The difference is that Reformasi has given these actions an aura of officialdom. In other words, we are witnessing an undoing of the structures and patterns that evolved during the Suharto years, as they are being replaced by emerging structures and patterns. Those actors that had been marginalized during the colonial and post-colonial eras have taken on a new political relevance. These processes fundamentally challenge the conventional role of conservation on Sumatra and elsewhere.

1.3 Research Overview

1.3.1 Research Questions

This dissertation addresses the broad question of how decentralization reforms and regional autonomy are affecting conservation at Kerinci Seblat National Park. I draw on literatures of political ecology, state formation and identity, and political and administrative decentralization to develop a framework of analysis to address this question. In order to tackle the complexity and impact of changes taking place, I
divided my task into three interrelated levels of analysis, each of which I operationalized with a set of sub-questions.

1. **Defining the Park's Relations With Surrounding Districts.** This first level of analysis develops a "status report" of decentralization and conservation to serve as a baseline for further inquiry. Questions guiding this level of analysis included:
   a. What is the official status of relations between the park and surrounding district and provincial governments, and how do local governments understand their responsibilities vis-à-vis the park?
   b. Are some areas of the park more vulnerable to logging/encroachment/poaching than others, and is the rate of each of these activities increasing?
   c. What are the development priorities of the district governments?
   d. How has the Ministry of Forestry (MoF) in general and KSNP specifically adapted to the changed political environment?

2. **Understanding Kerinci Seblat National Park as an Object of Political Contestation.**
   This second level of analysis builds upon the first and analyzes district level political processes as well as trends in administrative proliferation (*pemekaran*)\(^{13}\) in an effort to map shifting formal and informal power relations as well as patterns of political contestation. Guiding questions included:
   a. Who are the power brokers in each district, and how do they perceive KSNP?
   b. Are resources within the park becoming targets of political contestation?

\(^{13}\) Administrative proliferation (*pemekaran*) refers to a process enabled by reformasi laws whereby districts and provinces can be subdivided, creating new political entities at the equivalent level in Indonesia's administrative hierarchy. I will explain this process in detail in Chapter 4.
c. How can geographic variations in levels of encroachment be explained?


This last level of analysis tests the understanding of patterns of political contestation developed in the previous levels by examining current events related to the park at both the village and district level in an effort to understand how the new patterns and conditions actually structure the actions and decision-making processes of individual actors. Subquestions included:

a. Do villagers feel that the existence of the park hinders the realization of their social and economic aspirations? If so, what is their response?

b. What are the characteristics of officially illegal activities such as encroachment? Who are the perpetrators, and how are they organized?

c. How are district level political and economic aspirations manifested in the form of policies and projects that exert direct and indirect pressures upon KSNP?

Through this research framework I was able to identify a number of emerging structures and trends that have direct and indirect impacts on the park. The chapters of this dissertation step through each of these questions more or less in order; I start at the broadest scale of analysis and work my way down to the local. This enables me to describe how actors and processes operating at different scales have been affected by Indonesia's decentralization reforms, and how their relationship with one another has changed.
1.4 Methods

This dissertation is primarily a case study but there are elements within that case study of comparative analysis as well. Kerinci Seblat National Park provides opportunities for a wide range of research approaches utilizing many different methods. My work is for the most part qualitative; I conducted semi-structured interviews, focus groups, archival research and participant observation. Fieldwork for this dissertation took place over the course of approximately twelve months between August 2011 and August 2012. During this time I resided primarily in Sungai Penuh, an administrative municipality in Jambi province, where the headquarters of KSNP is located, though I made numerous visits to villages bordering the park as well as to capitals of districts and provinces surrounding the park.

During my fieldwork I partnered with a local conservation NGO, Lembaga Tumbuh Alami. Over the course of a year I conducted visits to 24 different villages that share a border with or are located entirely within the national park. My stay in each of these villages ranged from one to five days, and I visited several of these villages more than once. The primary objective for each of these visits was to interview the village head and village secretary. If the village had an adat chief I would attempt to schedule an interview with this official as well. Each of these interviews was semi-structured; I usually used a modified form of a standard 11-question interview guide (see appendix) over which conversation would flow. These interviews generally lasted between one and two hours and typically would take place at the home of the official, but sometimes in the village office if there was one. Village officials were typically very welcoming and interested in sharing their views.
and information about the village. Other information about the various villages was
gathered from discussions at food stalls or warungs\textsuperscript{14}. In all instances I informed
discussants the purpose of my project, describing the project in terms as an
investigation into the socio-economic and cultural patterns of villages on the edge of
the park.

In some cases I was able to make recordings of conversations with village
officials, but in general I did not attempt to make recordings of discussions with
village residents, although I did make notes. The reason for this is that I found
recordings tend to make people uneasy, and I found it very difficult to explain the
purpose of the recording in ways that interviewees could relate to. In cases where I
did make recordings I asked informants to sign a disclosure form, which I translated
into Indonesian. I always asked permission to make notes. All respondents were
welcoming and forthcoming. However in order to protect informants and ensure
anonymity information from village informants will be referred to with only the most
general terms in this dissertation. Quotations or direct references to specific villages
will be based on information obtained from village heads, village secretaries, or adat
heads from whom I obtained proper permission.

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\textsuperscript{14} A warung might be thought of as a "village convenience store".
In addition to village visits, I also made trips to the capitals of three provinces (Bengkulu, Jambi, West Sumatra) and nine districts. I was able to interview planning bureaucrats (BAPPEDA) from all nine of these districts, and either the headman or his deputy in four districts. I conducted visits to six park offices and resort posts and followed forest police activities on three occasions. Throughout the course of my year in the field I also attended as many park socialization and training activities as possible. I even received certification as an auxiliary forest policeman.

I conducted archival research in the library of KSNP as well as the small libraries maintained by district planning offices (BAPPEDA) when I was permitted. I gathered and read through park documents on management, collaboration with local governments, and enforcement operations. From the districts and provinces I collected spatial planning documents, including long-term spatial plans (RTRW: *Rencana Tata Ruang Wilayah*). I also collected statistical yearbooks, annual

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accountability reports for district headmen, budgets, and other documents related to the policy direction and politics of the districts. Due to the influence of "gatekeepers" in various districts, I was able to gather more information in some districts and less in others. Also, some districts seemed to be better at maintaining records than others.

A significant difficulty stemmed from the Indonesian government's system of permissions for foreign researchers. The system is set up for researchers planning to do projects in single locations. However my project covered the entire park and thus crossed multiple district and provincial jurisdictions. Each time I entered a new district I was required to register with the district police and the cultural affairs office. In some cases I was asked for letters from various district and provincial offices which I did not have, and so it was difficult to secure access to some libraries. Generally I was able to work around obstacles, and visiting all the different offices introduced me to a wide range of bureaucrats, most of whom were happy to talk to me about their jobs, district politics, and their perceptions of the park. I have taken to referring to this interviewing technique as the "bureaucratic snowball effect."

1.5 Contributions and Themes of the Dissertation

Though I focus on a specific area of Sumatra, the scope of this dissertation is quite broad. As is the custom in political ecology analysis I have attempted to incorporate a historical perspective in my analysis (Bryant and Bailey 1997, Kull 2004, Neumann 2005, Watts 1983). I will show how historical processes play an important role in determining current trajectories and outcomes. My treatment of the issues is also informed by an attention to actors and processes operating at different
spatial scales in order to gain a fuller understanding of the interaction between them and their impacts on KSNP (Daniels and Basset 2002, Peterson 2000, Purcel and Brown 2005). Throughout the dissertation I address not only the direct consequences that decentralization and democratization have had for the park, but also indirect effects as well. These indirect effects are often not obvious to the casual observer, and so it is necessary in some cases to go into some detail and background to adequately explain my points and conclusions.

With this in mind, this section describes several key themes which run through the entire dissertation along with the contributions of the current work. Much of the information provided might at first glance seem to be peripheral or tangential to the real story, but one of the major points I am trying to make here is that to truly understand the impacts of decentralization on the park (and vice versa), we have to understand how the changing political-administrative environment relates not just to direct pressures and processes, but indirect ones as well.

1. **Statemaking and reverse statemaking.** In this introductory chapter I have described the long process of centralization and subsequent nation building. As others have shown (Bryant 1997, Neumann 1998, Peluso 1992), a large element of these processes is asserting control over natural resources. In the following chapters it will be clear that KSNP is not just a protected area, but rather is a component of this process of authoritarian centralization and control of natural resources. I examine how the policies and practices of the park's managers (and their superiors in the
Ministry of Forestry) have been built upon a foundation of authoritarianism, and to a large degree these practices continue to reflect these origins.

I will describe how Indonesia's decentralization and democratization reforms have divided sovereignty between different scales of government (primarily between the central government, districts and provinces) in effect creating new nodes of official "stateness" that are often in opposition to one another in terms of goals and aspirations. I argue that the MoF and KSNP have been weakened vis-à-vis other scales of government by these changes, but they continue to operate as though the old rules of the New Order were still in place. I show how Indonesia's national parks have historically served the interests and priorities of actors at higher scales. However, the establishment of districts and provinces as new, largely independent nodes of stateness has served to undermine the effectiveness of the park.

2. Marginalization and Relegitimizing Local Claims to Natural Resources. Many prior studies have shown how local resource users have been marginalized and criminalized as distant governments coercively and sometimes forcefully appropriate their natural resources (Ghimire and Pimbert 1997, Turnbull 1972, West and Brechin 1991, West et al 2006). This historical process of marginalization can be seen in and around Indonesia's forests (McCarthy 2006, Peluso 1992). However, decentralization and democratization have created new opportunities and channels for local resource users to renew their claims on natural resources, and the aforementioned new nodes of stateness provide some degree of official legitimacy for these local claims. This dissertation describes how decentralization allows for the relegitimizing of these local...
claims and how "everyday" or "hidden" resistance (Kerkvliet 2009, Scott 1985) has become official challenge. Moreover, I will describe how the implementation of decentralization has allowed district level elites to appropriate local struggles to gain popular support at election time, and how after they are elected these elites, who are neither upwardly nor downwardly accountable, are able to work through local resource users to exploit forests and mineral resources for personal gain. The outcome is likely to be the continued marginalization of some of the poorest and most vulnerable sectors of the population along with continued environmental degradation.

3. **Contestation of the Concept of Conservation.** A third theme that runs through the dissertation is an attention to the language used by all the actors in the story, from villagers and farmers to district level politicians and bureaucrats to park managers, MoF officials, and representatives of international NGOs. Reformasi has allowed for the park's conservation mission, which was officially unchallenged during the Suharto years, to be questioned, scrutinized, and assailed. I will show how competing and conflicting definitions of forests as a resource (e.g. as a conservation resource, as a livelihood resource, as a resource for regional economic development) have made KSNP a political object and how conservation and development issues are portrayed by the various stakeholders.

4. **Path Dependent Reliance on Primary Sector Activity and the Political Economy of Extraction.** Sumatra has historically been a region where agriculture and extractive activities have dominated the economy. This dissertation demonstrates...
how this history combined with the structure of the decentralization reforms limits the future economic and policy options available to elected and appointed officials in the areas around the park. Moreover, the constraints of this situation make conflict with the park virtually unavoidable.

5. **Protected Areas as an Obstacle to Effective Decentralization.** Most if not all prior analyses of the impacts of decentralization on natural resources, both in Indonesia and further afield, have described the detrimental effects that the reforms have had on natural resources and protected areas (Brown and Purcell 2005, Dressler et al 2006, EPIQ 1999, Hollenbach 2005, Lutz and Caldecott 1996, Pradnja 2003). Though this dissertation describes a variety of direct and indirect effects on KSNP stemming from decentralization, a major contribution of the current work is that it describes how KSNP has inhibited effective decentralization in its neighboring districts. I draw on the decentralization literature to show a number of ways in which the park as it currently functions and is administered has undermined decentralization.

6. **Remapping and Reterritorialization.** Two key interrelated issues of interest to geographers are how political and administrative boundaries are created and how spatial units are used to reinforce claims on natural resources. As alluded to above, territorialiality as a strategy to control natural resources has been a key component of the centralization process throughout the colonial and post-colonial eras (Peluso and Vandergeest 2001, Sack 1986, Vandergeest and Peluso 1995). Analyzing the park as a "conservation territory" (Zimmerer 2000) established by a particular regime helps
us to see the characteristics and priorities of the regime that created the park. By creating new nodes of stateness, decentralization and democratization have established a new regime and have unleashed processes of reterritorialization as newly empowered village, district, and provincial governments seek to remap the geography of Sumatra to advance their interests.

7. **Rescaling.** During the Suharto years governance in general and the management of protected areas more specifically was in response to directives and priorities originating at higher scales (national and international), and lower scale actors were either incorporated into this top-down hierarchy or largely disregarded. However, decentralization and democratization have led to the *rescaling* of many issues, including political contestation and resource management. Rescaling has given new political importance to some previously marginal geographic areas and groups of people and changes many of the kinds of issues that are important in elections and other forms of political contestation. Rescaling has also modified the relative powers of actors at different scales ranging from global to village and alters the relationships of authority, influence, and accountability between them. The rescaling that accompanies decentralization is important in terms of environmental governance because concepts of scale and space are generally assumed to be congruent with the nested territorial containers for political life (Bulkeley 2005). For national parks this assumption holds true if the national scale of government (the central government) is dominant, but decentralization has altered the relative power of the various scales of government and society, and this is having a significant impact on the park.
1.6 Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is made up of eight chapters. In the next chapter I describe Kerinci Seblat National Park, the field site for this dissertation. This chapter briefly discusses the history of protected area-based conservation in Indonesia along with an overview of some controversies associated with national parks in general. I will describe the history of the park and provide some details about how it operates. Lastly this chapter will describe challenges currently facing the park's managers from their perspectives.

Chapter 3 discusses Reformasi, focusing on district level political processes in the districts surrounding KSNP and how these processes have changed since the fall of Suharto. This chapter draws on other case studies and research from around the archipelago to describe some broader patterns related to decentralization and political contestation at the district level as well as observations made during my time in the field. I apply these broader patterns to the districts around KSNP to identify processes that lead to direct and indirect pressures on the park.

Chapter 4 describes in depth the process of administrative proliferation which has increased the number of districts around the park from nine to fifteen. I argue that administrative proliferation is a major driver of indirect pressures on KSNP, serving to increase the nodes of stateness that operate largely independent of the central government. Each of these new nodes creates an additional arena where the processes described in Chapter 3 can flourish.

Chapter 5 applies the arguments developed in Chapter 3 to proposed road construction projects around the park. Road construction projects are seen as a
manifestation of broader political trends; they are also sites of confrontation with KSNP and by extension the central government. The chapter examines the economic geography of central Sumatra as well as patterns of economic development in the region to show that much of the pressure on the park is at least in part due to historical patterns of resource extraction on Sumatra.

Chapter 6 develops a framework for analyzing relations between the park and village residents. I show how villages are distinct politically from district governments, but also how decentralization has altered the political balance so that they have common objectives. I provide an overview of socioeconomic conditions in the village, followed by an examination of the general characteristics of the relationship between the park and its neighboring villages over time, with special attention as to how Reformasi is changing various aspects of this relationship. Chapter 6 relates how the New Order marginalized locally-rooted systems of social organization and resource management (adat), and how this continues to impact the rate of encroachment in villages around the park.

Chapter 7 examines several villages and their troubled relationship with the park, demonstrating how Reformasi has changed how tensions between the park and people are manifested, and how aspiring district elites are able to use sites of conflict for political gain. In this chapter I also describe the ways in which discourses of human rights and customary claims to land are used to challenge the legitimacy of the MoF's conservation mission, as well as how these claims relate to district level political contestation.
Chapter 8 reflects upon the preceding chapters to construct a theoretical understanding of the changes decentralization is fostering around Kerinci Seblat National Park. These changes are understood from a geographic perspective; I describe processes of rescaling and reterritorialization and how they relate to a new geography of Sumatra. This chapter then concludes the dissertation with some comments about the way forward for the park.
CHAPTER 2. KERINCI SEBLAT NATIONAL PARK AND ITS ENVIRONS

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I provide a brief history of national parks in Indonesia followed by a description of the setting for my research, Kerinci Seblat National Park. This chapter has two basic objectives. The first is to provide support for the assertion I made in the introductory chapter, that national parks in Indonesia are a product of the specific political configuration of Suharto's New Order. As such they are part of a general process of centralization that began with the Dutch administration during the colonial era but was greatly accelerated and eventually reached its apex during the Suharto years. The general point then is that Indonesia's parks are an artifact of that regime, and so much of the conflict and contestation that is described in later chapters is rooted in the fundamental conundrum that Indonesia's national parks are a relic of authoritarianism in a post-authoritarian era. I will provide support for my contention that national park management for the most part still follows the patterns of management established during the Suharto years, which contributes to conflicts with the surrounding districts. From this discussion it should be clear that KSNP (and national parks in general) are political objects.

The second, more mundane objective is to present an overview of the geography and the functioning of the park, which provides a context for understanding the later chapters. The general point here is that over the past fifteen years the management of
KSNP, as well as the Ministry of Forestry in general, has been slow to respond to the new political realities of the post-authoritarian era. This lethargy has led to two important outcomes. The first is that the MoF and KSNP are not able to play an effective role in helping to guide the process of decentralization with respect to how the process affects natural resources and ecological processes. Rather their intractability has meant that they have remained on the sidelines while new formal and informal political-administrative practices and traditions are established at the village, district, and provincial level. This is significant because the MoF, as the guardian of the country's forest estate, is largely responsible for ensuring the long-term continuity of ecological services deriving from forested areas. However, in the Reformasi era the MoF has assumed the role of adversary to the districts, which limits the possibility of institutionalizing environmental concerns in regional governance. This is one of the key legacies of "Big Bang" decentralization (Hofman and Kaiser 2002) in Indonesia: the separation of responsibility for adverse environmental outcomes from the set of incentives that reward exploitation of natural resources. This outcome has never been inevitable, though; rather it was brought about by the specific provisions of Act 22/1999 and Act 25/1999 (see chapter 1).

The second key outcome is that the park has actually passively inhibited the progress of decentralization in its neighboring districts. An additional point to be taken from this chapter is that the establishment and management of protected areas in Indonesia has always been in response to concerns and directives originating from "higher" scales (e.g. national and international), and has for the most part ignored or at most paid lip service to priorities originating from "lower" scales (e.g. village,
district, and provincial). The information for this chapter comes from a literature review of previous research on KSNP and its surroundings, a review of official park documents, interviews with park staff, and direct observation. The chapter aims to address the following questions and issues:

1. How is Kerinci Seblat National Park part of the broader historical processes of centralization and state formation? Does the fact that the park was established during the authoritarian New Order era have any implication for the way that it has been managed? These questions fit in with the overall theme of statemaking and reverse statemaking.

2. How has the park historically reflected the priorities of actors at national and international scales? What effect has this bias had on the people living around the park, and can the problems facing the park be linked to this orientation towards broader scale priorities? These questions are directly related to the overall issues of marginalization and reterritorialization and remapping because they provide critical background for understanding processes currently affecting the park.

3. How have the MoF and KSNP been affected by and responded to decentralization? As noted in chapter 1, decentralization and democratization have been accompanied by reinvigorated calls on the part of regional scale actors for greater control over natural resources. In what ways has this state
of affairs affected the park? This includes attention to the ways in which the *rescaling* of administration and political processes is being experienced by park managers as representatives of the central government.

### 2.2 Indonesia's National Parks: A Brief History

Indonesia's system of national parks traces its origins to foundational policies and practices established during the colonial era. Jepson and Whittaker (2002) trace the Dutch concern with nature in the archipelago back to the 1811-1814 administration of Sir Stamford Raffles\(^{15}\), whose naturalist-oriented policies led the Dutch elite to take an interest in the science of the colonies. The first Dutch governor general of Java was accompanied by Carl Reinwardt, who lived on Java for seven years and established the Botanic Garden at Buitenzorg (now Bogor) in 1818. Upon Reinwardt's return to the Netherlands the Dutch king began authorizing missions to the colony to conduct botanical and zoological surveys (ibid). Then around the middle part of the century the Dutch began to be concerned about the detrimental effects of logging on steep slopes on Java (Boomgaard 1999). This led to the establishment of the colonial Forest Service, which is well documented in Peluso's (1992) account of the history of teak forestry on Java. One of the major events of the 19th century was the Dutch *domeinverklaring* ("domain declaration") by which "the Dutch had completed their shift in status from that of 'tenants,' with leased rights to forest products and labor, to 'landlords' who controlled forest lands and forest access thus reshaping the entire nature of forest access and control" (Peluso 1992:67). With

\(^{15}\text{Raffles, a British official, was put in charge of Java when the British occupied it during the Napoleonic Wars.}\)
this declaration the Dutch colonial government asserted control over all "unutilized" forests, which not only curtailed local users' rights to forest products, but also appropriated all lands in shifting cultivation systems that had been fallow for three years or more. Efforts to catalogue the immense flora and fauna of the archipelago continued through the 19th century despite ups and downs\textsuperscript{16} and culminated in the establishment of the 280 hectare research reserve at Cibodas in 1889, which can be considered the colony's first western-style protected area\textsuperscript{17}. This was followed by the establishment of a number of hydrological reserves (\textit{schermbossem}) where all cutting was prohibited (Boomgaard 1999).

By the late 1800s the Dutch had extended their control to most areas of the archipelago, with only a few isolated pockets remaining beyond their reach (including Aceh and Kerinci Valley). Meanwhile at home in Holland awareness of the natural riches of the archipelago as well as commercial pressures encouraging overexploitation was growing, at least among the upper classes. One of the major impetuses for this was shock over the scale and impact of the feather trade. At that time feathers from exotic birds including the various species of bird-of-paradise were in high demand for hats (Westermann 1945). A contemporary observer noted that the bird trade "rightly aroused indignation everywhere, and societies that had the protection of nature in view, in the Netherlands Indies as well as in Holland and abroad, more than once tried to exert pressure on the Netherlands-Indian or Dutch government to put an end to this" (Dammerman 1929:11). In 1904 prominent

\textsuperscript{16} For example, extremely high mortality rates amongst the Dutch naturalists sent to do the inventories.

\textsuperscript{17} Boomgaard (1999) points out that the rulers of Mataram established game parks (\textit{krapyak}) and regulations (\textit{larangan}). He also describes indigenous \textit{angker} (holy; sacred) areas as wooded places with restricted access. On Sumatra these areas were referred to as \textit{keramat}. 

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citizens founded the Society for the Protection of Nature Monuments (*Vereniging tot Behoud van Natuurmonumenten*) in Amsterdam (Jepson and Whittaker 2002). This was followed by the Netherlands Indian Society for the Protection of Nature, founded in 1912 and recognized by the government in 1913 (Dammerman 1929). Then in 1925 wealthy banker Pieter Gerbrand Van Tienhoven established the Dutch Committee for International Nature Conservation (*Nederlandsche Commissie voor International Natuurbescherming*) (Jepson and Whittaker 2002). Nature groups grew both in the colony and the metropole and exerted pressure on the colonial government to expand the network of reserves, suggesting 46 over the course of ten years. The governor general, who was granted the power to designate nature reserves in 1916, created 33 in 1919, and by 1949 there were approximately 120 nature and wildlife reserves scattered across the archipelago (Boomgaard 1999). The origins of many of Indonesia's national parks, including KSNP, Gunung Leuser National Park, and Bukit Barisan Selatan National Park can be traced to these early efforts to create reserves as these parks encompassed land originally set aside by the Dutch. It is clear from the historical progression described here that the gradual increase in control over forest resources on the part of the colonial government occurred in parallel with their gradual assertion of control over more and more territory.

The contemporary outlook that supported the protection of nature in the Dutch East Indies is consistent with the underlying logic that led other colonial powers to establish protected areas in Africa (Adams and Hutton 2007, Gibson 1999, Neumann 1998, 2001). These assumptions included a conception that nature was in peril, the
notion that vast areas of pristine landscape were on the verge of being despoiled, and
am assumed a moral imperative to take action to forestall the destruction of nature:

Seeing the immense tropical virgin forests, one would suppose that here would be no urgency to create nature reserves, but if one notices how quickly in Java the primeval jungle has disappeared, so that now in the lowlands hardly any real jungle is to be found anymore, one will have to acknowledge that there is *periculum in mora*\(^\text{18}\). Sumatra is going the same way as Java; here too the primeval forest is disappearing at an alarmingly rapid rate, and where cultivation does not already exist, often the land has been granted years before, so that it is hardly possible to withdraw it from the violating hand of the cultivator (Dammerman 1929:21).

Here we see that the principle enemy is man (specifically local people), and the *modus operandi* is agricultural extensification. This perception of dichotomy between cultivation and conservation still exists in protected area management in Indonesia today (and, as we will see in chapters to come, political discourse), though the reality in the field is somewhat less black and white. Related to this point, the quotation also is indicative of a particular epistemological position that sees forests not as a source of livelihood or sustenance, but rather as a undespoiled *nature* (Castree 2014, 2005, Coates 1998, Cronon 1996, Hinchliffe 2007). This definition of forest resources is imposed from the top down and originates not among local resource users but rather actors operating in this case at the international scale. Upon this is built a particular way of defining resources such as trees; they exist as conservation resources rather than extractive resources, and so local users come to be seen as threats by outside managers. This way of defining the resource brings with it a particular moral framework which determines the types of interactions humans will

\(^{18}\) Latin: "danger in delay"
have with the protected area, and anyone that doesn't conform to these strictures is deemed "criminal."

In 1941 the Nature Protection Ordinance placed the newly-created Directorate General of Forestry under the Ministry of Agriculture and gave it authority for managing protected areas (Werner 2001). Upon achieving independence from the Dutch in 1949 the new government of Indonesia inherited the protected area network, but some of the reserves had "disappeared" in the period of war between 1942 and 1949 (Boomgaard 1999:272), and still others were neglected or abandoned during Sukarno's rule, as the political regime was less interested in conservation and the development of extractive activities and more interested in ensuring stability and the territorial and ideological integrity of the state. But the structure established by the Dutch would prove useful to Sukarno's successor, Suharto.

By the mid-1970s interest was growing within the Indonesian bureaucracy to bring the system of protected areas up to date. In partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), researchers from the Ministry of Agriculture began background research on several potential national park sites. The result of this research was a series of recommendations based on several principles, including the establishment of a large protected area in each of the major biogeographic regions of the country in order to protect "continuous habitat types and if possible the richest example of those habitats" (Jepson and Whittaker 2002b: 52). This shows that elements within the Suharto regime were particularly enthusiastic about protected areas and adopted a “science based protected areas policy and expanded the

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19 Jepson argues in his unpublished dissertation (2001) that nature conservation and protected areas was one area which afforded developing countries the opportunity to be global leaders and pioneers.
designated area to nearly 10% of the terrestrial land area in the form of national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, and nature reserves” (ibid: 130). By 1977 the Directorate of Nature Protection and Conservation (PPA) had formulated criteria for national parks based on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) definition of parks (Wiratno et al 2004:102). The first national parks were gazetted in 1980, with a group of five (Gunung Leuser, Komodo, Ujung Kulon, Baluran, and Gunung Gede-Pangrango) being listed that year. A further eleven parks, including KSNP, were declared at the Third World Congress on National Parks and Conservation Areas, held in Bali in 1982. A major development occurred in 1985 with the removal of the Forestry Department from the Ministry of Agriculture and its elevation to full ministry status with complete responsibility for the management of the nation’s forest estate.

While the establishment of parks in the archipelago was hailed as a major victory by conservationists, it also served the general centralizing interests of the Suharto regime. As noted in the introductory chapter, during the 1970s Indonesia greatly expanded exports of timber from the outer islands after the passage of the Basic Forestry Act of 1967 (*Undang undang 5/1967 Tentang Ketentuan-ketentuan Pokok Kehutanan*), which had extended state sovereignty over virtually all forests in the same manner as the aforementioned Domain Declaration served as the legal instrument by which the Dutch usurped all forests on Java. This increase in logging coincided with a growing global perception that the expansion of logging across the tropical belt was a threat to biodiversity and would have other adverse ecological impacts as well. Thus the parks were an important tool for the Suharto regime to
placate international fears over rapacious and unsustainable practices. It is also likely that Suharto and other elites within the New Order felt that protected areas were a feature of the modern nation state, and thus were a necessary part of the regime's modernization project (Li 2007, Robison 1981).

With the establishment of these parks the first steps had been taken towards the goal of creating a network of protected areas, but a formal legal framework for management was still lacking. The major legislative tool concerning protected areas was Act 5 from 1990 Concerning the Conservation of Living Resources and their Ecosystems (Undang undang 5/1990 Tentang Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam Hayati dan Ekosistemnya). This law described five different types of protected areas, including Strict Nature Reserves (Cagar Alam), Wildlife Sanctuaries (Suaka Margasatwa), Grand Forest Parks (Taman Hutan Raya), Nature Recreation Parks (Taman Wisata Alam), and National Parks (Taman Nasional, TN). Neidel (2006) points out that the key consideration of all of these protected areas was biodiversity conservation, a concern that responded to international conservation norms and discourse. This act required that national parks be managed with a system of zones, including a core zone with the strictest restrictions, a utilization zone for ecotourism, an education and research zone, traditional use zones for communities living in or near parks, and other zones to be based on specific needs (Wirato et al 2004). Act 5 still forms the basis of national park management in Indonesia, and is the primary legal instrument cited by park managers, rangers, and many conservation NGOs at all scales when discussing their duties. For example, park officials refer to this law in
explaining why encroachment and deforestation are bad, rather than to more ecologically-based rationalizations.

This overview shows that the national parks of Indonesia and the various protected areas which came before them were, for the most part, rooted in international discourses of conservation. Early reserves were established to protect nature from abuses stemming from the caprices of the international market, whereas the gazettement of official national parks was based on creating a network of parks to protect representative samples as part of a global protected area network. These international priorities coincided with the New Order's project of centralization and provided legitimacy for the regime's efforts to extend central control over the archipelago's forest estate. It also shows that from the beginning the government of Indonesia seems to have had a commitment to the idea of national parks, but as I will show in the following section, not to providing adequate resources to enable parks to function properly. Over the ensuing decade and a half more parks were created but by 1996 only 12 of 36 had an active presence. As Werner (2001:67) notes, "although Indonesia's domestic legal framework for nature protection is well developed, it lacks sufficient implementation regulations."

It is clear then that the establishment of the park's network was made possible by the strength of the central government. In fact, among all government ministries during the New Order, the Ministry of Forestry was one of the biggest beneficiaries of centralized rule, as it was given control over nearly 75% of the country's land area. It is therefore understandable that the Ministry of Forestry was very resistant to idea of decentralization when it was being debated in 1998 and 1999. For the most part
the MoF has been brought kicking and screaming into the Reformasi era, and MoF bureaucrats have resisted most efforts to redistribute their powers and responsibilities from Jakarta to the regions (Moeliono et al. 2009). In fact, in the early years of Reformasi the MoF took steps to recentralize powers and authorities that had been delegated to the provincial and district branches of the ministry (Patlis 2004). The reason for this illustrates a fundamental point about the nature of the decentralization laws and their departure from the New Order's way of doing things. During the 1990s the MoF transferred authority over certain aspects of forest management to lower level offices. However, since all of these offices were still part of the top-down system, this transfer is an example of deconcentration rather than decentralization (Agrawal and Ribot 1999, Furtado 2001). However, Act 22/1999 abolished the old bureaucratic hierarchy along with the provincial branches of the Ministry of Forestry (known as Regional Offices, Kantor Wilayah or "Kanwil" for short) while simultaneously removing the district offices from ministerial control. Instead these district offices (now known as Dinas) would henceforth fall under the authority of the district governments. Despite this the MoF has continued to resist decentralization. One of their major arguments has been that the districts don't have the necessary technical capacity to appropriately manage the forests (Resosudarmo 2004). They further assert a general lack of commitment on the part of the districts to sustainable management, pointing to a huge increase in the issuance of small scale logging permits by the districts in the years immediately following the fall of the Suharto regime (Barr et al 2006, Djogo and Syaf 2004). In many areas these permits were issued for areas falling within the borders of national parks and protected areas, which
is technically illegal. The practical upshot of this is that the MoF continues to operate in a strictly hierarchical manner reminiscent of the Suharto era, which has led to management challenges for the national parks, which are on the front lines of center-regional struggles arising from decentralization and democratization.

2.3 The Park: Physical Characteristics

Kerinci Seblat National Park covers an area of 1,368,000 hectares. For comparison purposes, this is slightly larger than the US state of Connecticut, or the Hawaiian islands of Hawai'i, Maui, and Oahu. It is the largest national park on Sumatra and the second largest terrestrial protected area in all of Indonesia, behind only Papua's gigantic Lorenz National Park. KSNP's size, according to the park's director, is related to the areal and physical characteristics required to protect top predators and large herbivores (described below). It stretches approximately 350 kilometers north to south following the Bukit Barisan mountain range, and has a maximum width of 70 kilometers. The park ranges in altitude from below 300 to 3,800 meters above sea level. These mountains are part of the Sunda Arc orogeny, which stretches from Burma across the Indian Ocean and includes the Andaman islands, one-third of Sumatra, most of Java, and the lesser Sunda islands. These mountains are formed by the convergence of the Australian and Eurasian tectonic plates; the Australian plate is slowly subducting beneath the Eurasian plate which fuels the orogenesis process\(^\text{20}\). One of the most conspicuous features of the Bukit Barisan system on Sumatra (other than the mountains themselves) is a series of high

\(^{20}\text{This is a necessary simplification of a fascinatingly complex geology. For a more thorough discussion of the tectonic plates of Sumatra see Schluter, et al 2002.}\)
valleys formed by the crustal folding, faulting, and breaking that accompanies subduction. These valleys, technically known as the Semangka Graben, are marked by a series of volcanoes, including Mount (Gunung) Kerinci, the highest active volcano in Indonesia, which is located in the park. The valleys have also been covered with alluvial and colluvial material, making them quite fertile. Because of the mountainous topography, most of the land in the park is steeply sloped.

The park is the largest continuous area of undisturbed primary forest on Sumatra (Werner, 2001). There are approximately 4,000 plant species from 63 families, 306 bird species from 49 families, including 39 endemic species, 144 species of mammals, of which seven are found only in the park, 10 reptiles, and 6 primates. The park is among the last remaining refuges for several charismatic megafauna species including the Sumatran tiger (Panthera tigris sumatrae) and Sumatran rhinoceros (Dicerorhinus sumatrensis). Other mammals of interest include the rarely-photographed and until recently presumed extinct Sumatran hare (Nesolagus netscheri), sun bear (Helarctos malayanus), Malayan Tapir (Tapiricus indicus), clouded leopard (Neofelis nebulosa), and Sumatran elephant (Elephas maximus sumatranus) (KS-ICDP 2002). The park covers a wide range of ecosystems, including lowland dipterocarp forests, ranging from 200-1500 meters above sea level and dominated by Dipterocarpaceae and Leguminosae families, hill and montane forests ranging from 1500-2500 meters above sea level and dominated by

21 For example, approximately 92% of the park area in Bengkulu province is sloped at greater than 60 degrees.
22 Though the Sumatran tiger is found in several locations across the island this is thought to be the largest population.
23 Though officially these animals still exist within the park, none have been recorded for several years and it is widely suspected that they have gone extinct locally, though while I was doing my fieldwork a routine patrol encountered a trap intended for a rhinoceros, which suggest the animal is still thought by poachers to inhabit the park.
Dipterocarpaceae, Lauraceae, and Myrtaceae species, swamp forests, highland wetlands, as well as montane and alpine ecosystems, which are found above 2500 meters and are dominated by Lauraceae, Fagaceae, and Ericaceae species. The park contains more than 20 unique wetland areas including volcanic lakes and peat swamp forests, including the highest peat swamp forest in Southeast Asia (Ladeh Panjang in Kerinci district at 1600 meters).

KSNP also provides important ecosystems services. It protects catchment areas for three major rivers, the Musi, which flows through South Sumatra province, the Batang Hari, flowing through Riau and Jambi provinces, and the Ketahun in Bengkulu province. There are 20 other important rivers with their headwaters in the park as well, and these are fed by hundreds of tributaries. Werner (2001) points out that three million people in the four provinces surrounding the park depend on irrigation water from KSNP; boilerplate introductions to park documents state that the park is the main source of water for several million hectares of wet rice cultivation in the surrounding provinces and is also an important source for hydroelectric power for people living around the park. Moreover, 86% of the land is classified as mountainous, whereas 14% is lowland hills or plains, so much of the land in the park is susceptible to erosion, which highlights the ecological importance of maintaining permanent forest cover.

The park covers parts of four provinces: Jambi, with 40% of the park’s total area, West Sumatra (25%), Bengkulu (21%), and South Sumatra (14%). Within the four provinces the park covers parts of fifteen different districts and administrative municipalities (see table below). One important feature about the physical
characteristics of the park is its shape; as mentioned in the preceding paragraph the park has something of an elongated shape, which means that relative to its area its boundary with its neighbors is long; approximately 2800 km. Moreover there is a large enclave in the middle of the park. This is Kerinci valley, which is divided administratively between Kerinci district and the administrative municipality of Sungai Penuh. The population here is approximately 280,000 people. Despite the aforementioned characterization of KSNP, more than 80% of the park borders directly with settled and/or cultivated areas (KSNP 2006a). The next section details the history of habitation in the area.

2.4 History of Habitation

*The people of Kerinci...strategically played upon their geographic remoteness and the 'mysteries' that shrouded the region to maintain their autonomy from unwanted influence and interventions of outsiders*-- Hartanto 2009:110.

In the introductory chapter I provided a general overview of the pre-colonial political arrangements of central Sumatra in the context of centralization and the statemaking project. Here I will expound upon this discussion in more detail to illustrate the fact that before Kerinci Seblat National Park was gazetted in the late twentieth century, parts of the area had been inhabited for hundreds of years.

Pollen evidence indicates that the area around Lake Kerinci in Kerinci district was first occupied thousands of years ago. It is thought that prehistoric settlers would have been attracted by the valley's rich volcanic soils and cool climate. These early settlers developed systems of shifting cultivation because much of the complex topography beyond the valley itself is not suited for wet rice (Aumeeruddy, 1994). In
terms of political administration, the area has traditionally been a sort of political transition zone; around the 14th century it formed the fluid border zone between the Pagar Ruyung kingdom to the west and the Kingdom of Jambi to the east (Schnitger 1989). This is characteristic of old kingdoms in Southeast Asia and in the Malay Archipelago; spheres of influence were more important than political boundaries as the “state” was traditionally an instrument of control over people and resources, with geography being a secondary consideration (Kathirithamby-Wells, 1995, Winichakul, 1994). Further, according to local custom, Sitinjau Laut hill within the park area (located in Kerinci district) has traditionally marked the boundary between the Kerinci people to the south and the Minangkabau people24 to the north. Thus the area might be thought of almost as a neutral zone; the people there have been self-sufficient, living on the periphery, and as a result customary law (adat) and customary resource management regimes have emerged25.

During this time the area drew interest from both of the aforementioned regions due to its abundant gold. Minang people from the north slowly began moving into the areas that are now Solok Selatan, Kerinci, Pesisir Selatan, and Mukomuko districts (Kathirithamby-Wells 1986). These areas are now sometimes described as Minang rantau areas26, an expression acknowledging that though the Minang have long inhabited these areas, they are not considered part of the traditional Minangkabau heartland. In the first half of the 16th century black pepper (Piper

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24 The Minang are one of the largest ethnic groups on Sumatra. Their cultural hearth is centered on the towns of Agam, Bukit Tinggi, and Pariaman in what is now the province of West Sumatra.

25 Local legend also holds that the fascinating and mysterious carved megaliths that are scattered throughout the region are remnants of an ancient fight among gods (sometimes described as giants) who lobbed the big rocks at one another in a battle over territory.

26 Rantau means to roam or wander in search of a livelihood. Minang areas are typically divided into heartland or hearth areas, and rantau areas which exist primarily on the southern periphery of the heartland areas. These are areas to which Minang people have migrated over the past 200-300 years.
*nigrum*), which had been introduced into Aceh in the 13\textsuperscript{th} century by Islamic traders from India, likely expanded into the Kerinci area, which strengthened trading ties with the Jambi Sultanate (Andaya 1993, Burgers 2004). Kathirithamby-Wells (1986) notes that there was never a relationship of domination, however; even though the Sultan of Jambi claimed *de jure* authority over the Kerinci area, the Sultanate was often ignored by the people themselves, and until the late 19\textsuperscript{th} century they fiercely maintained their autonomy. Interestingly, in some areas around Kerinci Seblat National Park local people still use documents from the Jambi Sultanate to support their claims of ownership or control over land that is now within the borders of KSNP (Neidel, 2006)\textsuperscript{27}.

By the early 1800s Kerinci was known as "the Secret Valley" by the Dutch (Watson 1984). The Dutch had long been interested in the area because of rumors about gold in the valley, and the first treaty between the VOC and people of Kerinci was in 1660 (ibid). The British, who had a colony centered on Bencoolin (Bengkulu) on the southwest coast of Sumatra, were also interested in the island's interior\textsuperscript{28}. By the 18\textsuperscript{th} century they were trading salt, textiles, ironware, and luxury goods for cinnamon, gums and resins, and other forest products (ibid). However, most trading activities with both the British and the Dutch took place on the coast, and so the interior of the island remained a mystery. Indeed, Kerinci valley itself was among the last areas in the entire archipelago to come under Dutch domination. In 1903, after a long struggle the Dutch finally managed to assert control over the entire valley.

\textsuperscript{27} For example, the territorial claims of the Serampas people, who will be discussed in chapters 5 and 7, are based on a royal edict (*piagam*) from the Sultan of Jambi, which according to the Serampas provided pre-colonial recognition of village boundaries (Neidel 2006).

\textsuperscript{28} The British ceded control of Bencoolin to the Dutch through the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824. This is the same treaty in which the Dutch ceded control of Malacca to the British.
In 1921 the Dutch opened up a road from Tapan on the western coastal plain of the island to Sungai Penuh complete with telegraph lines, which for the first time opened up the valley to easy access to and from the outside. From this point onward, commodities, including the rice surpluses which made the valley largely self-sufficient, could be marketed to the outside (Kathirithamby-Wells, 1986). This led to a major increase in cash crop cultivation and significant deforestation of the hills surrounding the valley, which led to an increase in erosion (Watson 1984). In 1926 the Dutch designated part of the Kerinci area for development of tea plantations. In 1935 coffee was introduced into the area, continuing a process of integration into the commodity-production system that was already established in various stages in other colonies throughout Southeast Asia. Cultivation of coffee increased through the 1970s spurred on by and spurring the construction of new roads into remote areas. Through the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s new areas were colonized for plantations and coffee cultivation, attracting new settlers to the area, including people fleeing the exploitative policies of the Dutch and later the Japanese. Increased coffee prices in the 1950s and 1960s drove further cultivation (WWF & DGFPNC, 1994). Kerinci today remains an area primarily reliant on agricultural activity, including extensive wet-rice farming as well as large areas of agroforests.

2.5 Kerinci Seblat National Park

2.5.1 Establishment of the park

The Dutch colonial authorities began to declare protected status for several forests in the area in 1921. In 1929 the forests of Mount Indrapura in the heart of what
would become the park were declared a nature reserve. It should be noted that this action was enabled by the 1903 conquest of Kerinci and likely accelerated by concerns over erosion stemming from expanded forest clearance, which was an indirect byproduct of the conquest. Details of the various gazettements are provided in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Legal Basis</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Area (ha)</th>
<th>Original Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>GB No. 42</td>
<td>June 3 1921</td>
<td>Kelompok Hutan Indrapura dan Bayang</td>
<td>PESSEL, SOLSEL</td>
<td>205,550</td>
<td>Nature reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>SK Mentan 808</td>
<td>Nov 5 1980</td>
<td>Kelompok Hutan Vick van Inderapura dan Bukit Tapan</td>
<td>Kerinci, Bungo</td>
<td>279,550</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>GB No. 27</td>
<td>December 9 1929</td>
<td>Kelompok Hutan Rawas Ulu Lakitan</td>
<td>Musi Rawas</td>
<td>281,120</td>
<td>Wildlife refuge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>SK Mentan 424/1979</td>
<td>May 21 1981</td>
<td>Kelompok Hutan Batanghari I, Lubuk Nyuir dan Kambang</td>
<td>Merangin Alai</td>
<td>129,580</td>
<td>Protection forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>SK Mentan 339/1980</td>
<td>January 31 1921</td>
<td>Kelompok Hutan Bukit Reges, Hulu Selup, Bukit</td>
<td>PESSEL</td>
<td>24,287</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>SK Mentan 443/1981</td>
<td>February 16 1921</td>
<td>Kelompok Hutan Merangin Alai</td>
<td>Bungo, Merangin</td>
<td>139,420</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The establishment of several protected areas in 1926 meant that local households could no longer open new land in the designated forests, but they were still allowed to extract forest products (Burgers, 2004). Thus Burgers (2004) writes that during these early years of conservation efforts there were few conflicts between local people and conservation managers, due in part to the low population density and existence of adat forests, which helped to regulate outside access to forest land and resources.

Following studies by the Food and Agriculture Organization and Directorate of Nature Conservation in the late 1970s and 1980s the idea of a large park emerged, and in the early 1980s, amidst the explosive growth of protected areas in Indonesia, KSNP was proposed as a consolidation of several separate blocks of reserves and protection forests. At this time conservation was becoming an important issue for the Indonesian government, which was influenced by the World Conservation Strategy, drafted in 1981 by the IUCN, WWF, FAO, and UNEP (Moeliono 2008). In 1982 the Minister of Agriculture announced a decree during the 1982 World Congress on
National Parks in Bali proposing the gazettement of Kerinci Seblat National Park with an area of 1,484,650 hectares, bringing together 17 already gazetted and planned wildlife and nature reserves (Werner 2001). The park was officially declared by the Ministry of Agriculture in 1983, but by 1984 KSNP had already made the IUCN’s commission on National Parks and Protected Areas list of the world’s most threatened parks, even before the park had been officially gazetted. In 1992 a general consensus over the boundary was agreed to by the Ministry of Forestry, the four provincial governments, and holders of logging concessions in areas surrounding the park.

In 1990 the park was officially decreed; shortly thereafter the World Bank and the WWF initiated plans for a massive integrated conservation and development project (ICDP; see full description below) initially intended to be renewed in increments of five years for at least 30 years.29 By 1999, after seven years, the entire 2800 kilometer boundary of the massive park was finally determined, delimited, and marked (Neidel, 2006). In 2004 an additional area (known as Sipurak Hook) that had been removed from the park in the early 1990s was restored, bring the park up to its current dimensions.

2.5.2 The Park’s Functioning

Though this dissertation is not the place for a comprehensive description of the management structure of the park, a brief discussion of how the park is run is relevant to the research. In 2010 the budget of the park was approximately US$2 million

29 The fact that the park was declared “threatened” before it was even gazetted, and the pace at which the international community involved itself in the park should indicate something about the international community’s priorities and conception of the park, and also might lead one to believe that there was negotiation between these entities and the GOI.
The park is currently almost completely funded domestically, though some staff members individually apply for small grants from international donors to fund pet projects such as camera trapping or educational programs. Administratively the park is an "Echelon II" bureau, which is significant in the confusing matrix of relations between various bureaucratic entities in Indonesia. The echelon refers to the institution's rank within the bureaucracy. This promotion to Echelon II occurred in 2007; prior to 2007 the park was only an Echelon III office, and so in the words of park officials they were not "brothers"\textsuperscript{31} with other offices within the districts, including the district police, and so the park's administrators weren't afforded respect by administrators in other government offices. The head office is at Echelon II, which makes the manager of the park the rank equivalent of a district headman in the civil service hierarchy. Five of the operating units within the park are at Echelon III, and six are at Echelon IV.

However, though KSNP, as with other parks in Indonesia, are responsible for day to day operations and enforcement, they don't have much autonomy in terms of long-term planning. This has the effect of making the park's management relatively inflexible and not particularly responsive to the concerns of the communities situated around the park. For example, in one village I visited the village head wanted to pipe irrigation water from a stream located inside the park to provide water to the village, which would have entailed running a four-inch diameter pvc pipe from several hundred feet inside the park. He was told by park officials that he would need to send

\textsuperscript{30} The park's funding fortunes have had significant ups and downs through the years. During the ICDP years (see description below) millions of dollars flowed to the park. After the abrupt departure of the ICDP, funding declined significantly, to a minimum of approximately IDR3.5 billion in 2005 (approximately US$370,000).

\textsuperscript{31} "\textit{Saudara}"
a written proposal to the subsection in charge of management of his area, which would then be forwarded to the park's headquarters. After review the proposal would then be forwarded to the Directorate General of Nature Protection and Conservation in Bogor. If approved by the Director General, there would then be a memorandum of understanding signed between the village and the park to conduct periodic checks to the site. Stories such as this abound in the villages around the park, and district bureaucrats relate similar frustrations: dealing with the park's administrators is seen as an overly cumbersome process by villagers and village leaders as well as district and provincial bureaucrats and elected officials (this topic will be more fully explored in chapters 6 and 7). Moreover, from the perspective of the village, the MoU would have the effect of increasing central government surveillance on the village, which conjures up local remembrances of the sinister Suharto regime. Officials in a few of the districts around the park use this bureaucratic inefficiency as a justification to proceed with small projects in the park (such as upgrading tourism infrastructure) without consulting with the park's management. This further strains relations between the park and the districts, since any kind of project carried out in the park without consent is technically illegal. However, in most cases park officials only discover these circumventions of its authority after the fact since monitoring capacity is stretched so thin (see below), and so in many cases they have no other options but to accept the activity.

Park administrators openly describe the top-down organization of the Ministry of Forestry and the park itself and the constraints this places upon them. Moreover, I even found that some park documents, including the 2002 five year-year management
plan (page 4), lament the lack of autonomy ("this style of management is not compatible with the situation in this autonomy era, when district government has been given authority to manage natural resource"). As noted above, the park is very large, and so it is divided into four regional management units (wilayah), which are in turn each divided into two management sections (seksi). The sections are further divided into a number of resorts, which are basically patrol jurisdictions under a ranger post. Each of the regional units are managed by experienced, high-ranking forestry officials, but they have very little autonomy from the park headquarters. They are not authorized to meet with officials from the nearby districts without the approval of the park's headquarters, even though the regional offices are located in district capitals. In other words, they are not able to coordinate with the districts or initiate any kinds of agreements or plans. Some park managers see this as a major weakness, whereas others don't seem to mind. One regional manager explained to me that he did not know about the political or administrative developments happening in the districts bordering the park in his region because it was not his job to know about these things. In general, many members of the park's administrative staff (as opposed to the rangers) are from Java and have been posted to KSNP and expect to be rotated out at some point, generally to a posting that represents a higher pay-grade. Thus many staffers I interviewed and interacted with viewed themselves as temporary residents only; in some cases they complained about being posted "in the middle of"

32 I specifically asked this park bureaucrat about the possible existence of feasibility projects for road proposals (see Chapter 6 for a fuller discussion of this topic). He told me that he wasn't interested in issues like roads, even if they threatened to cut through the park, until they were actually being built on park land.
nowhere”\footnote{"Di tengah tempat tidak bertuan", literally "in the middle of a place without God".}. This aspect of park management seems to be an institutional legacy of
the New Order in which strong central control, hierarchical organization, and down-
the-line management was the norm.

Another important aspect of the park's functioning that deserves mention here is
its system of zones. In compliance with regulations from the Ministry of Forestry
(based on Act 5/1990), the park has established a system of zones which in theory are
meant to help with management tasks (see figure 2.1). The largest zone is the core
zone (zona inti), covering 53.6\% of the park. The core zone is the highest level of
protection and all human activities are prohibited here. The next zone is the forest
zone (zona rimba), which is meant to serve as an undisturbed buffer for the core zone.
The rehabilitation zone (zona rehabilitasi) covers 9.8\% of the park. These are areas
that were degraded at the time of the establishment of the system of zones in the
1990s and were targeted for afforestation projects. The recreation zone (zona
pemanfaatan) covers 1.2\% of the park. These are areas that have been targeted for
ecotourism development or other non-extractive uses. Most of these are relatively
easy to access and cover areas including waterfalls and hot springs. The special use
zone (zona khusus) covers .9\% of the park's territory and encompasses villages that
were established before the park but fall inside the park's boundaries; importantly the
special use zone does not encompass all of the adat territory of these villages. The
people living in the special use zone are permitted to cultivate land that has already
been cleared, but they are not allowed to expand their fields, including areas that were
under long fallow when the park was established. According to interviews with park
managers, when the park was initially established it was hoped that people living in

\footnote{"Di tengah tempat tidak bertuan", literally "in the middle of a place without God".}
the special use zone would gradually move away from the park. The last zone, the traditional use zone (zona tradisi) also covers .9% of the park. Gathering of non-timber forest products is permitted in this area. However the zones haven't been physically marked in the park, in most places villagers don't know about the distinction in function much less the location of the various zones. Even rangers have only the most general sense of the zones; they exist for the most part only in the park's GIS.
Figure 2.1: KSNP zonation system. Red denote the core zone, yellow the forest zone, green the special use zone, light blue the rehabilitation zone, gray the special use zone, and brown the traditional use zone. Map courtesy of Kerinci Seblat National Park.
2.6 The Park's Neighbors

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the park covers parts of four provinces. Among these provinces the park also covers parts of 15 districts and administrative municipalities, as detailed in the table below:

Table 2.2 Districts and Provinces (capital letters) surrounding KSNP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Size (ha)</th>
<th>Area in park (ha)</th>
<th>% in park</th>
<th>% of park</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JAMBI</td>
<td>5,005,800</td>
<td>436,036</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bungo</td>
<td>716,000</td>
<td>86,364</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerinci</td>
<td>391,500</td>
<td>231,776</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merangin</td>
<td>638,000</td>
<td>148,833</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarolangun</td>
<td>782,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sungai Penuh</td>
<td>39,150</td>
<td>3,076</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BENGKULU</td>
<td>1,991,900</td>
<td>340,575</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bengkulu Utara</td>
<td>442,460</td>
<td>71,028</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebong</td>
<td>151,576</td>
<td>111,035</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muko-Muko</td>
<td>403,670</td>
<td>144,355</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rejang Lebong</td>
<td>151,581</td>
<td>25,780</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH SUMATRA</td>
<td>9,159,243</td>
<td>250,613</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>25.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubuklinggau</td>
<td>40,150</td>
<td>6,616.0</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musi Rawas</td>
<td>1,236,583</td>
<td>243,997</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEST SUMATRA</td>
<td>4,201,289</td>
<td>347,125</td>
<td>8.26</td>
<td>25.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dharmas Raya</td>
<td>296,113</td>
<td>5,993</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pesisir Selatan</td>
<td>572,789</td>
<td>263,230</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solok</td>
<td>373,800</td>
<td>8901</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solok Selatan</td>
<td>322,280</td>
<td>70,000</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.7 Foreign Involvement

2.7.1 The ICDP Project

As noted above, the establishment of the park was in response to a convergence of environmental concerns originating at the international level and practical political-

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34 An interesting point, but not surprising to researchers accustomed to working in Indonesia, is that different government entities have different figures for the amount of land in the park. This is an indication of a problem that will be described later: namely, it is often the case that different scales and in some cases different bureaus within the same scale of government use different spatial databases.
administrative exigencies at the national scale. Because of this KSNP's early history featured a significant amount of involvement from international NGOs and multilateral institutions. But these national and international priorities have always encountered resistance from local scale actors. In 1996 the World Bank in partnership with WWF and the Government of Indonesia initiated an integrated conservation and development project (ICDP) at KSNP. ICDPs originated in the 1980s and represented a new strategy for conservation emphasizing linkages between protected area management and local economic activities. The idea took off and by the early 1990s international donors were funding numerous projects around the world in conjunction with national governments and international and local NGOs (Marcus, 2001). This project was also part of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and in fact at the time, the project was the largest GEF project ever initiated. Global Environmental Facility (GEF) projects, according to Ghimire and Pimbert (1997) approach conservation from the standpoint that protected areas are isolated areas, cut off from outside influences. They argue that a fundamental assumption is that “decisions on which land or water areas of a country should be incorporated in national parks are made by the state environmental agencies or/and expatriate conservation professionals, who independently design and execute park management plans” (1997:7).

The project had four components, including park management, village development, integration of biodiversity in forest concession management, and monitoring and evaluation. Anti-illegal logging activities focused on the district level and looked to the district headmen to coordinate enforcement and monitoring. This
portion of the project was funded though block grants to the districts. This is an important point, because according to ICDP documents, this engagement with district governments was meant as an effort to incorporate local people and priorities into the program. However, at the time of the ICDP's inception, district governments were still part of the centralized hierarchy, and were thus agents of the central government.

By 2001 results were less than anticipated, and the project was terminated. The World Bank’s 2003 completion report summarizes the projects achievements:

Outcome: Unsatisfactory…
Sustainability: Unlikely…. 
Institutional Development Impact: Modest…. 
Bank Performance: Unsatisfactory…. 
Borrower Performance: Unsatisfactory…. 

The Bank’s post-project analysis echoes problems that have traditionally plagued the Indonesian bureaucracy, including a lack of coordination among the various agencies at the national and local level. Without coordination the integrated nature of the program suffered and each of the agencies developed their own sub-projects.

2.7.2 Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra World Heritage Site

In 2004 KSNP became part of the newly-created Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra (TRHS) World Heritage Site along with Bukit Barisan Selatan and Gunung Leuser national parks at the 28th session of the World Heritage committee in 2004.
At this time the Committee wanted to bring the TRHS site in as an endangered area, but the Government of Indonesia protested (Hitchcock and Meyers 2006). A 2006 assessment of the site observed illegal logging, encroachment, and road building as threats (ibid).

This large protected area also has been closely monitored by outsiders including the WWF, Conservation International (CI), and Flora and Fauna International (FFI). The organizations bring with them the assertion that KSNP is an important natural resource for the planet as a whole, and the two-pronged assumption that 1) it is the duty of the government of Indonesia to protect the park and 2) these organizations have the expertise to guide the process. There are institutional expectations stemming from various compacts, agreements, and multilateral organizations as well. For example, the Rio declaration “stresses that authority should be vested at a level of decision making suitable to the scale of the environmental issue” (UNDP 2002). The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species expects nations to take action to prevent trade in endangered animals. For the most part, these actors and processes operate through the central government, and the expectations that come with them fall upon the central government. This is consistent with the terms of the decentralization laws, as conservation remains the responsibility of the central government. However, decentralization has also limited the power of the central government, operating through the MoF and KSNP, to fulfill the obligations it has taken on. Instead the central government is now being challenged by subnational nodes of stateness, a product of the divided sovereignty that has been engendered by those same decentralization reforms.
The common perception amongst the international actors as well as the MoF is that local people constitute the greatest threat to the integrity and mission of the park, and indeed as noted above the park has always encountered resistance on the part of local people (to be discussed more fully in chapters 6 and 7). However, the fundamental change that has come about as a result of the decentralization and democratization reforms is that this local resistance has been fortified (and in many cases appropriated) by district and in some cases provincial actors, who previously had been extensions of the central government. This difference is manifested in the pressures facing the park, which are discussed in the next section.

2.8 Conservation Issues Facing Kerinci Seblat National Park

2.8.1 Deforestation

I use the term "deforestation" here to broadly refer to any kind of degradation in the park resulting in the clearance of a significant proportion of trees from a given area. There are a number of different drivers of deforestation at KSNP, including mining, logging, and encroachment. Over the course of my fieldwork it has been very difficult to find consistent and reliable numbers for deforestation at the park because the definition as well as the methods to determine rates of deforestation are so variable. However, according to a World Bank report produced by the ICDP (2001), forest cover declined from 1,268,328 hectares in 1995 to 1,249,129 hectares in 2001 as determined by Landsat comparison. Thus the six-year loss was approximately 19,000 hectares, or .28% per year, which was lower than deforestation rates experienced at other Sumatran parks, including Gunung Leuser National Park.
and Bukit Barisan Selatan National Park, but still high enough to be of concern to
conservationists. Between 2004-2008 forest destruction was calculated to be .21%
per year for a total of 10,435 hectares. Then according to park figures in 2010 alone
there were 12,399 hectares degraded. In 2012 the park director admitted to reporters
that approximately 42,000 hectares had been degraded, but this number is not
consistent with other figures gleaned from interviews, media reports, and official park
documents. The highest figure I have seen for forest degradation is 40%, but more
"conservative" estimates of 20% are common.

For the purposes of this dissertation more useful than absolute figures is an idea of
where degradation is greatest. Based on written and oral reports I have compiled the
following table with relatively recent, published estimates of forest degradation in
each district. Note that only one area (Sungai Penuh) has experienced deforestation
of greater than 20%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Area in the Park (HA)</th>
<th>Degradation (HA)</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bengkulu Utara</td>
<td>44,000</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bungo</td>
<td>86,364</td>
<td>500-1,500</td>
<td>.5-1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dharmasraya</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerinci</td>
<td>220,000</td>
<td>25,000-50,000</td>
<td>8.8%-17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebong</td>
<td>111,035</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubuklinggau</td>
<td>6,616</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merangin</td>
<td>148,833</td>
<td>4,000-10,000</td>
<td>2.6-7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mukomuko</td>
<td>144,355</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musi Rawas</td>
<td>243,997</td>
<td>10,000-17,500</td>
<td>4-8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pesisir Selatan</td>
<td>260,967</td>
<td>10,000-30,000</td>
<td>4-12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rejang Lebong</td>
<td>25,780</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarolangun</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solok</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solok Selatan</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>4,000-6,000</td>
<td>5.3-8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to the park the main reasons for deforestation include 1) limited availability of land outside KSNP, 2) Low levels of economic development; 3) lack of patrolling by district government, 4) low level of awareness as to the benefits of KSNP. These drivers will be further examined in chapters 6 and 7, but it is important to note here that park documents tend not to examine the forces behind these reasons.

### 2.8.2 People in and Around the Park

It is estimated that 1.7 million people live in and around the park, but the population is unevenly distributed. Approximately 280,000 live in Kerinci Valley, a densely populated enclave which is part of the central rift valley of the Bukit Barisan range. There are approximately 460 villages in and around the park, with approximately 70% of the residents working as farmers. Close to 80% of the park's border is adjacent to settlements and cultivation. Werner (2001:87) notes that 134 of these had agriculture lands opened up in the park. She also observes that encroachment takes on several forms: 1) local people living outside the park cultivate cash and subsistence crops within the park; 2) local people living within agricultural enclaves in the park, and 3) sharecroppers living outside the park. This informal classification is consistent with what I found in the field. The table below, based on information from the park headquarters, indicates the relative proportions of village land inside the park.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sungai Penuh</th>
<th>6,000</th>
<th>2,000</th>
<th>33%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1,444,947</td>
<td>62,900-125,400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

35 14 villages are inside the park. The number of villages bordering on the park has increased due to administrative proliferation over the years.
Murniati et al. (2001) argue that traditionally there have been linkages between the land in the park and the people around the park, with communities extracting timber, fuel wood, medicines, and animals. However, these linkages were not as destructive when population density was low. Increasing population pressure, according to Murniati, has put greater pressure on the park. Political ecology generally eschews “population pressure” explanations for resource conflict because these types of explanations downplay the factors that lead to increased pressures and marginalization (Bailey and Bryant 1998, Blaikie and Brookfield 1987, Robbins 2004). Thus a more detailed examination is called for, which will be the subject of chapters 6 and 7.

Most of those living around the park are poor people, relatively speaking. The International Monetary Fund ranked Indonesia 125th in the world in terms of purchasing-power parity adjusted gross domestic product in 2013. Within Indonesia Sumatra lags significantly behind Java economically. Moeliono (2008) writes that “people living in and around forest areas, some 65 million, are amongst the poorest in the country.” Poorer people generally are more dependent on locally-available resources than more affluent people, and the coming of KSNP has brought change to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of village land in the park</th>
<th>Percentage of villages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greater than 70%</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50%-70%</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35%-50%</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15%-35%</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 15%</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
local resource use regimes (Werner 2001, Neidel 2006). Thus local people are intuitively the most affected by the opportunity costs inherent in the establishment of the park, while the benefits of the park (carbon sink, biodiversity, existence values, etc) accrue globally. There is in other words a differential between who pays for and who receives the benefits of conservation. However, as mentioned above, decentralization and democratization have meant that the concerns of local people have taken on a new significance.

2.8.3 Illegal Logging

Though this is not the greatest threat facing the park, it is perhaps the most widely known issue to those outside of Sumatra. The causes for this are structural. In general, Hitchcock and Meyers (2006) argue that too much unsustainable exploitation of forests has made timber exploitation increasingly dependent on illegal exploitation of protected areas. However, this should be understood in the context of the historical and contemporary political-economic forces that have led to a dependence on primary sector activity on Sumatra. Like other extractive activities described below, illegal logging can be divided into two categories: subsistence and for profit. These two categories have different characteristics. Normally local people take wood to build houses or for firewood. Although they sometimes cut down trees for this purpose, they often take logs and wood that have already fallen down. While this is technically illegal, rangers and park officials have tolerance for this level of harvesting in part because they sympathize with the villagers but also because it is hard to stop. Moreover, they realize that if they were extremely strict regarding these
rules it would damage the relationship between the park and the villagers and would make their jobs more difficult.

Larger scale logging is coordinated by financiers (*cukong* or *tauke*) who buy chainsaws and market harvested lumber. The work is generally done by local labor, though it is commonplace for villagers in areas that experience a high-level of illegal logging to blame it on outsiders. The financiers, on the other hand, almost universally come from elsewhere. Wages for laborers depend on the type of labor and wood involved; on average chainsaw operators earn approximately IDR300,000 per day (US$33.33), whereas porters earn IDR100,000 per day (US$11.11), though sometimes porters are paid by the trip or per cubic meter hauled\(^\text{36}\). Regardless of how they are paid, these wages are significantly higher than virtually all other opportunities available in most of the villages around the park, but this is an opportunity available to only a few people with connections to the financiers, who often work through village heads. Overall though local people generally function as the "point of the spear" (*ujung tombak*); they get paid the least but do the most work. Much of this type of logging is demand-driven; small to medium sized sawmills, when operational, require significantly higher numbers of logs to meet their capacity than are available via legal means. Thus illegal logging at the park is also tied to overcapacity in terms of sawmills. For example Djogo and Syaf (2004) point out that the proliferation of illegal sawmills in Jambi meant that demand for timber was three times greater than legal supply. When sawmills close down, there is a corresponding decrease in illegal logging. The problem for the park's managers is that legal

\(^{36}\) According to my field research the average is about IDR200,000 per cubic meter, but this depends on distance.
sawmills exist outside the park and so they are beyond the park's enforcement jurisdiction. Thus the park's managers must rely on help from the surrounding districts to handle the sawmill problem. In most cases though there isn't much incentive for the district governments to close sawmills; in several districts the sawmills are owned by members of the regional assembly or others with close ties to political elites. Another problem related to sawmills is that all harvested logs are required to have documents proving their legal origin (surat keterangan asal usul, SKAU). These documents are normally issued by the district forestry authority (DINAS Kehutanan). A common problem is that corrupt officials within these offices sell SKAU documents under the table, thus allowing harvesters of wood from within the park to "launder" their logs. Thus district authorities are able to make the case that logs processed by local sawmills are legally obtained.

Logging is not as rampant now as it was during the three to four years following the fall of Suharto, when one NGO informant told me you could see piles of wood along the main road in Solok Selatan waiting to be transported. This is representative of a well-documented spike in illegal logging that occurred following the end of the New Order; most observers attribute the increase to a breakdown in law and order resulting from the fall of Suharto (Barr et al 2006, Gaveau et al 2009, Gellert 2010, Obidzinski 2004). During this time illegal logging was for the most part a coordinated activity usually facilitated by politically influential financiers and sawmill owners. At KSNP the existence of sawmills outside the park drove demand for wood, which was sourced from within the park. For example, park officials indicated that Sarolangun district, which has almost none of its territory covered by
the park, was a major destination for illegally logged timber because there were so many sawmills there. Solok Selatan, Pesisir Selatan, and Bengkulu Utara are all sites where illegal logging was perceived to be a problem during this period. The proliferation in both legal and illegal sawmills in the districts around the park is shown in table 2.5 (below). The post-Suharto spike in illegal logging started to decline after the election of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono as President of Indonesia. Yudhoyono took a harder line on illegal logging, issuing a directive to the national police, attorney general, army, state intelligence agency, and other government entities in 2005 to make combating illegal logging a priority.\(^{37}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sarko(^{38})</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>No data</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bungo Tebo</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PESSEL</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solok/SOLSEL</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWL/SJJ</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rejang Lebong</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BengUt</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musi Rawas</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
<td><strong>56</strong></td>
<td><strong>79</strong></td>
<td><strong>82</strong></td>
<td><strong>111</strong></td>
<td><strong>131</strong></td>
<td><strong>219</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BOX 2.1: Illegal Logging Case Study**

The following account is translated from an interview with a local informant.

\(^{37}\) It should be noted here that most media accounts of SBY’s 2005 directive paint it as a failure resulting in very few convictions; the information about KSNP is derived from interviews not only with park officials but also local conservation NGOs.

\(^{38}\) “Sarko” is short for “Sarolangun-Bangko”, the name of one of the kapubatens neighboring the park before it was split into Merangin and Sarolangun kapubatens in 2003.
The people that do the cutting are from Sukaraja village. They take the wood from inside Kerinci Seblat National Park around Bukit Tujuh all the way to Sungai Manggus. It takes about 5 hours to walk there from Lubuk Kumbung village. The wood is then floated down the Rupit river (Sungai Rupit) towards Sukaraja village and then loaded onto a Colt Diesel and taken to the final destination very early in the morning. The destination is a sawmill called Rimba Ria Persada, owned by someone named Bambang or Joko who lives on Simpang Lake. Some of the wood is also taken to Rejang Lebong. The people that transport the wood are able to get SKAUs from the district government.

The whole process begins with a cukong (financier, mastermind, coordinator) that gives money to a penampung ("floater") at the village level. This person channels the money to the chainsaw operator and the person that makes the wood rafts to float down the river. The village "floater" has 5-15 "orang anak kapak" ("ax children", subordinates or "clients") and sometimes the floater operates the chainsaw himself. The floater gives loans to the people below him for operational expenses and also for shopping for their families. Then the wood is floated out of the area with the river and is valued according to type and condition; later the anak kapak will receive their portion of the money.

The amount required to make a truck load is about five cubic meters, and when they get this much accumulated they contact the person in the town at the lumber depot to come get the wood. Sometimes a truck is provided by the village floater, but if he doesn't have a truck the town contact will haul the wood for a fee of IDR100,000 per cubic meter. The wood is transported with a SKAU.
It is known that this all involves people that are influential at the village level and also people that have close relationships with business elites and the police.

2.8.4 Encroachment

By all accounts encroachment is currently the greatest problem facing the park. However, for the same reasons alluded to above it is difficult to ascertain how much of the park has been degraded. Hitchcock and Meyers (2006) point out that encroachment is one of the most serious and sensitive problems facing the park when they did the assessment for the World Heritage site. They argue that a lack of coherent policy coupled with financial constraints have conspired to undermine efforts to address encroachment. Encroachment is perpetrated by a broad spectrum of actors ranging from isolated households to large scale commercial plantations (Hitchcock and Meyers 2006:8). Werner (2001) identifies three sources of encroachment: 1) local people living outside the park cultivating cash and subsistence crops; 2) local people living within agricultural enclaves inside the park; and 3) sharecroppers who live outside the park. The park acknowledges that encroachment is the most difficult challenge and park documents indicate a number of reasons contributing to encroachment, including the fact that the borders of the park are long and that in many places they are unclear. Based on a review of official park documents causes of encroachment include the following:

--Population pressure

--Lack of understanding on the part of local communities as to the conservation importance of the park
--Unclear borders
--Overreliance of local people on natural resources within the park
--Limited availability of land outside the park
--Low economic development
--Lack of patrolling by district governments
--People prefer the land in the park because it is more fertile and the climate is mild

Thus there are many perceived factors driving the problem of encroachment, but it is clear that encroachment has increased tremendously in the Reformasi era. This is no coincidence, and the issue of encroachment will be discussed in chapters 6 and 7.

Agroforests

In her dissertation Werner (2001) describe the cultivation of Cassiavera, which is the local name for Cinnamomon burmannii, a species of cinnamon in and around Kerinci. Kerinci Valley is a hotspot of Cassiavera cultivation, accounting for about 40% of national production. This crop represents a significant source of income and attracts not only contract laborers but also those with money to invest, including government officials, army officers, and the successful elite of Kerinci Valley. Another agroforestry crop popular in the central Sumatra area is rubber. Villagers cultivate Hevea brasiliensis as "jungle rubber" (hutan karet) in mixed-species agroforestry systems (Penot 2004). Much of the land in the park but on its edges consists of cinnamon and rubber agroforests that predate the park. Although continued harvesting in most of these areas is technically illegal, most rangers
interviewed say that harvesting is allowed on a case-by-case basis with the understanding that further expansion into the park is not allowed. The general pattern in most places is what Suyanto and Otsuka (2001:4) refer to as "multi-strata agroforestry" where paddy fields are located in the valleys and flat areas and agroforestry fields with both mature trees and newly planted trees are intercropped with annuals and bush-fallow fields under shifting cultivation are developed in the surrounding fields and mountains. Werner (2001) also notes these patterns of intercropping and rotation. During my fieldwork I also noted that many farmers tend to live temporarily in shacks constructed in their upland fields.

More worrying for park managers are new stands of rubber, cinnamon, and now oil palms that have been planted by smallholders in the park. Werner (2001) argues that smallholders are forced into the park because of estate development for plantation crops such as tea, rubber, and oil palm. According to this log commercial plantation companies displace local communities which then move into the park39. Although plantation companies need labor, and although part of the rationale for districts to reach agreements with plantation companies rests on job creation, local people are in many cases not willing to work for the low wages offered by the plantation companies. Instead migrants enter the area from elsewhere to do the work. This topic will be further discussed in chapters 6 and 7.

39 My own research confirms this dynamic, but it should be pointed out that in many cases local people sell their land to plantation operations.
2.8.5 Poaching/Theft of Non-Timber Forest Products

Poaching has always been a major concern at KSNP, with charismatic megafauna such as the tiger and rhinoceros receiving the most attention from international conservation organizations. Traditionally tigers have been poached for a number of reasons. Their bones and vital organs are highly valued in some medical traditions. Additionally, tiger skins have in the past been a preferred gift for clients aspiring to climb the bureaucratic or military ladder.

In recent years the poaching of smaller mammals and birds have received more attention. According to informants in and around the park, poaching of birds is thought to be a significant problem, but there are no statistics or studies to support this claim. The keeping of birds is a popular hobby throughout Indonesia. Birds are highly sought for their songs, sometimes fetching thousands of dollars for a single animal. Songbird competitions are a common occurrence and there is a significant amount of social prestige attached to good songbirds. This hobby is thought to drive poaching of birds in the park. Conservationists and park officials claim that many of the birds sold in areas around the park are illegally taken from the park, but since birds are small it is difficult to catch the poachers. Hitchcock and Meyers (2006) suggested that as many as 100,000 birds were poached annually from the park. Forest rangers and residents of villages bordering on the park also say that birds are noticeably rarer compared with five years ago. During my fieldwork some informants that accompanied me on forest walks through the park were simultaneously hunting birds. These casual hunters had the birds' songs recorded on [40]

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40 On almost every instance when I entered the forest with guards or NGO representatives, these people remarked on the conspicuous absence of birds at the periphery of the park.
their cell phones, which they would use in an effort to attract the birds. Other tactics include the use of glue and lures.

Probably the most commonly poached mammals at KSNP are kijang (Muntiacus sp.; muntjac) and rusa sambar (Cervus unicolor; deer) and forest pigs. The former two species are hunted for their meat, whereas pigs are seen to be a crop pest. Other widely poached animals include landak (porcupine), trenggiling (pangolin) and pemalu (slow loris). Porcupines are sought for their quills and the bezoar stones that sometimes form in their stomachs. Pangolins are taken because their scales are thought to have medicinal properties. Slow lorises are sought because they are thought to be very good pets.

Kerinci Seblat National Park also contains a wide variety of non-timber forest products that are valuable. Normally forest rangers turn a blind eye to harvesting that is truly done for the day-to-day consumption of local people, but there also exist networks of harvesters that gather products like rattan and manau (Calamus manan) on a for-profit basis. These coordinated networks involve financiers and complicit officials, including forest rangers. According to several informants, theft of forest products seems to increase during economic downturns; this was true even before the existence of the park. Werner (2001) writes that this trend was particularly noticeable during the Asia Economic Crisis which began in 1997. This would seem to suggest that forests serve as a kind of emergency reserve for people for use during tough times; thus the forested area probably adds to the resilience of the community because it enables people to eke out a living in lean times.

41 The dominant religion around the park is Islam, so the pigs are generally not eaten.
2.8.6 Human-Wildlife Conflicts

Bearing in mind the fact that approximately 80% of the park's border abuts settled areas (fields/villages), it should come as no surprise that there are frequent conflicts between humans and wildlife. The most well-publicized are instances when a tiger enters a village. Normally tigers prey on goats or cows, but from time to time a person is mauled or killed by a tiger as well. Indeed during my fieldwork villagers were often eager to show me gruesome pictures of victims caught on their cell phone cameras. Conservationists argue that these conflicts occur because encroachment and development are cutting into the tigers' habitat. Elephants are a more frequent cause of conflict; the big pachyderms often raid crops. They appear to particularly enjoy eating the fruit of oil palms, and so in places where land has been converted to oil palm holdings elephant conflicts are a frequent occurrence.

2.8.7 Mining

Mining is also an issue within the park, both on the part of individuals and corporations. Individuals carry out illegal mining using artisanal techniques (panning for gold, using a pickaxe or similar implement to dislodge coal) in several districts including Lebong, which is known for its gold deposits. In several places mining concessionaires have moved beyond their borders to encroach into the park. According to park officials, when this happens the mining companies claim that they have been granted permission to mine within the park, or that the coordinates provided by rangers are incorrect. With the advent of handheld GPS units it is easier

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42 The gold leaf that adorns the top of the National Monument (Monas) was mined in Lebong.
for rangers and conservation activists to document encroachment by corporations, though.

2.8.8 Border Markers

As mentioned previously, the park has a border of more than 2800 kilometers. There are supposed to be markers every 100 meters, meaning that theoretically there are more than 28,000 markers delimiting the park's boundary. Some of these are made from stone, others from concrete or even wood. But it is safe to assume that most of the border markers don't actually exist; periodic surveys of the border universally find that the vast majority of markers are missing. Given the nature of the tropics, the natural environment takes its toll on some of the markers. Others might be lost in foliage. But there are many cases in which the markers have been allegedly destroyed or moved by villagers. Many villagers claim that on the contrary park officials have actually moved the markers to expand the area of the park; another common charge is that when the markers were first being placed, those responsible for the job didn't want to go through the trouble of hacking through the forest to accurately place the markers, so instead they just placed them on the edge of the forest, which according to local accounts also served to unofficially increase the area of the park while cutting them off from their agroforests or long fallow swiddens. Since the onset of decentralization these accusations have been voiced by elected

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43 One survey of 75 kilometers of border in Bengkulu in 2008 found that 703 of 750 markers were missing; 40 were found in good condition and 7 were badly damaged. A more recent survey of border markers in Kerinci district found that on 13 of 100 markers along a 10-km stretch were in good condition, with 10 damaged and 77 lost. Interestingly the notes from this survey indicated that the locations for every single one of the 100 markers, whether found or not, was in cultivated fields (ladang masyarakat)
members of district assemblies in many cases, and so Reformasi has given an official voice to these locally-originating challenges to the park's extent.

2.8.9 Enforcement Difficulties

Enforcement has always been a problem at the park due to chronic understaffing. Currently there are approximately 106 forest rangers assigned to the park, which averages out to one guard for approximately 130 square kilometers of area and 25 kilometers of borders. Park guards are stretched thin, and large areas of the border, especially in hard-to-access places are patrolled infrequently. Moreover, a common complaint is that too many of the park's 183 total staff are based at the park's headquarters in Sungai Penuh. Many park documents acknowledge the chronic understaffing and underfunding the park has experienced since the end of the ICDP project. For example, one document explicitly states that "limitations in funding, human resources, and infrastructure at KSNP in protecting and preserving the integrity of the area are very unsatisfactory in terms of creating ideal conditions" (Nugraha 2006: 3). Another related problem is a lack of personnel with expertise in areas such as conflict resolution, community relations, and public outreach. Park staff also complain that the park manager is replaced every 2-3 years, which hinders continuity in management and is detrimental to institutional memory.

44 KSNP has the lowest ranger density of any operational park in Indonesia with the exception of Betung Kerihun National Park in West Kalimantan, which has 24 rangers responsible for 800,000 hectares. Bruner et al (2001:126) show that density of park guards is strongly correlated with park effectiveness; according to their statistical analysis the median density of guards in the most effective parks was 3 per 100 square kilometers. Moreover, the number of forest guards officially assigned to KSNP is somewhat misleading, as approximately 30 of the most experienced and capable guards have been seconded to the Ministry of Forestry's Rapid Reaction Force (SPORC), which is based in Jambi City, hundreds of kilometers from the park. A common complaint at KSNP is that SPORC never patrols in the park.
Related to this is the fact that the park must often rely on outside help when conducting enforcement operations. This means that the park's manager must formally request assistance from other agencies (e.g. the district police or the district army barracks) in writing. Bureaucratic rivalries as well as a general decline in intra-government coordination that has resulted from decentralization mean that this assistance doesn't come as readily as it did during the Suharto years. In addition, if the other agencies do provide assistance, KSNP must pay them a per diem fee, which comes out of the park's budget\(^\text{45}\).

These institutional weaknesses are compounded by outside forces as well. Park managers complain that district and provincial prosecutors are reluctant to try cases, and Indonesia's rules concerning evidence (two eyewitnesses are needed for conviction) complicate the judicial process. Moreover, if and when cases finally do make it to trial, district judges sentence offenders to what might be described as a slap on the wrist. All of these factors taken together mean that the laws governing the park are not effectively enforced, and so it is highly questionable whether there is any deterrent effect whatsoever. For example the following arrest data comes from the park's 2010 annual report. These figures represent arrests and confiscations for the entire park for the period of one year: 3 chainsaws and 1 large saw seized...mobilization against 794.5 hectares of illegal cultivation and settlement with 1 suspect prosecuted...five cases of illegal logging...one case of hunting and trading endangered species...eight cases of encroachment...one case of transporting wood

\(^{45}\) For the first nine months I was in the field the park conducted very few coordinated patrols and in general there weren't many outreach activities. This was the result of an embezzlement case two years prior to my arrival in which the park's treasury officer, whose name was Erwin Rommel, had absconded with 60% of the park's budget. Though he was captured and put on trial, the money was not recovered, and so the park was forced to economize for two and a half years.
without proper documents, one case of theft of non-timber forest products. This is for the entire year, for the entire park, and speaks to the difficulties the park faces in enforcing the law.

Therefore it is very clear that management strategies that rely on strict enforcement alone are doomed to failure. Officials at the park concede this point, but they also complain that the personnel assigned to the park don't have the appropriate skills needed at the park, noting a general lack of conservation professionals with training in ecology, GIS, education and outreach, and conflict resolution.

2.9 Conclusion

This short history of conservation in Indonesia and the establishment of KSNP illustrates how the park is rooted in international conservation priorities. During the New Order, the top-down structure of the MoF and the park was consistent with other aspects of the regime and thus fit in with the overall strategy of centralized control and administration of natural resources. However, as noted in chapter 1, decentralization reforms have completely altered the relationship between the various scales of government and have liberated the villages, districts, and provinces from the direct supervision of the national government, effectively establishing them as independent nodes of stateness. Though the park's management structure may have been somewhat effective during the authoritarian era, a wide variety of challenges have emerged now that decentralization has taken hold of the country. Patlis's observation (2004:1) is instructive here:
The key to increasing the benefits of decentralization and improving the legal framework is to enact laws that confront, rather than ignore, the practical realities of society. Specifically, past legislation ignored the realities of corruption and non-compliance and were written as if they would be fully implemented and enforced... New legislation must address such realities. For example, if in the past there has been widespread noncompliance with regulatory measures, it is unrealistic to expect that new regulations may enjoy better compliance.

In this new era the park's management strategies are mismatched with the political-administrative realities; moreover the way the park is administered by the MoF serves to obstruct decentralization. This is not due simply to poor planning and implementation; I have argued that it is part of the MoF's efforts to "protect its turf." However, this has and will continue to lead to conflicts with the provinces, districts, and villages. This chapter has provided an overview of the current situation around the park and has discussed the Ministry of Forestry's response to decentralization. In the next chapter I will turn to regional politics in order to identify the factors driving the pressures described in this chapter.
3.1 Introduction

Decentralization has to this point been a disastrous process leading to the destruction of large production forests, conservation forests, and nearly all of the national parks in Jambi (Djogo and Syaf 2004: 14).

Ecologists use the term "edge effect" to refer to the ways in which abrupt transitions between habitats impact the biological and ecological processes occurring within the habitats. These effects are often most pronounced on population or community structures, since edge areas (for example, between a meadow and a forest) provide advantages for some organisms and disadvantages for others (Lahti 2001). Edges also provide invasive species a point of entry for colonizing new habitats, and many species exhibit avoidance behaviors with respect to edges. The geometry of agricultural encroachment, roads, fires, and other forms of modification and conversion greatly increase edge effects, so these activities are of concern to conservationists and protected area managers (Cochrane and Laurance 2002). A major contention of this dissertation is that protected areas are not only susceptible to physical changes on the periphery, but also to changes in governance as well. The changes to the political landscape that have come about as a result of democratization and decentralization are key factors in what I call "the political edge effect" at Kerinci Seblat National Park and are the subject of this chapter.
As I pointed out in the introductory chapter, decentralization has introduced a new configuration of government, with new rules and new stakeholders constituting new nodes of stateness. This chapter turns the lens on the process of decentralization as it has been implemented and contested in the four provinces and fifteen districts and administrative municipalities that surround Kerinci Seblat National Park in an effort to identify the general ways in which these new actors are operating. I will focus on formal and informal aspects of this new political configuration with the ultimate goal of identifying general patterns and how these patterns affect the park, both directly and indirectly. In the following two chapters (4 and 5) I will further develop the themes laid out in this chapter by examining specific projects and policies and how they reflect the processes described here and in turn the impacts they have on KSNP.

Part and parcel of apprehending local politics in Indonesia is understanding informal networks and relations between those actors that hold political power and business elites (Hidayat 2007). The districts have become the arena for all sorts of political contestation and much of this is tied to control over resources. Firman (2009:143) notes that district governments have become "kingdom[s] of authority" for local elites able to gain control of districts through the electoral process. Reformasi has increased contestation and the unprecedented powers devolved by the decentralization reforms means that the stakes are quite high in district elections. As McCarthy (2007: 152) explains, "in addition to the district government agencies and the police, business interests, preman\(^{46}\), indigenous entrepreneurs and remote villagers vied with or accommodated each other in attempting to maximize their

\(^{46}\) "Preman" is derived from the Dutch word for "free man" and is generally used to refer to thugs and gangsters, who have been integral to strong arm tactics used by various powerful actors over the past half century.
benefits." This applies to the districts around KSNP, but the existence of the park frustrates efforts to formally benefit from the control of natural resources that might be successful elsewhere in Indonesia (through the awarding of exploitation permits, for example) since the central government maintains administrative authority over national parks. Despite this fact, in general, decentralization has opened up tremendous opportunities for district elites around the park, but given the special status of the protected area, informal networks and processes as well as indirect strategies using formal powers to access and benefit from natural resources are often more evident (though the latter are also used to indirectly affect the park as well; this will be discussed in chapter 5). In an effort to sort through all of this complexity, this chapter seeks to address the following issues and questions:

1. How are decentralization and democratization reforms taking shape in the regions around the park? In this chapter I aim to present a clear and detailed picture of Refomasi era politics in order to ascertain connections between the structure and processes of decentralization and the increased challenges facing the park. This addresses the overall theme of statemaking and reverse statemaking by describing how new nodes of "stateness" are developing at the district level.

2. In what ways have decentralization reforms increased district-level pressures on natural resources? I will discuss how the structure of decentralization laws place great weight on the role of natural resources in
3. In what ways do the approaches of the Ministry of Forestry and KSNP to managing natural resources conflict with the structure and form of decentralization in the districts? I will show how the MoF and KSNP have obstructed the implementation of decentralization in the districts and provinces around the park. At the same time, decentralization has created no incentives for village, district, or provincial governments to support the park.

4. Are these processes contributing to the institutionalization of a dichotomy between development and conservation at the district level in Indonesia? I will describe the tensions that have emerged between the park and its neighboring regions. These tensions lead to greater informal and indirect pressures on the park.

3.2 Decentralization and District Politics: Imperatives and Structures

3.2.1 Changes in How Regional Governments are Funded

One of the most important factors in political contestation at the district level has been changes in the way district governments are funded. In addition to changing the balance of powers between the central government and the districts, the decentralization laws (most important in this respect was Act 25/1999) altered the terms of financing the increased responsibilities that have been decentralized to the districts. I will also show how the form decentralization is taking in central Sumatra is exacerbating these pressures to exploit the environment.
fiscal balance between the districts and provinces and the central government as well as their respective responsibilities in terms of funding public service provision. It is difficult to overstate the importance of these changes; Booth (2003:181) predicted that "in the space of a few years, the Indonesian fiscal system will change from being one of the most centralized to one of the most decentralized in the world, and there can be little doubt that this is one of the most ambitious decentralization programs undertaken by any country in recent times."

*District Finances Before and After Decentralization*

Prior to 2001, Jakarta exerted very strict control over essentially all official financial aspects of government (Firman 2009). This dominance over fiscal affairs was a product of the New Order's centralization project (Booth 2003). Most taxes and other revenues from fees were funneled to the central government, which then distributed these to the districts in the form of grants, establishing a system of dependency whereby the district government, in exchange for implementing the programs of the central government, would receive a steady and reliable source of revenue. The two most important sources of funding for districts were Inpres (Instruksi President, Presidential Instruction) grants and SDO funds (Subsidi Daerah Otonom, Autonomous Region Subsidies). Inpres funds were generally associated with development projects originating from Jakarta and formulated according to the central government's priorities (Booth 2011). For example, the Primary School Inpres (Inpres Sekolah Dasar) program of the 1970s provided funds and directions to

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47 It should also be remembered that district officials were appointed by the Ministry of Home Affairs in most cases as a reward for loyalty to the regime, and so the district government was oriented more towards Jakarta than its constituents.
build a three room primary school in every village unit in the country (Booth 2003).

Examination of the Inpres program reveals not only how projects were funded during the New Order years, but also how they were standardized, conforming to cookie-cutter blueprints formulated by the central ministries in Jakarta with little or no input from lower levels of government, and little or no consideration for the variations within the country. SDO funds, on the other hand, were used to pay civil servant salaries and other day-to-day expenses associated with government (Seymour and Turner 2002). Like Inpres funds, the districts had little official discretion over how these funds would be spent (Barr et al 2006; Ryaas 2003).

Decentralization laws abolished both the Inpres grants and SDO funds and replaced them with a different system of funding, which includes a mix of grants from the central government and a new revenue sharing formula between the central government and the regions (provinces and districts) for revenues derived from natural resources (see table 3.1). The main stream of revenue from the central government to the districts and provinces is the General Allocation Fund (DAU, Dana Alokasi Umum), which is intended to fill the "fiscal gap," which is the difference between the regions' expenditures and earning capacity in order to enable local governments to finance their routine activities and public services (Firman 2003). DAU varies from district to district and is determined based on a formula used by the Home Affairs Ministry. Though there are very few official stipulations on how DAU funds are used and so theoretically the districts now have more discretion over how funds are spent, the reality is that the vast majority of these disbursements go to covering the salaries of civil servants and other day-to-day expenses (Firman
2003, Lewis 2005), and so in reality the districts don't have much leeway in terms of how these funds are used. Although the decentralization laws stipulate that DAU funds must be at least equal to the former SDO funds, with decentralization more than two million civil servants were transferred from the central government to the districts and provinces, which greatly increased their payroll liabilities.

A second stream of revenue from the central government to the districts is the Special Allocation Fund (DAK, Dana Alokasi Khusus), which in general is intended to help meet special needs of economically disadvantaged districts and provinces; these are generally targeted funds for specific projects. While districts don't have as much formal discretion over these funds as they do the DAU, the ability to secure DAK funds is something local politicians are proud of, and so they are somewhat similar to Congressional earmarked funds in the United States. Because they are dedicated to special projects, district and provincial officials have a great deal of discretion over where the funds are spent (i.e. which contractor). Thus DAK funds provide opportunities for graft as district and provincial leaders are able to skim a certain percentage off the top in the form of bribes and kickbacks, or channel projects to firms owned by cronies.

Besides these center-periphery funding mechanisms, decentralization laws instituted a new revenue sharing mechanism that applies to natural resources, including oil and gas, fisheries, and most germane to this discussion, mining and forestry revenues. During the New Order all of these funds went directly to the central government where they would be divided up between all the districts and

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48 Hidayat and Firdausy (2003) conducted an extensive survey of district level officials in the wake of decentralization reforms. Their study indicated that less than 25% of DAU funds were typically left after paying salaries and overhead.
provinces. Now, however, 80% of taxes and other government revenues from mining and forestry go to the districts (64%) and provinces (16%). As we shall see below, since these reforms have been passed districts and provinces, especially on the outer islands, have looked to natural resources as a way to increase their official revenues.

### Table 3.1: Distribution of natural resource revenues after Seymour and Turner 2002.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue from</th>
<th>Central Government %</th>
<th>Province/District %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land and Property tax</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquisition of land and building rights</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forestry, mining, fisheries</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income tax</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The PAD Imperative and the Importance of Locally Generated Revenues**

Though there are a few exceptions, officials in most of the districts around the park complain that they have been given new responsibilities without adequate financial resources to fulfill those responsibilities, and that even though they have a significant degree of autonomy, because the presence of the park limits their options, they don't have the fiscal capability to initiate projects that meet the specific needs of the districts. It has been shown that an important component of successful decentralization regimes is an increase in the fiscal capacity of the administrative units that are the target of the reforms (Guess 2005, Mawhood 1987). This improved capacity comes from increasing local revenue generation and improved funding stability. Theoretically decentralization allows for more efficient public sector service provision as local governments have a greater knowledge of local needs than
the central government, but the funding must be there for this to work. One of the lasting legacies of Indonesia's decentralization adventure has been the failure of the central government to fulfill these requirements. Thus a major project for many district governments is to increase locally generated revenue, or PAD (*pendapatan asli daerah*). According to the structure of the decentralization laws, PAD comes primarily from local taxes, regional contributions, profits from district-owned enterprises, and legal revenues.

The facts of this new mechanism of distribution combined with the historical trajectory of primary sector activity described in the introductory chapter means that the natural avenue for increasing district revenues in many places, especially on the outer islands like Sumatra, is by encouraging natural resource extraction. Because of this, many district governments have begun to exploit their natural resources more intensively than under the Suharto years (Duncan 2007; Firman 2009). For park managers this is particularly problematic because, while the district and provincial governments cannot legally award concessions or permissions to cut trees or mine within the park, they are able to do so in certain areas of the park's buffer zone, which consists of a variety of non-national park forests (production forests). The fact that these forests are not designated as national parks or protection forests means that the district and provincial governments have more policy options in managing them and that there is a clearer path for gaining permission from the Ministry of Forestry to grant concessions to these lands. Some park officials worry that this will have

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49 Djogo and Syaf (2004) refer explicitly to the case of Kerinci district, where the head of the district forestry office was required by the district head to raise IDR 700 million (approximately US$86,000) from forest resources annually, despite the fact that most of the district, and virtually all of its forested area, lies within the park.
adverse affects on the park because it decreases effective habitat for certain species, increases the ecological edge effect, and also increases incidents of human-animal conflict. Dealing with these types of conflicts is a major weakness for the park for the reasons explained in chapter 2. Moreover, park managers admit that it is very difficult to keep concessionaires from encroaching into the park, both accidentally and intentionally. In the past this encroachment has been a way for concessionaires to pad their revenues. Park managers and local NGOs also point out the indirect effects of this reliance on expanding primary sector activity as district governments award concessions to land claimed by local people. These concessions go to businesses with ties to the district politicians, and the local owners of the land are forced to move elsewhere, in some cases pushing into the national park. Around the park this has reportedly taken place in Mukomuko, Bengkulu Utara, Bungo, and Merangin districts, and local NGOs worry that instances will increase as district governments endeavor to entice more investors to set up operations. This is an example of a broader phenomenon occurring throughout the archipelago whereby small scale communities that were marginalized by the natural resource politics of the Suharto regime are continuing to lose out in the post-authoritarian era (Duncan 2007).

*Reinforcing New Order Networks of Extraction*

In this way the "PAD imperative" reinforces informal structures that developed during the Suharto years. During the New Order there was a significant amount of illegal logging on Sumatra, but much of it was done by entrepreneurs with

50 It is important to note here the possibility that in some cases local people are more willing to sell their land to plantation companies due to a perception that the park's borders are poorly enforced and hence the local sellers will be able to clear new land in the park.
connections to the military, and in some cases by the military themselves (McCarthy 2002, Morishita 2008). This can be seen as part of the "franchising" of corruption that helped Suharto maintain his grip on power (McLeod 2000). The general pattern was that high-ranking military officials and others with ties to the regime were appointed as governors or district heads, and along with their formal powers there was a tacit understanding that they would exercise control over illegal resource extraction in their regions. In many places these outside interests overwhelmed local people and their customary law institutions (further discussed in Chapters 6 and 7) to the point where many village elites saw no alternative other than to participate in the system. These village level elites became part of a vertically-articulated system of patronage based on extraction, in many cases buying chainsaws and setting up their own localized logging and processing operations to take advantage of the informal system. As McCarthy (2002: 45) points out: "the pattern of collusion that emerged between oknum51 and logging operations constituted a set of accommodations that operated according to a predictable logic."

Village leaders were also incorporated into patterns of legal extraction as well. During the New Order, the central government controlled the awarding of forest concessions, which for the most part were granted to corporations close to Suharto. Most of these concessions were large-scale operations, but the Jakarta-based corporations would often subcontract work out to district entrepreneurs, who would then work with village leaders to recruit and supervise workers and manage operations at the local level. Once permission to log was granted local entrepreneurs

51 An oknum is a delinquent or corrupt government official, including military and police officers. Oknum are actively (orchestrating) and passively (facilitating) illegal activities such as illegal logging and mining.
could exceed their quotas and log beyond the boundaries of their small concessions by paying bribes to local officials to look the other way. Morishita (2008:99) describes the system with respect to Kalimantan:

These local businessmen were tasked to manage logging operations and the shipping of timber on site, to conciliate and/or intimidate locals who opposed logging and so forth. Some also engaged in illegal logging to meet the targets of a particular company's annual work plan, a cooperative effort that allowed them, at the same time, to accumulate their own capital. Their positions were also protected by personal connections with local bureaucrats, politicians, military personnel, and police, all of whom were important figures when it was necessary to obtain official protection for their operations.

The result of this is that a structure of extraction developed during the Suharto years, and networks including village elites, local entrepreneurs, and district bureaucrats (but excluding the vast majority of local people) emerged to facilitate extractive activities. The structure of the decentralization reforms, instead of dismantling these local networks of corruption and extraction, has created opportunities for them to continue their activities and has even institutionalized incentives via the redistribution of revenues from natural resources for district governments to encourage these activities. The post-authoritarian manifestations of this can be seen in several districts around the park, but one of the clearest examples is in Solok Selatan district. When Suharto fell, these local entrepreneurs, who had already established networks of chainsaw operators and timber porters and who already had systems in place to transport and market illegally felled wood, were able to take advantage of the confusion of decentralization and step up production. In addition, at about the same time the military was pulling back from their involvement
in these activities, which opened up additional space and increased the take for the local entrepreneurs. Local NGO informants recall a huge increase in timber leaving the area between 1999 and 2003, and so these local entrepreneurs experienced windfall profits, which some of them would later use to bankroll political campaigns. Now it is widely known that several members of Solok Selatan's district assembly as well as other high-ranking district officials made their fortunes from illegal logging\(^{52}\).

Since these elites have experience in the timber industry, it stands to reason that they would likely benefit from expanded timber harvesting in the district. Thus according to local informants they have used their formal powers and informal influence to encourage more logging. Informally, district officials have deprioritized enforcement of forest laws, giving loggers a freer hand to cut trees. Formally they have pushed for infrastructural improvements that would make logging and other extractive activities more profitable (see chapter 5).

_Creating a Dichotomy Between Development and Conservation_

Perhaps the most important aspect of the PAD imperative with respect to KSNP and other national parks though is that it establishes a clear line of cleavage between the district governments and the national park's managers and contributes to a dichotomy that pits conservation against development in a zero sum game. The upshot of this is that it institutionalizes disincentives for the districts to cooperate with the park. As pointed out in Chapter 2, the park is very under-resourced, and the 70 or so active rangers are stretched thin along the 2800 km border. Because of this, park

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\(^{52}\) Several officials admitted directly to me that they had been involved in illegal logging in various capacities, but maintained they were no longer associated with illegal activities of any kind.
officials admit that in order to have effective policing and patrolling, the cooperation of both the district police (which are technically under the administration of the central government) and the district constables (Satpol PP) and other local enforcement officials is necessary. For example, district forestry police (Dinas POLHUT)\textsuperscript{53} ideally would police the buffer zone and alert KSNP authorities in the case where encroachment or illegal logging was found. District police would also respond to reports of poached animals or forest products being trafficked through the districts. But park managers admit that there is now little communication with some of the districts (though as pointed out in chapter 2, the level of communication and cooperation varies from district to district). For example, endangered and protected birds that are almost undoubtedly captured within KSNP are openly sold in the market in Sungai Penuh, which is located in the middle of the Kerinci enclave. Park managers are powerless to stop this trade, however, since their jurisdiction is limited to the park itself. They must rely on district authorities for interdiction and enforcement outside the park. And while the district police are under the command and administration of the central government, their organization parallels the province-district-subdistrict administrative structure of the country, and so in many places the district headman is able to exercise a significant degree of influence over the police. In fact, in many instances officials from each of these agencies are said to be involved in the illegal activities (Djogo and Syaf 2004). During the Suharto years there was at least tacit support for the park, since as it has been pointed out, district

\textsuperscript{53} POLHUT is an abbreviation for polisi hutan, or "forest police", a general term for any forestry law enforcement officials. District and provincial forestry officials and police during the New Order were part of the Ministry of Forestry's hierarchy. However the decentralization laws put them under the authority of the district headman and governor, respectively.
headman and representative assemblies took their official marching orders from Jakarta. But now there are really no practical reasons for district governments to support the park.

This is reflected in the attitudes of district headmen, bureaucrats, and assembly members, but their way of expressing their opinions differs. Some are openly defiant, often explicitly challenging the park and the authority of the Ministry of Forestry. Others, while they lament the fact that the district receives no direct compensation for the presence of the park and the foregone revenue earning opportunities, express a kind of dutiful resignation that they must enforce the national law. A key difference between these two positions is that those most opposed to the park are district elites that have gained power and influence since the fall of Suharto, while those expressing a legal obligation to support the park are more likely to be former Suharto-era functionaries (police, military offices) that have entered electoral politics after the fall of Suharto. Examples of the former trait would include the district headmen of Kerinci and Lebong districts, both of whom were not closely connected to the New Order apparatus. The headman of Kerinci was an adat leader, successful farmer, and small scale businessman during the Suharto years, but his influence didn't extend beyond his subdistrict (kecamatan) nor into the halls of government. However, he was able to take advantage of favorable conditions after decentralization\(^{54}\) and consolidate his position and eventually become headman. He has no strong ties to preexisting networks of power at the provincial or national levels, and so he doesn't have to risk alienating any patrons. He is known not only for his outspoken stance

\(^{54}\) These favorable conditions include the formation of Sungai Penuh as an independent administrative municipality and the arrest on corruption charges of the former district headman, who was closely connected to the Suharto regime. These factors are discussed elsewhere in the dissertation.
towards the park, but also for his less-than-friendly relationship with the provincial
governor. Likewise, the current district headman of Lebong during the Suharto years
was an important local preman in a neglected corner of Rejang-Lebong district who is
known to have made a significant amount of money illegally harvesting swiftlet
(walet) nests from caves located in the park. However, when Lebong district was
established in the early 2000s this created an opportunity for him to gain power which
he otherwise likely would not have had, since his power base was always
overshadowed by and subservient to more influential groups in the former district
capital of Curup. Like the headman of Kerinci, he is well known for his antagonistic
attitude towards the park. In contrast, the headman of Merangin district was a high
ranking police officer during the Suharto years, a position that is associated with the
patronage dynamics of the New Order regime. He and his subordinates are much
more accommodating to the park, at least in conversation and in terms of their public
statements.

Another aspect of this that can be traced back to the relationship between Java and
the outer islands during the Suharto years. After Suharto gained power, he appointed
loyal Javanese military allies to important posts in government throughout the
archipelago. At the same time, revenues from natural resource exploitation on the
outer islands flowed disproportionately to development projects (as well as the
pockets of corrupt cronies) located on Java. These aspects of the New Order, which
are collectively known as the "Java Bias", are described in detail elsewhere (Charras
around KSNP many districts, especially newer districts, point to the exploitative
policies of the Suharto years and are demanding a bigger slice of natural resource revenues as compensation (Morishita 2008). Indeed, it has been noted that the decentralization process in general has been driven in part by regional pressures (district and provincial) calling for a greater share of these lucrative revenue streams (Duncan 2007). In other words, a major consideration and driving factor behind decentralization has been access to natural resources. In several cases provinces and districts have experienced windfall profits due to the new revenue sharing arrangements. This is most notable in areas that have large oil and natural gas deposits. Many of the district officials I interviewed used these natural resource rich areas as examples for comparison, complaining that the existence of the park is an unfair constraint on their economic development. They argue that the Bukit Barisan mountains are rich in minerals, particularly gold, which could be used to develop the districts.

3.2.2. Changes to Resource Management Structure (KANWIL to Dinas)

One of the major decentralization changes that has been noted is the transfer of approximately two million civil servants from the central government to the districts and provinces. This was accompanied by a reordering of bureaucratic entities. Previously during the new order, many bureaucratic offices operated under the supervision of the Regional Offices (Kantor Wilayah; KANWIL) which were under the control of the ministries in Jakarta. At the same time, there were parallel offices nominally under the control of the districts and provinces (Dinas), but Dinas offices coordinated with and were largely subservient to KANWIL offices. Theoretically the
KANWIL offices were responsible for policy formulation at the provincial level whereas the Dinas offices were responsible for implementation, though in practice there was some overlap.

Since the fall of Suharto the picture has changed. KANWIL bureaus at the provincial level, including the KANWIL for forestry, have been abolished by decentralization reforms\textsuperscript{55} and replaced by Dinas offices under the control of the district government (Alm et al 2001). These are now only accountable to the district level and they operate according to district level regulations (\textit{peraturan daerah}; PERDA). According to McCarthy (2007), with this move the national forestry department lost its capacity to operate as a vertically-integrated agency with full technical responsibility for forests. Djogo and Syaf (2004) indicated that after the dissolution of the KANWIL forestry office in Jambi province, staff were relocated to the provincial and district DINAS offices, which created competition for jobs and resulted in conflicts between the newcomers and the preexisting staff. Other problems associated with this aspect of decentralization include the fact that there was no capacity building or training to help DINAS officials incorporate good governance practices into their management of forest resources. This has created a situation in which district elites pressure DINAS forestry officials to increase revenues to fund rapid development (and corruption), but since the DINAS officials lack the expertise to develop long-term sustainable management plans, deforestation and degradation are the outcomes. However, while the MoF's authority over most forest resources has been modified, national parks remain a bastion of MoF control, as the ministry is still the absolute arbiter as to what happens within national parks.

\textsuperscript{55} The specific legal instrument was Act 22 of 1999.
3.3 Decentralization and District Politics: Processes

Anyone that has visited Indonesia in the year or so leading up to a district election immediately understands that democracy is flourishing in Indonesia. Democracy by any definition is thriving (Bunte and Ufen 2009); all elections, from those for district headman all the way up to the presidential level are heavily contested. Regardless of this, there has been criticism as to the "quality" of the democratic process (Mietzner 2009). Much of this revolves around the degree of elite capture that has taken place since decentralization as well as the role of money and political parties in political campaigns. Elite capture has a number of follow-on effects that serve to weaken the overall responsiveness of district governments to citizen needs. In this section I will describe the formal and informal political processes that have taken hold in districts since the fall of Suharto. This discussion complements the preceding discussion of structural changes. I will describe some general patterns based on academic and professional literature and relate how these patterns are manifested in the districts around Kerinci Seblat National Park. Then I will describe how these patterns and processes shape elections there.

3.3.1 Elite Capture

"Elite capture" has been a major theme of research and analysis since decentralization reforms were implemented (Aspinal 2005a, 2009, Hadiz 2003, 2004, 2010). Elite capture refers broadly to a phenomenon whereby entrenched figures from the New Order are able to repackage themselves as reformers, distancing themselves from the old regime, in order to hold onto power in the post-authoritarian
era. These entrenched figures have an advantage over new political aspirants because they already have patronage networks they can draw on for support. These Suharto-era elites include high-ranking military officers, police officers, bureaucrats, businessmen, and even criminal figures (Aspinall 2005a, 2009; Hidayat 2007), all who were spokes in the wheels on which the New Order machine ran. Moreover, these elites exist at various scales, from the central government in Jakarta all the way down to village heads. During the Suharto years they were all part of a loosely connected network, but in the post-authoritarian era there is less upward accountability so individual actors have more options available to enrich themselves and their personal networks56. These predatory elites are seen as a lasting legacy of the Suharto regime that has derailed decentralization and democratization. For example, Aspinall (2009:2) notes that

...it has become all too obvious that patterns of corruption and predatory behavior that grew and consolidated under that regime have persisted into the new era of democratic and decentralized politics, and that New Order era neo-patrimonial networks linking the worlds of politics and business have been both resilient and adaptable, especially at the local level.

However, the fact that elite capture has occurred in most cases does not mean that there is not active political contestation. In fact, the opposite is the case. Because virtually all leaders are democratically elected (except for subdistrict heads), they are downwardly accountable, at least at election time. This makes it much more difficult to engineer victories and establish top-down machines because politicians no longer

56 Hidayat and Firdausy (2003:52) relate a popular play on words describing this phenomenon: "Autonomy is auto-money."
rely on patronage from above for their positions. Moreover, the New Order relied on an intricate web of relationships to maintain control. This web included the army, police, bureaucrats, political leaders, and others. When the regime fell apart the authoritarian cement that held all of these various interests together disintegrated, and so in the Reformasi era they have all sought independently to improve their positions (Buehler 2007). Moreover, certain aspects of the decentralization reforms have created opportunities for figures that had influence in certain sectors of society during the New Order, but not within the regime itself. This group includes some adat leaders and small to medium scale business people operating at the district level. These figures are often able to take advantage of opportunities provided by the establishment of new districts (described in detail below)\textsuperscript{57} or seemingly random investigations for corruption, which strike like lightening in a forest, clearing away the old growth and making room for new seedlings to sprout\textsuperscript{58}. The struggles between these elites are reflected in hotly contested elections for district head, which as has been pointed out is one of the most powerful and desirable political positions in Indonesia. Contesting these elections has become very expensive and has given rise to a phenomenon referred to as money politics, which is an important indirect driver of new pressures on KSNP.

\textsuperscript{57} The aforementioned example of the head of Lebong district would be an example of this.

\textsuperscript{58} An example of this second "opening" would be the current head of Kerinci district, who was elected after the protégé candidate of the former district head was implicated in a corruption scandal which resulted in prison sentences for the former district head and several of his associates as well as fines for his protégé.
3.3.2 Money Politics and The Path to Power

Since Act 32/2004 made district heads directly elected by their constituents the rule in Indonesia, running for district head has become an expensive proposition. There are two main expenses associated with political campaigns. The first expense is for party sponsorship. The second expense arises from wooing of voters and includes general campaign expenses but also informal direct and indirect payments to voters. During my fieldwork I was able to directly track two campaigns for district headman. The first of these was in Kerinci district, where the election was held in 2013\textsuperscript{59}. The second was in Merangin district, where the election was held in late 2012 (after my fieldwork was completed). My description of money politics is based on these observations.

Finding a "Perahu"

An interesting development stemming from the flowering of democracy in Indonesia is the role of political parties. During the Suharto years the two opposition parties that were permitted to exist were essentially toothless and heavily circumscribed in their activities and hence they did not constitute a threat to Golkar\textsuperscript{60} and the ruling regime. After Suharto resigned, new laws allowed for the formation of new political parties. Shortly thereafter, 148 parties registered for the June 1999 parliamentary elections, 48 of which were eventually allowed to take part in the election after meeting some minimum requirements (Ufen 2009, 2008). Over the

\textsuperscript{59} This election actually took place on September 8, 2013 as I was working on an earlier draft of this chapter. As I write this footnote, the election results are being bitterly contested.

\textsuperscript{60} Golkar, or Golongan Karya ("the Party of Functional Groups") was the political vehicle of the Suharto regime and is still a major force in Indonesia politics.
course of several elections, some of these parties went defunct and others merged. By the 2009 presidential election, though, there were still 34 parties in the coalitions that had candidates running, and by 2013 there were nine parties with representation in the national parliament. However, it is easy to overstate the meaningfulness of this range of choices to Indonesian voters. Although some parties maintain a relatively distinct identity, there is a lot of blurring of lines between their platforms. Moreover, most of the parties that currently exist in Indonesia share several characteristics that combine to make them not only undemocratic, but also inefficient at meaningfully expressing the will of the people. These characteristics are explained in detail in Ufen (2008), but here some of the more striking characteristics deserve mention, including vague platforms, internal conflicts, and "shady financing" (7).

Most if not all of the major national parties have representation in the districts and municipalities around KSNP\(^6\), but one characteristic of parties in Indonesia is that the vast majority of them have little or no grassroots organization. Nor do they typically have well-developed platforms\(^6\). However, the endorsement of one of the political parties is important for aspiring politicians because of the way the new election laws are structured. Before 2007, all candidates were required to be sponsored by a party. Modifications to decentralization laws in 2007 allowed for candidates to run independently by collecting the signatures of 15% of the registered voters in the electoral unit\(^6\). Still this is a very difficult benchmark to achieve since

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\(^6\) One of the decentralization laws requires parties that contest national elections to have organizations in at least 50% of districts and provinces.

\(^6\) Mietzner 2009: 145 remarks on the "structural inability of political parties to serve as vehicles of political aggregation and popular representation, allowing independent but wealthy elite figures to dominate the political processes".

\(^6\) This is the result of a Constitutional Court decision in a case in which two candidates for governor of Jakarta failed to gain support from political parties, and so they challenged the provision in Act
the validity of the signatures is subject to the approval of the local election commission (*Komisi Pemilihan Umum; KPU*), and so most candidates opt to associate themselves with a party. But as mentioned, parties don't have clear platforms, and so politicians rarely have lasting, career-long relationships with one party. Rather it might be thought of as a reverse free agency type of relationship in which candidates form ad-hoc partnerships with a political party.

This makes party endorsement quite valuable and hence puts the local branches of political parties in a good situation to make demands of potential candidates, and in the period leading up to elections for district heads, there is much gesturing and positioning as the potential candidates negotiate with the various parties for sponsorship. During my fieldwork this process was openly and well-covered in the local media, and candidates openly commented on their relationships with the various parties. This indicates that the practice of auctioning off party endorsement has become institutionalized in district level politics (Mietzner 2009). Reaching an agreement with a political party is colloquially referred to as "riding a canoe" (*naik perahu*) or "renting a canoe" (*menyewa perahu*). Though it is difficult to know how much money is required to gain the endorsement of a party, to get an idea we can look to bribery estimates for elections prior to 2004. As mentioned previously, before 2004 district heads were elected by district assemblies rather than through general elections (*32/2004*) which required candidates to be sponsored by political parties. The Court sided with the challengers.

64 The district KPUs are widely acknowledged to be subject to corruption, and so independent-minded candidates cannot be assured that, even fairly reaching the 15% threshold, they will be allowed to contend the election. One candidate confided to me that this was a major concern of his, and in fact the Kerinci district KPU disallowed one candidate on the basis that his 15% signatures were deemed fraudulent, a judgment that has caused a significant amount of controversy in Kerinci.

65 Rinakit (2005) studied 86 district/municipal campaigns and found that winning candidates for district head or mayor spent between 1.8 billion and 16 billion IDR (US$180,000-US$1.6 million) on their campaigns, with an average of 20% going to pay for political party endorsement.
electeds. Djogo and Syaf (2004) for example estimate that for election held in Jambi province between 1999 and 2000, members of local assemblies received IDR 100-120 million (US$12,000-$15,000) from candidates, which would require a total of more than half a million dollars.

Wooing Voters

The dominance of "money politics" has a variety of impacts on voters and elections, but one of the most important is that there really isn't that much distinction between the various candidates other than their village or sub-district affiliation. Moreover, party affiliation doesn't indicate very much about the candidates or what they are likely to do if elected. The only guide most voters have then are the slogans found on hundreds of oversized banners that dot the district up to two years before the election. These banners normally feature the face of the candidate along with a general slogan. Examples from Kerinci and Merangin include the following:

Only by relying on the help of God and the support of the people I endeavor to proceed....Young, Intelligent, Unpretentious.

I ask for prayers of blessings and support to lead Kerinci with Heart...

Three Demands: 1) Increase the people's economy and realize prosperity; 2) Successfully develop the capital of Kerinci at Bukit Tengah as a center for economic growth; 3) Form the [new] district of Lower Kerinci to increase and equalize development.

Most of the slogans are variations on a theme, and so politics has become more personal and charismatic. This is a characteristic of district level elections throughout Indonesia, and one of major results is that voters tend to be more swayed by the
personalities of candidates rather than actual platforms (Erb and Sulistiyanto 2009).

This then results in the second type of expense, which on the surface seems similar to what might be observed in other democracies. Candidates have to get the message out; they have to pay for billboards, newspaper advertisements, fliers, and other promotional materials. They also have to travel around and meet voters, "pounding the pavement" in order to garner support. In many cases candidates sponsor village gatherings with meals and karaoke performers. However, there are also other informal expenses that have to be paid, as the reality is that voters are more likely to be persuaded by material bribes than personality. This includes direct payments to voters and vote-brokers to ensure they vote for the candidate. These incentives can come in the form of direct cash payments to voters, but they also often take the shape of gifts, such as free fertilizer or livestock. Many village residents indicated that they expected to receive gifts from candidates, and that they based their decision for whom to vote on gifts and payments received. Around the park a common "gift" to voters is to promise them that they will be allowed to farm in the park if elected. This type of promise is an inexpensive, low-risk way of gaining support.

Another expense is the funding of temporary campaign newspapers and websites. These media outlets tend to proliferate conspicuously in the one to two years leading up to an election and appear irregularly, but their professional layout lends an air of legitimacy to the articles within, which hagiographically portray a certain candidate.

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66 The results of a survey done by a now-defunct internet newspaper in Kerinci are particularly revealing. Their survey of approximately 600 respondents indicated that 76% of voters could be persuaded by money, 60% plan to take money from the candidate they will vote for, and 40% would take money but not vote for the candidate providing the money.

67 In the currently unfolding election drama in Kerinci, there are allegations that certain candidates distributed bribes in the form of basic household consumables ("Sembako"); "Sembilan bahan pokok. This is an Indonesian term for the seven household necessities, including cooking oil and rice).
and his allies while subtly maligning opponents. Interestingly, the lifecycle of these publications tends to mirror the fortunes of the candidates; in several instances I observed certain publications disappear after a candidate linked to the publication dropped out of the election or decided to become running mate to a stronger candidate. Some candidates challenging incumbents go so far as to fund ad-hoc non-governmental organizations which claim to function as corruption watchdogs. In one of the districts around the park I was given several hundred pages of documents by one of these NGOs that was hoping to bring a corruption case against the current district head to the national Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK)\textsuperscript{68}. It was very clear to me that this NGO was directed and funded by another candidate for office, and information from NGO and other informants in the district confirmed this suspicion. Other unofficial expenses include bribes to journalists for favorable coverage (or to ignore unfavorable news angles) and payments for endorsements.

"The Success Team" ("Tim Sukses")

"District government officials in Jambi are less accountable to the public or the central government than they are to the private business interests that support their elections and contribute to their official district revenues as rent from extracted forest resources" (Djogo and Syaf 2004: 12).

All of this is obviously expensive, and beyond the reach of even the most wealthy candidates, especially since the returns on investment are not guaranteed. For this reason most potential candidates assemble a "success team" (tim sukses) consisting of wealthy and/or influential backers. Members of the success team provide financial or

\textsuperscript{68} The "NGO representative" asked me to convey the documents to a friend that works for the national newspaper, Kompas.
other in-kind resources to the candidate. To cynical observers this might not seem out of the ordinary, as in most democratic systems a quid-pro-quo is expected for campaign support. The difference in Indonesian district elections is the openness in which reciprocation is provided. Campaign debts are repaid in two major ways, both of which can have an indirect bearing on the park. First, if his campaign is successful and the candidate becomes district head, he gains the power to appoint the heads of the district bureaus (Dinas). Second, the district head can use his position to ensure that his supporters receive contracts for infrastructure and other development projects. Both of these are desirable outcomes for supporters because they open up opportunities for rent-seeking. As Aspinall (2005a: 125) explains, "once these elections [are] completed, there [is] a reversion to more old fashioned markups, channeling of contracts, and siphoning off of funds from regional budgets."

Appointment as head of a district office (kepala dinas) can be very lucrative. Not only is the head of the bureau able to appropriate funds and assets from the district office, he also exercises influence over who is hired to work in the office. Civil servant positions in the districts around the park are highly desirable, as evidenced by the hundreds of people that sit for the civil service exam in each district each year. When interviewing villagers and farmers I would usually ask them what sort of future they wanted for their children, the answer was almost universally to work as a civil servant. The benefits of one of these jobs are perceived to be job security along with the pension and other formal benefits. Moreover, most people see working for the government as easier than working as a farmer or in some other occupation, and there

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69 Bureau chiefs at the district level are provided with a late model automobile with coveted government license plates ("plat merah"; literally "red plate" as government license plates are red) and driver, a significant perk in Indonesia.
is also a significant amount of prestige associated with civil service jobs\textsuperscript{70,71}. Thus there is value associated with these positions that extends above and beyond the salary, which is not particularly high, so demand for the positions increases. District officials therefore are able to solicit bribes from people wanting to become civil servants. Normally those wanting to become a civil servant negotiate with a middleman or broker, who later disperses payments to senior officials in the office the candidate wants to join, as well as officials within the government office responsible for administering the civil service as a whole. Elected officials, including the district headman, receive a fixed percentage of all of the payments. In all of the districts around the park this pattern can be observed, but the people of Kerinci district are infamous in central Sumatra because they are willing to pay higher bribes\textsuperscript{72}, as much as IDR150,000,000 (approximately US$16,500)\textsuperscript{73}. To put this in perspective, the highest starting salary for civil servants in Indonesia is approximately IDR 1,500,000 monthly (approximately US$165), which means that it would take approximately 100 months, or eight years just to recoup the initial investment from salary alone. The

\textsuperscript{70} I also believe that the desirability of civil servant positions is at least in part related to the historical and ongoing dominance of primary sector activity on Sumatra. I will discuss this characteristic of the island’s economy in Chapter 5, but here it suffices to say that because a disproportionate number of jobs on Sumatra are for mining and plantation firms which generally are perceived as low-paying and difficult, working for the government becomes a more attractive option.

\textsuperscript{71} This phenomenon has been noted by many other observers as well. Some attribute a prestige factor to civil service positions; Levang (1993:11) in commenting on Jambi province noted that “the prestige of old priyayi still surrounds modern aristocrats.”

\textsuperscript{72} Kerinci district is said to be much wealthier relative to other districts in central Sumatra due to the fertility of the land, and also due to the number of Kerinci residents that have worked temporarily in Malaysia.

\textsuperscript{73} 60 million rupiah (approximately $6,700) seems to be a common average for how much it costs to land a civil servant position nationwide. Speaking in November of 2011, Azwar Abubakar, then the Minister of Empowerment of Civil Servants and Bureaucratic Reform, indicated that 60 million was the going rate (SIKE 2011 Korupsi Birokrasi). The minister lamented the level of corruption and suggested that civil servant exams, instead of being administered by the district governments, be given by an independent organization. Only after the tests were scored would the results be released to district and provincial executives, while at the same time being made public.
price depends on the position as some bureaus are more desirable than others; for example, it is more expensive to get a job for the public works bureau than the health bureau\textsuperscript{74}. Each year the districts accept candidate civil servants (CPNS, \textit{calon pegawai negeri sipil}) who must pass an exam and complete various other requirements before becoming a full-fledged civil servant. Thus every year the incoming crop of civil servants represents a significant income opportunity for higher level bureaucrats that are able to influence the selection process\textsuperscript{75}.

\textit{Tim sukses} members can also benefit greatly from government contracts. Indeed, political donations are a well-known way for district and provincial businessmen to gain access to state funds and indirectly influence the budgeting, tendering, and bidding processes. Contractors are often part of the success team (Aspinall 2009; Hidayat 2007), and in return for their support they receive contracts from the district or provincial government. Hidayat (2007: 203) for example describes a situation in Banten in which private businessmen function as a "shadow state," operating behind the scenes to control the tendering and bidding process. Government bureaucrats, NGO officials, and several contractors I was able to interview in the districts around the park confirm a similar pattern at KSNP.

\textsuperscript{74} This is because of the possibilities to enrich oneself vary. Indonesians call jobs with ample opportunities for corruption "wet places" (\textit{tempat basah}) whereas positions that offer fewer opportunities for graft are called "dry places" (\textit{tempat kering}).

\textsuperscript{75} The issue of civil servants in Kerinci district deserves a dissertation-length treatment of its own. While I was in the field the headman of Kerinci was reported to the national Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK, \textit{Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi}) because he allegedly exercised extreme favoritism in his appointment of civil servants; several different informants estimated that as many as 80\% of all new civil servants appointed during his tenure lived in his home village. At the same time, the district headman frequently publicly lamented the fact that virtually everyone in the district wants to become a civil servant, complaining that it stifles the creativity of the younger generation. Also, several times during my fieldwork the district headman, along with the mayor of Sungai Penuh, enlisted the help of the district police to arrest civil servants (civil servants wear conspicuous uniforms) found out of the office during work hours. These draconian steps were taken to combat truancy among civil servants, which was seen to be a big problem in the district.
Infrastructure is King

A major factor contributing to the use of contracts as tools of political patronage is the fact that most regional governments (both districts and provinces) have a strong preference for infrastructure development projects. Although this is partly an inheritance from the Suharto years, district and provincial governments have enthusiastically taken up the mantle of developing roads, irrigation projects, and other concrete and steel upgrades. During the Suharto years infrastructure development was a key part of the modernization project, and so there is a traditional association for many Indonesians that government means infrastructure development. However, at the same time, much infrastructure development was controlled and directed by the aforementioned Inpres programs, and this resulted in gaps between Java and the outer islands, and also between rural and urban areas (Firman 2009). So not only did the Suharto era establish a pattern to be followed, but it also indirectly contributed to a catch-up mentality on the outer islands. Many district administrators allude to the standards of infrastructure on Java as a model or target for their own district development plans.

This creates natural areas of partnership with contractors, and as a result the construction industry is "one of the most politicized and corrupt sectors of the Indonesian economy" (Aspinall 2009:2). This will be discussed more fully in Chapter 5, but one of the many reasons that politicians push for infrastructure projects like roads is that they can sell contracts for road construction or maintenance to the highest bidder (Kuncoro et al 2013). Those aspiring to political office recruit members to their "success teams" by promising future contracts for public works.
projects in exchange for support from successful businesspeople. In this way then infrastructure projects become an important means for paying political debts.

### 3.3.3 A Hierarchy of Public Policy Formation?

The role of the *tim sukses* in district elections shows that the politics of regional autonomy, at least in central Sumatra, seems to have led to a decoupling of qualification and skill from the heads of district offices, who are appointed by the district headman. This decoupling of skill and qualification extends down through the district bureaucracy, since a significant proportion of civil servants are hired not on the basis of their qualifications for the job, but rather on the basis of their ability and willingness to pay the bribes necessary to secure the position. In addition, DINAS officials are often moved from office to office every couple of years, which further limits the cultivation of skilled personnel. I interviewed numerous civil servants that had worked in several seemingly unrelated departments; for example one bureaucrat I interviewed had worked in the district's agriculture office, the small business administration, and the financial office all in a span of five years. Bureaucrats are moved from office to office as punishments and rewards by the district head, but virtually all of the bureaucrats I interviewed that described this phenomenon admitted that it has a negative influence on morale and performance, and that it leads to a prioritization of political goals over public service provision. Several bureaucrats expressed doubts over their ability to adequately fulfill the requirements of the job they had been appointed to. Another widely acknowledged weakness of decentralization with regards to the bureaucracy is the tendency to
prioritize local people in recruiting new civil servants. Several informants mentioned that during the Suharto years the bureaucracy was more heterogeneous, with people from all over the archipelago serving in the districts' administrations. This was seen to be tied to improved performance. Since decentralization reforms were enacted, however, less experienced and less competent local people have been appointed to most of the vacancies.

Though these aspect of district politics do not directly impact Kerinci Seblat National Park, they do have indirect impacts, mainly because the lack of skilled and experienced personnel seems to contribute to a bias towards a particular type of policy and project orientation. To explain this I suggest a hierarchy or continuum of public policy initiatives where on the upper end we find interventions and programs that require a high level of expertise, training and commitment. Agribusiness development and land or tax reform would be found here. Then moving down this continuum we find policies and interventions that require less expertise, commitment, and training, including road building and issuing permits for extraction. Based on a careful review of regional planning documents obtained from several of the districts around the park, there is a clear need for the former type of policies and programs. These professionally-prepared district spatial plans elucidate the needs of the districts. For example, the long-range spatial plan for Bengkulu Utara district laments the district's dependence on primary sector activity, which doesn't provide added value for the district's residents. Moreover most of the spatial plans I reviewed described the importance of the park from the perspective of local ecosystem services, including watershed protection and erosion control. The spatial plans acknowledge that forest
protection limits agricultural expansion, but this is framed as a necessary tradeoff.

Thus it is important to encourage an economic transformation away from primary sector activities. For example:

The location of the protection forest in the eastern part of Bengkulu Utara district and the special characteristics of the watershed means that there are limitations to land that can be developed for agricultural activities. Therefore it is necessary to encourage changes in the economic structure from activities based on land to those that are not based on land, along with an increase in the productivity of the land (BAPPEDA Bengkulu Utara 2010: II-5).

Other strategic problems and priorities described in the various district medium term (RPJMD: 5 years) and long term (RTRW: 20 years) plans include the following:

--Gender equality and involving women in governance
--Increasing competitive power of regional products
--Improving access to education and healthcare
--Sustainable development
--Intensification of agricultural activity and encouragement of locally-based agribusiness
--Improved agricultural technology
--Addressing the lack of agricultural extension services
--Development of secondary and tertiary sectors based on district competitive advantage
--Overreliance on commodity production leading to vulnerability to global price fluctuations
Lack of access to credit for smallholder farmers

Inefficiency in tax collection

Lack of alternative employment outside agriculture

Lack of access to market information for farmers

Improved nutrition for school children

Improved educational services for disabled children

Limited competence and capacity of government workers

These needs are confirmed by information obtained from interviews with villagers, village heads, and district bureaucrats. For example, a commonly voiced complaint is that the districts lack agricultural cooperatives and extension services. Farmers complain that there are inadequate insurance programs, and that it is difficult to obtain accurate market information, which puts them at a disadvantage when selling their produce. At the same time, virtually all informants indicate that the district governments are unwilling or lack the capacity to address these issues. Instead, district governments focus on agricultural extensification via opening up new lands for cultivation. Another focus for district governments is an increase in extractive activities, like mining and plantations. As has been explained, these activities are lucrative both for the districts in the short run and for informal networks of corruption and patronage. This focus on projects and policies at the lower end of the public policy continuum exerts significant indirect pressures on the park. An example of this is the stated policy of increasing the area under cultivation in Kerinci district.
This is clearly not in line with the problems identified in various planning documents, nor is it consistent with the project recommendations found in those same documents.

Though this bias towards lower-order programs and projects indirectly affects the park, the park also contributes to the problem. As noted previously, one of the key determinants of success for decentralization reforms is adequate control over financial resources to implement the reforms. I noted that the vast majority of General Allocation Funds (DAU) from the central government go towards funding day-to-day operations in the regions, and thus in order to fund their own projects many districts have encouraged private-sector development of natural resources to take advantage of the new formula for revenue sharing. The presence of the park limits this potential for the surrounding districts, thereby cutting off an important source of revenue that could be used to fund the kinds of higher-order activities mentioned above. Moreover, scholars point to the importance of transferring discretionary powers over natural resources to local authorities along with property rights that transform local users into legal claimants in order to maximize the outcomes of decentralization (Barr et al 2006, Ribot 2005). This has the dual effect of creating incentives for sustainable management on the part of local people while increasing the downward accountability of the district leadership.

**Box 3.1: The Rawa Bento Fiasco**

Rawa Bento\(^{76}\) is a forested wetland covering approximately 2,000 hectares in the northern part of Kerinci District. The swamp's average altitude is 1,375 meters above

\(^{76}\) “Rawa” means "swamp" and "bento" is the local name for an endemic species of grass found in the area.
sea level, making it one of the highest wetlands in Indonesia. The swamp is considered unique in Sumatra in terms of habitat and vegetation and it is an important stopover point for several species of migratory birds. Park officials say that they are working to have the site recognized as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar convention. Over the years part of the swamp has gradually been converted to wet rice fields by the residents of Pelompek and other nearby villages, but conversion slowed when approximately 1,100 hectares of the swamp were included in the park in the 1990s.

In 2012 the swamp was the subject of an interesting dispute between KSNP and the government of Kerinci district. The district government formulated a plan to drain the swamp and convert it into wet rice fields operating under the assertion that the swamp had been used by residents of the nearby villages, including Pelompek, Pesisir Bukit, and Sungai Jernih. This plan is understandable; to the district the swamp is a wasteland, but it is also a large area of well-watered territory that could easily be converted to wet rice. To this end the district received 35 billion rupiah (US$3.88 million) from the central government in the form of special allocation funds (DAK) to develop the area. However, when it was revealed that part of the proposed project would be on park territory, the central government's funds were put on hold. Several subsequent newspaper accounts described the incident, portraying it as an example of the park inhibiting district development. One headline declared "35 billion rupiah cancelled by Kerinci Seblat National Park," clearly attributing the loss of funds to the park. In these media accounts district officials attack the park,

77 Information from residents of these villages is contradictory; some claim that the swamp is adat land while others don't. The villagers do use the swamp as a sort of holding pen for water buffalos, though, and I witnessed villagers fishing and gathering non-timber forest products from the swamp.
suggesting that the borders are not clear or that the park staff had surreptitiously
moved the borders so that the park encompassed more territory\textsuperscript{78}. The head of the
district public works department\textsuperscript{79}, which was behind the proposed swamp
conversion, even challenged the park to re-measure the boundaries: "Don't just play
on paper....it's better to meet [us] directly in the field so that everything is clear."\textsuperscript{80}

One might ask why the district government did not coordinate with the park
administration, which is located approximately half a kilometer from the Public
Works office. Indeed, informants in the district government indicated to me that the
park's boundaries are well-known to district officials, and that the whole conflict
could have been avoided with a simple GIS comparison of spatial information that the
district's planning office has on file. The message was heard loud and clear among
the district's population, though. After the incident many villagers pointed to the
cancelled project as evidence that the park is actively sabotaging the district's
economic development plans.

This particular misadventure underscores how the district government politicizes
the park and the resources located therein. In this example the district government
attempted to use its formal powers to access resources, in this case land, located
within the park's boundaries. The park's official spokesperson indicated that this sort
of incident happens fairly frequently, though on a somewhat smaller scale, and that

\textsuperscript{78} The accusation that park officials have moved the border markers over time to expand the park
appears both in news stories and also interviews with district and village officials.

\textsuperscript{79} The head of Kerinci's public works department is the district headman's son. Heads of departments
are appointed by district headmen.

\textsuperscript{80} "Jangan hanya main di atas kertas. Bagusnya bertemu langsung di lapangan biar semuanya jelas":
park officials feel that the media coverage is always slanted against the park, portraying the park as in the wrong.

This episode also shows how district officials often use or attempt to use formal powers to undermine the park (discussed further in chapter 5). In this case the district's plans were foiled, likely due to the scope of the proposed project and the location of the swamp, which is just a couple of kilometers off of the main road through the district and thus is easily monitored by the park's staff. And while the cancellation of the project meant the loss of a significant amount of money for the district, the district leadership was quick to frame the issue in their favor. Several park officials told me in interviews that it is not the park's duty to assist or advise the district governments in any capacity related to development projects, and so in these instances the park rarely if ever makes an effort to counteract or respond to the charges of local politicians. Thus even if the local politicians are consciously distorting or misrepresenting the situation, there was virtually no risk because there is no one to call them out. This is another small way in which the park (and by extension the MoF) has failed to adjust to Reformasi. Although they have a staff position that is responsible for communicating with the media, the person currently occupying this position has no communications training, and the budget for getting the park's message out is minimal and often spent on misdirected efforts (see chapter 7). The park is clearly losing the battle for the hearts and minds of the public.

The nature of the project also supports the hypothesis that there is an overreliance on policies and projects focusing on extensification of primary sector activities due to a lack of bureaucratic capacity stemming from political corruption as well. The Rawa
Bento conversion project was a key element in the current district headman's economic development program, which relies on expansion of wet rice agriculture throughout the district, but tellingly most actively in areas near (and in) the park. Privately, professional rank and file government officers lament this type of project, because it does very little to address the real issues facing the district and distracts attention from more intractable, but crucial, issues. It is also indicative of a general trend in several districts around the park to initiate projects that directly or indirectly affect the park without consulting the park's administration. These projects frequently blur the lines between legality and illegality and illustrate one of the lasting problems of Indonesia's decentralization: the difficulty of policing district governments and ensuring compliance with national laws.

Another major issue stemming from the hiring processes at the district level is that decentralization transferred responsibility for many "back office" functions from the central government to the regional governments (Alm et al 2001:90). These functions include personnel and data management, contracting, and many other specialized, professional responsibilities for which it is doubtful the capacity exists in many localities (Patlis 2004). In many districts around KSNP, there are complaints among rank-and-file bureaucrats that these aspects are not considered by district heads when making appointments for Dinas offices; indeed many bureaucrats privately doubt that district headmen are even aware of these aspects of governance. This contributes to the overall inability of district offices to formulate and implement higher level policy initiatives.
3.3.4 The (Re)Birth of Democracy and the *Aspirasi Masyarakat*

As noted above sloganeering is an important part of *Reformasi* era politicking, in part due to the lack of clear and developed party platforms. "*Aspirasi masyarakat*", one of the most commonly used slogans, means "the aspirations of the people."

Basically it refers to the will of the citizenry in general; it is a catchall, ambiguous phrase that emphasizes the fact that the government should serve the people. It is not something that can be measured or quantified, but is frequently used by candidates for office during their campaigns. It also appears in formal legal documents including laws and regulations. While it can be argued that virtually all governments, from the most vibrant democracies to the most authoritarian tyrannies use this sort of language to rationalize their rule and claim that they have a mandate from the citizenry, in Indonesia *aspirasi masyarakat* seems to be a justification for policy on its own. In other words, rather than serving as a guiding principle for government, *aspirasi masyarakat* has become a primary criteria for policy formation. In this way *aspirasi masyarakat* is reminiscent of the concept of the "floating mass" doctrine espoused by one of Suharto's chief political advisors, Ali Murtopo, in the early years of the New Order. The floating mass doctrine was used to justify the consolidation of all opposition political parties into two ineffectual umbrella parties, asserting that the population's low educational levels made them unprepared for full democracy, and so

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81 For example see Government Regulation 129/2000 concerning the creation of new regions: "Regional autonomy is an authority of the autonomous region to regulate and maintain the priorities of local society according to their own initiative based on the aspirations of society consistent with laws and regulations."
the state would fulfill a sort of caretaker role, facilitating the social and economic transformations needed for a true democracy in the spirit of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution to take shape (Crouch 1979, Samson 1973). Both concepts are used to depoliticize certain issues, placing them beyond the reach of contestation and establishing them within an unassailable realm of universal goals or aims. Concepts such as *aspirasi masyarakat* create an impression that "society" is a homogenous block with easily identifiable goals, essentializing the population as an undifferentiated mass. This can be tied to other phenomena described above, including the lack of real differentiation between political parties and the superficial nature of political campaigns. This represents a fundamental weakness of Indonesia's emerging democracy because it is counter to the notion of pluralism, which is a key component of democracy. Indeed, debate and the exchange of ideas is considered by most to be one of the most positive aspects of democracy because it enables "society" to grow through elective processes and public deliberation. Another issue associated with the *aspirasi masyarakat* is that it raises questions as to what "society" being referred to. In this way the *aspirasi masyarakat* discourse is used as tool in identity politics.

More concretely this has ramifications for Kerinci Seblat National Park. In many instances this discourse is used to justify policies for which there are few practical reasons to implement. It is a discourse invoked by powerful interests that stand to gain from the proposed policy or project, and thus it facilitates elite capture of state resources. Two specific examples in which *aspirasi masyarakat* is used to justify projects that indirectly and directly affect the park are new administrative units (see
chapter 4) and roads through the park (see chapter 5). When the *aspirasi masyarakat* discourse is used to support these types of projects it represents a failing of public policy because it undermines the role of important tools of accountability and good governance such as environmental impact assessments (for roads), cost benefit analyses, and other types of studies that are used to support projects in mature democracies. These tools are essential in order to ensure that the benefits of the project outweigh the costs, both in terms of expenditure of public monies and damage to the environment. In addition, these types of studies also help to determine whether the project is actually merited and is a legitimate use of public funds and are part of the government's role as steward of public resources.

### 3.3.5 Political Fragmentation

Another general pattern that has emerged since the implementation of decentralization is political fragmentation (Buehler 2007). During the Suharto years the districts and provinces were somewhat insulated from one another by design to minimize the potential that a powerful regional block might emerge to challenge the central government (as happened during the Sukarno era). As noted, all of the regions were part of the top down system and hence there was very little horizontal interaction between them. One of the major problems that has emerged from decentralization is that it has granted significant powers to the districts, but has provided few new mechanisms to improve coordination between the them. When decentralization laws were being enacted, there were questions as to whether districts should be responsible for "functions that are inherently regional in nature" (Alm et al
2001:09), such as hospitals and universities. Moreover, prior to the 2004 revision, Act 22/1999 de-articulated the districts and the provinces, removing the hierarchical relationship between them. Because of this, during the first few years of decentralization, there were low levels of coordination between these two levels of government, and in some cases the districts even refused to follow directives handed down from the provinces. The 2004 revision addressed some of these issues, and further regulations passed in 2009 aimed at improving coordination between district and provincial planning offices (BAPPEDA), but there is still a long way to go. Inefficiencies have emerged as districts have embarked on redundant projects (for example, airports in close proximity to one another) and in some cases have even tried to undercut one another. Indonesia's decentralization has also led to political fragmentation of a number of issues by superimposing new boundaries or altering the significance of preexisting ones. Since power has been decentralized to the district level, districts are now responsible for addressing issues such as health care and education, and they do so within the narrow frame of their own territory.

Just as actual physical fragmentation can undermine the effectiveness of protected areas, this political fragmentation has a large influence on Kerinci Seblat National Park. Political fragmentation serves to break the park into fifteen smaller "forest blocks", and while there is no physical demarcation, the existence of the different political entities around the park creates specific baskets of interests and stresses on the park. The most obvious direct consequence of this is that it increases transaction costs for park managers, as they (theoretically) must coordinate and liaise with all of the districts and administrative municipalities. This coordination would ideally
include linking the park's management plan with the various district and provincial spatial plans, but this is not likely to happen anytime in the near future. For example, Djogo and Syaf (2004), in examining the case of Jambi district, point out that there has been conflict between the different levels of government in terms of forest planning because they use different maps, and so as a result district governments in Jambi have allocated national forest land for plantations.

Perhaps most damaging to the long term functioning of the park though is that these fifteen different administrative entities create a situation similar to the classic tragedy of the commons (Hardin 1968). By this I mean that none of the individual district governments has sufficient power or even incentives to incorporate environmental factors into their planning processes. This is exacerbated by the structure of the decentralization laws, which leave conservation in the hands of the central government, which as has been shown has been unable to implement an effective conservation strategy at KSNP. The practical upshot is that nobody is responsible for environmental governance or establishing policies that safeguard ecosystem services that function at scales greater than the district. On the other hand, all of the districts have both powers and incentives to manage resources unsustainably such that the continuity of these ecosystem services are compromised. Moreover, this aspect of political-administrative fragmentation means that downstream areas that do not harbor part of the park but do benefit from the ecosystem services it provides (e.g. hydrological services) must suffer the consequences taken by the districts around the park without recourse if they suffer adverse effects from poor environmental management. Unintentional beggar-thy-neighbor policies are a major risk stemming
from fragmentation, and park officials claimed that elected leaders in at least one downstream district have started to complain about the rate of forest clearance in one of the districts neighboring the park.

3.3.6 De Facto versus De Jure Powers

One of the big issues with the early stages of decentralization was that the initial autonomy laws made little mention of how forests would be administered, so districts took advantage of the confusion to assert administrative authority over forests. In some districts the government issued a large number of small-scale timber extraction and forest conversion permits and imposed new fees and royalties on the harvesting of logs (Barr et al 2006). In many cases districts took control over natural resources including forests in their regions before the laws went into effect, a phenomenon Rhee (2002) refers to as "de facto decentralization." Moreover, Moeliono and Dermawan (2006) note that there was a tendency for district governments to apply only the regulations most advantageous to them and Ribot et al (2006) describe how the confusion surrounding decentralization laws and resource management allowed different claimants to justify their actions by referring to different, and sometimes contradictory laws. Most devastating to forests throughout the archipelago was a decision by the Ministry of Forestry in the early stages of decentralization to allow district governments to issue small scale logging permits of up to 100 hectares on state lands. Ribot et al (2006) argue that this was part of a strategy to bypass provincial governments, which at the time were seen as posing a potential threat to the unity of the Republic. Many districts, including some around KSNP, took advantage of this opportunity to issue permits, in many cases for areas that had
already been assigned to large corporations during the Suharto years. Though in theory these permits were supposed to go to local people and benefit village stakeholders, in many instances district governments awarded numerous contracts to associates (members of their "success team", for instance) under fraudulent names, thereby making an end run around the 100 hectare limit (McCarthy 2000, Moeliono et al 2009). In some cases districts illegally issued permits to log national parks and other protection forests, but this doesn't seem to have happened around KSNP. This does not mean that the park was safe from the wave of logging that accompanied the fall of Suharto; like in other places around the country and in keeping with the Suharto-era patterns, entrepreneurs that received permits for production and conversion forests around the park frequently logged beyond the limits of their concessions, taking timber from inside the park.

The pillaging of forest resources during this period was remarkable. According to an article in Tempo (Adityo 2001), by 2001 107,000 hectares, or nearly 10% of the park had been deforested due to uncontrolled clearance, and according to the Jakarta Post (2002), provincial police in Jambi seized 4,000 cubic meters of logs believed to have been looted from the park over the course of one month. For the sake of comparison, the park's 2010 annual report (cited in chapter 2) indicated that less than 10 cubic meters of illegally felled timber was seized over the course of the entire year. Forest police and NGO activists recall the scale of illegal logging at the time, telling stories of countless trucks leaving Kerinci, Mukomuko, and Pesisir Selatan districts heading for the port at Padang. In Solok Selatan illegal logging was so out in the open that piles of illegally felled logs and timber planks waiting to be picked up were
a frequent sight on the side of the main highway that runs through the district. KSNP spokesman Rudijanta Tjahyo lamented that "illegal logging here is unbeatable," claiming that 30% of the total forest in the park had disappeared and that illegal loggers weren't afraid to physically assault the park's forest policemen (Saraswati and Siboro 2002). The increase in logging was accompanied by an increase in legal and illegal sawmills operating around the park. According to park administrators, by 2002 there were at least 183 illegal sawmills in operation, sourcing an estimated 60-70% of their supply from the park. The problem got so bad that one assembly member in Kerinci district recommended abolishing or privatizing the park, because it was perceived as being ineffective in protecting forests.

By mid-2002 however the Ministry of Forestry began to take steps to reassert control over forest resources. One major step was to rescind the power of the districts to issue small scale permits. Slowly the rampant illegal logging slowed down, in part due to coverage from the national and international media. The Reformasi era's first directly elected president, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, also made strong statements against illegal logging and directed all provincial and district authorities to take steps to curtail the practice as well. Currently there is still illegal logging in the park, but it is not nearly the same scale as it was between 1999 and 2002.

However, even though the districts have lost the authority to grant small scale permits, in many instances district governments have used their legal authority to push policies and programs that indirectly affect the park. One example of this is road construction projects and will be described in Chapter 5. Related to this is the effect of the anti-park discourse on the part of district leaders (as well as their direct
involvement in illegal activities). Park administrators and forest police express frustration in dealing with local residents because the latter have been emboldened by decentralization reforms to the point where they no longer respect (or more appropriately fear) forest police. In many instances encroaching farmers insist that their activities are not illegal because they have received verbal permission from district authorities to expand into the park. In other cases villagers have physically assaulted forest police (discussed in Chapters 6 and 7).

3.4 Conclusions

This chapter has endeavored to describe how decentralization reforms have been manifested in formal and informal political processes in the districts and provinces around Kerinci Seblat National Park. I have made the case that the structure of decentralization reforms has institutionalized a policy gulf in terms of responsibility for conservation and therefore exacerbated antagonism between the park and its neighboring districts and provinces. Districts have no responsibility for conservation or environmental governance, but they do have both formal and informal incentives to increase pressures on natural resources. Structural incentives stem from the need to increase locally generated revenues coupled with the rebalancing of payouts from natural resources, whereas the form decentralization has taken has led to a particular type of elite politics in which natural resources are used as political resources. The leadership of the districts for the most part resent the fact that they don't have any input into the management of the park. They also in many cases seem to have a different vision as to what the park ought to be used for and what its function is.
Given the nature of the decentralization laws, there is no way currently for this tension to be resolved. I have also shown how this tension comes to the fore in the form of district elections, and how political aspirants politicize the park to curry favor amongst the electorate. We have seen in this chapter that since the fall of Suharto, district governments and people in general have demanded greater access to forest resources for cultivation, exploitation, and conversion.

All of the processes described in this chapter contribute to an overall diminution in the quality of governance that indirectly increases pressure on the park in two ways. The first is that leads to a tendency to implement projects and policies that have negative impacts on the park. The proposed Rawa Bento rice project is a failed example, but in chapter 5 I will describe an example of a successful effort on the part of a district government that has had negative impacts. The second way in which pressure is increased is that the people in the district continue to be dependent on the exploitation of natural resources as political elites trade informal access rights for political support. Moreover, these processes serve to reify the dichotomy conservation and development, treating it as an inevitable fact when in truth it is not. There is certainly a tradeoff between conservation and a certain type of development in the environs of Kerinci Seblat National Park. The type of development I am referring to is that which is based on infrastructure development and expansion of primary sector activities. This is the kind of development preferred by elected officials. However, as I have shown in the preceding discussion, most government professionals and virtually all planning documents point to the need to move away
from primary sector activities if the economy is to experience growth sufficient to
drive real improvements in the overall socio-economic picture.

![Figure 3.1: Factors encouraging natural resource extraction.](image)

However, this dichotomy is very useful to local elites seeking elected office. In
many cases, especially in the new districts, local elites have little experience in public
administration. The lack of meaningful political party platforms compounds this
problem. In the absence of concrete platforms, aspirants for political office portray
the park as anti-development, and so the issue upon which they are running is
essentially their opposition to the park. Candidates frequently make promises (I
witnessed this in Kerinci, Merangin, and Lebong districts) about opening up the park
for roads and farming, which they legally can't keep. Then they blame the park with
the plan is rejected, this is reported in the local media, and it contributes to a negative
perception on the part of the people towards the park.

But this is only part of the story of dysfunctional decentralization. This chapter
has also shown several ways in which the park actively and passively inhibits
decentralization. Because of the significance of this, I briefly summarize and reiterate these points in the bullets below.

--It has been shown that decentralization relies on support from all levels of government (Rondinelli and Nellis 1986). However, the MoF and by extension the park have resisted decentralization reforms.

--Decentralization of discretionary powers over natural resources is a key element of successful decentralization (Ribot 2005). However, no authority over the territory within the park has been transferred to the districts, and so they have no incentive to dedicate scarce resources to protecting the park.

--Successful decentralization entails that adequate financial resources are transferred to the target of the decentralization measures (Guess 2005, Mawhood 1987). The structure of Indonesia's decentralization reforms pushes district governments to increase pressure on natural resources to raise locally generated revenues, but for the districts around KSNP the presence of the park removes this policy option for increasing revenues.

--Effective decentralization is in part determined by the actors to whom powers are decentralized (Agrawal and Ribot 1999). These actors must be downwardly accountable. As noted, one of the effects of the way in which decentralization has been implemented is that districts have taken control of
the process themselves without regard for the actual laws. They have been successful in some instances due to a lack of enforcement capacity on the central government (as is the case in national parks). Thus it can be stated that power over certain aspects of government has been informally transferred (or possibly usurped) by district level elites. However, since there has been no formal transfer of ownership by or accountability to local people, predatory local elites have a free hand to exploit and otherwise misuse the resource in question (KSNP) in whatever way they can with no checks or balances on their activities (Chavis 2010). There is no effective mechanism for popular participation at the local level in the areas of environmental governance and resource management, which is another prerequisite of successful decentralization (Hutchcroft 2001).

Thus it can be convincingly argued that the presence of the park as it is currently managed is contradictory to the currents of Reformasi, and so much of the tension between the park and its neighboring districts stems from this incompatibility of institutions. As noted, the MoF has done little to improve upon this situation, an attitude which is counter to orthodox thinking on decentralization. For example, in a widely-cited World Bank guide, Litvack et al (1998) emphasize the importance of providing incentives to local political-administrative units to ensure outcomes important to the central government. In Reformasi Indonesia, conservation policy is still by law the responsibility of the central government, but local governments, as new nodes of stateness, have the ability to impede and even subvert this goal. In this
case it is incumbent on the central government to provide support services or create incentives for local governments to act according to central government preference as well as to hold local governments accountable for their compliance. With respect to KSNP, neither of these has happened.

In the next chapter I will describe two in depth case studies from my fieldwork that illustrate many of the general topics discussed in this chapter.
CHAPTER 4. INDIRECT PRESSURES ON KSNP: ADMINISTRATIVE PROLIFERATION

4.1 Introduction

_Pemekaran_\(^{82}\), or administrative proliferation, refers to the increase in sub-national political-administrative units that has taken place since the fall of Suharto. Administrative proliferation has been an important part of the _Reformasi_ political landscape in central Sumatra, and it is a process particularly salient to this dissertation as the number of administrative units around KSNP has increased from nine to fifteen since the end of the New Order era. This chapter builds on the themes explored in the last chapter and applies them to a detailed examination of administrative proliferation. My examination of administrative proliferation illustrates three key themes of this dissertation: remapping, rescaling, and the dynamics of marginalization in the post-authoritarian era.

In the first two chapters of this dissertation I made the case that Indonesia's national parks are an artifact of centralized government, as they came about first through the conservation policies of the Dutch colonial authorities and later those of the Suharto regime. I also described the sweeping decentralization reforms that have been enacted since the end of Suharto's New Order. These reforms have divided power and sovereignty between the central government and the regions, creating hundreds of new nodes of _stateness_ at the district level that have changed incentives for established political elites while empowering newcomers. These regional actors have a greater role now in determining policies and how state resources will be used.

\(^{82}\) Pemekaran literally translates to "blossoming" or "flowering."
and divided, both through their formal activities as well as their informal machinations. In the last chapter I described some ways in which this new government configuration has been manifested in indirect pressures in the districts around Kerinci Seblat National Park. The informal practices and corruption discussed in Chapter 3 have become a fixture in political contestation as well as in governance and policymaking more broadly. Two important points from this discussion relating to KSNP inform this chapter. The first is that the position of the park (as well as the Ministry of Forestry) vis-à-vis actors and institutions at other scales of government (district and provincial) has been weakened, if not in law then certainly in practice. The second point is that new patterns of political contestation, which include a great deal of backroom dealing and other forms of corruption, are key indirect drivers of the mounting pressures on the park.

I first discuss the process of administrative proliferation in general, and then I describe how pemekaran has affected the districts around KSNP. In the first part of the chapter I elaborate on two specific cases that demonstrate that administrative proliferation might be perceived to have caused more problems than it has solved. Key findings are that there has been an increase in rent-seeking while the capacity of the district government to serve its citizens has actually decreased. Old ethnic rivalries have resurfaced in some cases due to the fact that the political spoils of pemekaran have been unevenly distributed, and the door has been opened for still more administrative proliferation despite efforts on the part of the central government to reign in new district formation. This process is a key indirect driver of pressures on the park. In the second part of the chapter I will describe the campaign to create a
new province in central Sumatra. This case reveals that while the establishment of a new province would greatly benefit regional and local elites, the steps that would be required to make the new province a reality would greatly undermine conservation efforts at KSNP. The issues and questions addressed in this chapter include the following:

1. How have decentralization reforms governing administrative proliferation allowed regional elites to remap the political-administrative geography of central Sumatra? As noted in the preceding paragraph, the number of districts and municipalities bordering KSNP has increased significantly over the past fifteen years, and regional elites are pushing for the creation of even more districts and possibly even a province. This chapter examines the motivations behind these ambitions as well as the ramifications of previous district splits. I will show that this process is driven not by national priorities or concerns, but rather by elite coalitions at the district and provincial level. The creation of new districts and provinces is a very effective way to reterritorialize the political and administrative landscape to create formal pathways through which corrupt networks can operate and improve their access to state resources.

2. In what ways do the aspirations of regional elites and everyday local people converge in the form of proposed districts and provinces, and in what ways do these aspirations and expectations diverge once new regions are
created? In addition to illustrating how decentralization has created a set of institutional incentives that ultimately lead to increased pressure on protected areas, administrative proliferation provides a very clear example of how decentralization potentially benefits regional elites while disadvantaging the general citizenry. I will show in this chapter how district elites in the areas around KSNP have used powers devolved through decentralization as a lever to improve their access to state resources. These district elites are able to use identity politics and populist tactics to portray their ambitions as congruent with the aspirations of local people, thereby creating widespread support within their districts. However, due to a general lack of oversight and mechanisms that ensure that the official goals of decentralization are met, administrative proliferation has led in many cases to negative outcomes for everyday people while district elites are able to benefit at the state's expense.

3. How does KSNP fit in with this new geography of Sumatra? This chapter will examine how administrative proliferation has impacted the park thus far, and how it could potentially be impacted in the future if plans to form additional new political-administrative units are successful. This chapter will show how administrative proliferation opens the door for local elites to profit from all of the activities described in chapter 3 while creating an additional front whereby the indirect drivers of forest destruction in the park are multiplied.
4.2 Administrative Proliferation in Indonesia

4.2.1 Defining Pemekaran

Administrative proliferation refers to the creation of new subnational political-administrative units, including new provinces, districts, subdistricts, and villages. The original national law facilitating pemekaran (Government Regulation 129/2000) was part of the decentralization reforms passed shortly after the end of Suharto's rule. With the fall of Suharto came a movement to empower lower levels of government, especially on the outer islands of Indonesia, where resentment towards the Java-centric policies of the New Order regime spurred calls for greater independence and autonomy. The new regulation led to a mushrooming of new polities in Indonesia; pemekaran was so rampant that beginning in 2004 the central government took steps to limit the expanding powers of the regions and to slow the establishment of new regions (Bunte 2009), and by 2007 President Yudhoyono had declared a moratorium on the establishment of new regions. However, in 2012 the central government's moratorium on the creation of new regions had lapsed and by late 2013 there were 34 provinces, 402 districts and 98 administrative municipalities, an increase of eight provinces, 168 districts, and 34 administrative municipalities since 1998. Moreover, since the moratorium has lapsed, the door has been opened for the creation of still more regions, and so pemekaran continues to be the subject of political struggles, both between different scales of government and also between the executive and legislative branches.

The original intent of the law allowing for the creation of new regions was to identify areas that could eventually stand on their own in terms of government. The
goals of the law included improving provision of public services, promoting
democracy, accelerating regional economic development, and accelerating the
mobilization of regional economic potential. In addition to these official
justifications observers have pointed to several other reasons for the creation of new
regions, and it is these additional motivations that led to runaway administrative
proliferation. During the financial crisis many new districts were created in resource
rich parts of the country by coalitions seeking a larger share of revenues from the
exploitation of natural resources, especially in Sumatra and Kalimantan (Oosterman
2007). New regions also create additional revenue streams from the central
government, which is a major enticement for locally-rooted elites. These two factors
combine to create a situation in which identity politics are frequently used by local
elites to mobilize popular support for the formation of new regions. Still other
reasons for administrative proliferation include geographic isolation and ongoing
neglect of certain areas by existing regional governments (Fitrani et al 2005, Kimura
2007).

In the districts around KSNP the official reasons given for pemekaran are
consistent with those in the law. The most commonly cited goals are to increase the
quality of public services and to decrease the distance traveled to access government
services. However, elected officials and bureaucrats are surprisingly candid about the
real motivations, which include increasing the amount of general and special
allocation funds received from the central government as well as to increase the
number of civil servant positions in the district. One can also assume that a
significant motivation is the construction of a new administrative complex as well.
Numerous sources indicated that the family of the new district headman in at least two cases are major landholders where the new administrative complex was to be built. Thus most observers assert that political rent seeking is the primary driver of administrative proliferation as the establishment of new districts increase by millions of dollars the state resources available to those that are able to gain power.

Table 4.1: List of New/Split Districts Surrounding KSNP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Established</th>
<th>Mother district</th>
<th>Capital</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sungai Penuh</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Kerinci</td>
<td>Sungai Penuh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bungo</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Bungo-Tebo</td>
<td>Muara Bungo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarolangun</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Sarolangun Bangko</td>
<td>Sarolangun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merangin</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Sarolangun Bangko</td>
<td>Bangko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mukomuko</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Bengkulu Utara</td>
<td>Mukomuko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solok Selatan</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Solok</td>
<td>Padang Aro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebong</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Rejang Lebong</td>
<td>Muara Aman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dharmas Raya</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Sawahlunto-Sijunjung</td>
<td>Pulau Punjung</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although one of the main officially stated reasons for new regions is to improve the provision of government services, several studies have shown that this benefit has not materialized in most cases. A 2006 government survey of service delivery in 134 districts and administrative municipalities shows that people in new regions are not as satisfied, and that new regions were far less likely to have poverty reduction programs in place or involve communities in planning. Moreover, a 2008 study by the national planning agency (BAPPENAS) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) indicated that economic growth in new regions is unstable compared to the parent regions, and that new regions have been unable to close the gap with parent regions. Another study (Hidayat et al 2007) showed that among newly formed

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83 Bungo is technically considered the mother district (*kabupaten induk*) with Tebo district considered to be the new district, but Tebo doesn't border the park.

84 As in the case of Bungo, Merangin is considered the mother district for Sarolangun. I have included Merangin in this chart because of the name change.
districts and administrative municipalities in North Sumatra province, locally-generated revenue (*pendapatan asli daerah*, PAD) has increased in some, but there is a general pattern whereby the increase in PAD does not keep pace with the increase in overall spending. Thus in almost all cases throughout the country, administrative proliferation has not lived up to expectations. This general finding holds true for the districts around KSNP, and in many cases the creation of new districts has caused new difficulties to emerge in governance and resource management.

### 4.2.2 Lebong District: *Pemekaran* as a Pathway to Power for Marginal Elites

One illustrative case is the new district of Lebong, in Bengkulu province, which was split off from its "mother district," Rejang Lebong in 2003. Lebong is currently the site of massive encroachment into KSNP on the part of local farmers, and according to park staff the problem is getting worse$^{85}$. Two of the main stated reasons for the split were that the people of Lebong had different cultural traditions than those in Rejang Lebong and that the government of Rejang Lebong was neglecting the Lebong subregion, and so it was argued by proponents that the establishment of a new district would remedy these problems. However, since 73% of the new district's territory lay within KSNP it was questionable from the start whether the new district would have the resources upon which to grow its economy. Due to the fact that the Ministry of Forestry has isolated itself from the implementation of decentralization, these concerns were never a part of formal deliberations, which were driven primarily by aspiring elites, and so the Lebong

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85 A 2011 article in Kompas (*6800 Hektar Hutan di TNKS Dirambah*) indicated that at least 5,000 hectares had been encroached upon in Lebong; park rangers say the real total is likely 3-4 times as high.
became one of more than 100 new districts that were created between 1998 and 2004. Now ten years have passed and Lebong is still among the poorest districts in Bengkulu, and the hoped for economic improvements have failed to materialize. Moreover, the district's new political leadership has taken to blaming the park for the sputtering economy, citing the familiar complaints described in chapter 1. The district is currently lobbying for two roads through the park, and the district headman is widely said to be protecting encroaching farmers and miners in exchange for their political support. Thus in this case we see that the park has become a kind of subsidy for the sputtering district since farmers, encouraged not only by lax enforcement but also by the support of district leaders, are able to move into the park and open up new cultivation. In this way the park absorbs excess labor and relieves pressure on district officials to implement policies that would improve the economy of the district. At the same time, district elites benefit from receiving unofficial payments from those wishing to access land and other resources within the park in addition to additional money from the central government in the form of General Allocation Funds.

Meanwhile the mother district of Rejang Lebong continues to prosper. Relieved of its poorest section, the district's planners are focused on diversifying the economy and taking advantage of the district's proximity to the Trans-Sumatran Highway. The majority of the most experienced civil servants remained in Rejang Lebong after the split, and while the elites of Lebong profited greatly from the contracts to build the new district seat at Muara Aman as well as under-the-table fees solicited from those

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86 According to the provincial statistical yearbook (Bengkulu Dalam Tahun 2010).
87 Interestingly the district headman himself made his fortune illegally harvesting swiftlet nests (sarang walet) from caves with the park.
seeking employment in the new district's administration, the leadership now admits that one of the biggest challenges facing Lebong is a lack of capacity in the government. Thus the split has resulted in the separation of capacity from need and the creation of a poor district whose future prosperity amounts to a zero-sum-game with Kerinci Seblat National Park: the well-being of one depends on the immiseration of the other.

In addition to illustrating the sad outcomes of administrative proliferation gone awry, this case is an interesting example of another aspect of rescaling, a phenomenon geographers refer to as the modifiable areal unit problem (MAUP). Heywood (1998:54) describes the MAUP "a problem arising from the imposition of artificial units of spatial reporting on continuous geographical phenomena resulting in the generation of artificial spatial patterns." In other words, the way lines are drawn affects the way that geographical phenomena are perceived. And as we know from the proverbial Gerry-mander, the drawing of lines can affect political outcomes as well (Griffith 1907). The creation of Lebong district can be seen as an example of the scaling effect of the MAUP in that it has created a statistical anomaly in terms of the proportion of the district population living below the poverty level as well as overall income of the district. The creation of the district hasn't created more poor people, but it has altered the relationship between the poor people and the government by aggregating them into a discrete administrative unit.

This has very real implications for politics and policy for several reasons. Prior to the establishment of Lebong district, the income inequality in the district would have been a district issue, but now it has become a provincial and even national concern.
Moreover, when compared to Rejang Lebong, Lebong is lagging, but the difference is not as stark as it is when Lebong is compared to all of the other districts of Bengkulu province. Pemekaran has not only emphasized the area's poverty, but also its lack of connectivity. Although Rejang Lebong is relatively well connected to other parts of Sumatra, Lebong is not. The level of infrastructure has not decreased in any way, but rather the creation of a new district has emphasized the lack of connectivity for the area, an issue that takes on a much greater significance now that Lebong is its own district. In addition, if Lebong had not been split off from Rejang Lebong, some of the benefits of the prosperous economy in Rejang Lebong would certainly be felt in Lebong, if not through diffusion then certainly through redistribution. Lastly, as noted in chapter 2, one of the most cutting critiques of national parks and other protected areas is that while the benefits of these territories accrue to consumers on the global scale, the opportunity costs fall disproportionately on the shoulders of the people that live near the protected area. The creation of Lebong district has actually exacerbated this dynamic as well, since instead of having one district with approximately 45% coverage by KSNP, now there are two districts, the poorer with 73% coverage and the richer with 16% coverage. Thus the district split has reordered the share of the burden so that it disproportionately affects the poorest people.

This process threatens to repeat itself in other places currently angling for district splits, as discussed below. As noted above, these splits pay great dividends for regional elites even as they further marginalize already peripheral populations. But local elites are able to use the promise of new sub-districts, districts, and even the dream of a new province to mobilize support, since administrative proliferation brings
benefits in the short term and creates the illusion of economic progress. For example, a new district seat must be created with the formation of each new district, which means new buildings and access roads, which come with construction jobs. However, once the initial building boom has passed in most cases the people are saddled with an ineffectual government lacking the capacity and resources to foster economic development. In cases like Lebong the result has been increased pressure on the park as local people, who are not being served by their district government, take advantage of the lack of enforcement to move across the borders and open up new fields. This case illustrates an important legacy of uncompleted decentralization in Indonesia: the failure to implement measures designed to control or prevent abuse by elites at the district level. In this case there exists on the books laws and procedures intended to prevent the profligate administrative proliferation that has been occurring in central Sumatra and elsewhere, but they have not been enforced.

4.2.3 The Case of Sungai Penuh/Kerinci

The case of the administrative municipality of Sungai Penuh and Kerinci district also illustrates many of the issues that have emerged from pemekaran in general as well as how administrative proliferation exacerbates the problems described in chapter 3 and hence contributes to indirect pressures on KSNP. Sungai Penuh was formerly the district seat of Kerinci district, but was split off in 2009 and established as an independent administrative municipality. In theory the administration of cities and rural areas require different skill sets, and so governing them separately allows for specialization and greater efficiency. The official reasons for pemekaran in this
case were to increase the level of public service provision by enabling the
government of the new administrative municipality (Sungai Penuh) to specialize in
urban services and promoting the tertiary sector while allowing the district
government (Kerinci) to focus more on rural services, including agricultural
infrastructure. Unofficially pemekaran also would increase the number of civil
service positions, thereby creating more jobs.

The establishment of the new municipality has created an additional arena for
money politics, which in turn has led to elite capture and corruption. Although the
former district headman's machine was defeated unexpectedly amidst widespread
corruption charges\textsuperscript{88}, the new district head of Kerinci is widely perceived to be even
more corrupt than his predecessor. Numerous instances of misappropriation, misuse,
and complete disappearance of public funds have arisen. Local corruption monitoring
NGOs have formally reported the new district head and his family members to the
Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) at least four times. The most egregious
of these cases involves 107 billion IDR (US$11.3 million) dispensed by the central
government to aid victims of a large earthquake in 2009. According to media and
NGO reports, this entire sum was rechanneled into road construction projects from
which the current district head received a 10\% kickback for contracts\textsuperscript{89}. In addition
the tendering process for road construction projects has come under scrutiny; in one
case a construction company owned by the current district headman's son was

\textsuperscript{88} Before the corruption scandal arose protégés of the former district head were said to be in position to
take leadership of both Kerinci and Sungai Penuh.
\textsuperscript{89} See Jambi Independent 11/21/11 \textit{KPK Bidik Korupsi Dana Bencana di Jambi}; Jambi Independent
11/23/11 \textit{BPK Audit Dana Bencana Kerinci}
reported to the KPK for misappropriation of funds intended for the purchase of heavy equipment (Radar Kerinci 2011a).

As mentioned in Chapter 3, one of the most lucrative privileges for district heads is control over the appointment of civil servants. According to informants in the public and NGO sectors the current headman of Kerinci has tightly controlled civil service appointments, and it is estimated that approximately half of the appointments over the past two years have been awarded to people from Siulak90 subdistrict alone. In addition, the current headman has reportedly proven very adept at extracting payments from the various government departments. According to numerous informants in NGOs, the district bureaucracy, and the media, the current district head has been open about these contributions, and frequently replaces heads of departments that refuse or are otherwise unable to play ball. In one case the head of a department was replaced three times in one year. This rapid turnover decreases continuity in decision making and strains relations with other levels of government, a dynamic consistent with the hypothesis of low quality service provision described in Chapter 3.

In addition to these results, the administrative split has resulted in two building booms; one for the creation of the new district offices in Siulak (see figure 4.2) and another for the construction of new facilities for the city government of Sungai Penuh. Many of the old district government facilities, located in the former capital of Sungai Penuh, are in the process of being vacated. The new offices for the city government are being constructed on a hill in a relatively sparsely-populated area west of town,  

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90 Siulak is the home and base of power for the current district headman. It is one of twelve subdistricts in Kerinci.
whereas the district offices will be moved to the village of Bukit Tenggah in Siulak subdistrict91. There is one road linking the new facilities in Sungai Penuh to the rest of the town, and to get to the new facilities one must travel five kilometers on a winding road in poor condition. The former facilities are located in the center of town in an easy-to-reach location. When the respective governments complete their moves, there will be numerous vacant buildings in the center of town. Moreover, in the case of Bukit Tenggah, which is near the border of KSNP in a relatively sparsely populated corner of Kerinci district, NGO activists and park officials expect there to be a significant influx of people, including encroachers moving into the park.

91 Bukit Tenggah and Siulak is the seat of power of the district headman.
There was also a heated dispute over the site for the new district seat, which will eventually be located in Bukit Tengah in Siulak subdistrict. There is a lot at stake here, as construction costs for the new buildings will reach into the millions of dollars. Initially a research team from the Bandung Technology Institute (Institut Teknologi Bandung, ITB) proposed four sites for the new capital\textsuperscript{92}; two of these were in Air Hangat subdistrict and one site each in Air Hangat Timur and Danau Kerinci subdistricts. As can be seen from the map, each of these locations is relatively central

\textsuperscript{92} The regulations governing administrative proliferation mandate that convenience of location should be a determining factor in deciding where capitals should be cited, but few specifics are provided.
to the district. Each site had its own supporters and detractors, but late in the selection process Bukit Tengah was put forth by the district headman as a potential site. The major argument in favor of this site was that residents were willing to donate the 300 hectares of land that would be required to construct the facilities. This site was strongly supported by the current district headman and was finally chosen in a process almost universally perceived to be corrupt. There have also emerged questions as to how "voluntary" the donation of land in Siulak actually was, with several landowners alleging they were coerced into selling land cheaply so that it could be "donated".

In most of cases of the new district formation, the new capital is much closer to most of the people than the old capital, with a few exceptions\textsuperscript{93}. However in the case of Sungai Penuh and Kerinci, the former was previously the capital of Kerinci District, and is located almost dead center in the middle of the district. The two subdistricts that were furthest away from the regional capital Sungai Penuh before pemekaran (Gunung Raya and Batang Merangin) are now actually farther away from the new regional capital at Bukit Tengah. Residents of these sub-districts complain that previously they could make a trip to the district seat, handle their official business, and return home in a day. The new location requires them to spend two days. The increased geographic distance has been accompanied by an increased identity distance as well. Residents of downstream Kerinci (\textit{Kerinci hulu}, comprising subdistricts south of Sungai Penuh including Batang Merangin, Gunung Raya, Keliling Danau, and Danau Kerinci) complain that residents of Siulak are being

\textsuperscript{93} Every part of Mukomuko, Solok Selatan, Lebong, and Dharmas Raya districts are now closer to the new district capital than they were before they were split off as new districts.
favored for coveted civil-servant positions. They also complain about the distance to the new district seat, as well as perceived neglect of infrastructure in their subdistricts. People in the valley seem to be increasingly identifying themselves with their village or subdistrict rather than as Kerinci people (Orang Kerinci).

Thus the results of pemekaran have not been as promised. In addition to the resurgence of sub-regionalism, money politics, and corruption, the relationship between the city and the kabupaten have been less than cooperative (Radar Kerinci 2011b, c, d, e). These factors contribute to the general decline in quality of government at the district level, which as chapter 3 demonstrates, leads to greater pressures on the park. Moreover, the district split means that there are two administrative units clamoring for greater access to the resources where previously there was only one.

4.3 Puncak Andalas and Elite Territorial Ambitions

The third case study covered in this chapter describes efforts on the part of a loose coalition of local, regional, and national elites to form a new province, which would be called Puncak Andalas94 and would be formed from all or part of several districts in three provinces (Bengkulu, West Sumatra, and Jambi). The case of Puncak Andalas reveals a great deal about the informal effects of the processes of decentralization on KSNP as well as the way that decentralization is being implemented and contested in general.

94 “Puncak” means peak or top, and Andalas is a name given to the island of Sumatra by Arab traders in the 13th century. The name is a reference to Mount Kerinci, which would be in the approximate center of the new province.
As mentioned above, in addition to the official justifications for creating new regions, the process has also been driven by district and provincial elites seeking to increase their rent-seeking opportunities. The possibilities for self-enrichment draw together alliances of elite actors at various scales to form territorial coalitions, which Kimura (2010) defines as ad-hoc alliances of influential actors at different scales that find common cause in lobbying for the new regions. However, although there has been an unprecedented degree of administrative proliferation in Indonesia, many proposed regions have failed because they have been unsuccessful either in gaining the approval of the Ministry of Home Affairs or the necessary support in the national parliament. Thus in many cases the presence of a territorial coalition is not sufficient to ensure the success of the proposed region. There are numerous reasons why these proposals fail, but the geographic concept of spatial regions provides some insight into the difference between success and failure. Geographers describe three basic types of regions: formal, functional, and vernacular. All of the provinces that have been created in post-authoritarian Indonesia seem to very clearly fit into either or both of the functional/formal categories. In cases where there is not a clear functional identity or agreed upon formal extent, the likelihood of a proposal succeeding seems to be greatly diminished.

Regional elites vary in their capacity to overcome the obstacles to the formation of new regions. In some instances districts and provinces have emerged fairly easily, while in other cases local elites face much higher hurdles and a much longer road to realize their aspirations of forming new administrative entities. Puncak Andalas is a case in which, on the surface, the chances for success would seem quite remote.
There is no compelling regional identity that could form the basis of a formal or functional region. There is no geographically discrete ethnic group that is marginalized by the current administrative configuration. There is no historical justification, such as the traditional boundaries of a pre-colonial sultanate. Furthermore, the creation of this new province would require the establishment of at least two new districts as well as new road connections through the park between the principle towns. In other words, it would require a significant remapping of central Sumatra, both in terms of the cartography of administrative boundaries as well as the creation of new physical infrastructure. In order to overcome these formidable hurdles, local elites have embraced an incremental strategy whereby smaller, more attainable goals are targeted, including the development of transportation links and the establishment of new subdistricts. This incremental strategy broadens the base of support for each intervening goal while gradually establishing the basis of a functional region, thereby increasing the possibilities of Puncak Andalas eventually being approved as a new province. Moreover, this gradual, incremental strategy enables peripheral regional elites to proceed without the active cooperation of existing provincial elites; in this way it is a sort of "backdoor" strategy for pursuing a new province.

The story of Puncak Andalas is a curious one for a number of reasons. First, it demonstrates how relatively weak local elites are able to work through a system of decentralization that creates significant legal barriers for the creation of new provinces. They are able to exploit the new powers granted to districts in order to initiate smaller, more mundane policies and projects which simultaneously improve
their rent-seeking potential while creating the foundation and momentum for more ambitious move in the future. Moreover, this case shows how powers granted to districts are not being used in to benefit the majority of residents of the districts, but instead are being used to advantage a small group of district elites. Second, the fact that Puncak Andalas would be carved from three existing provinces makes this case so exceptional that it is important to understand just how local elites would pursue its realization. Moreover, the case of Puncak Andalas helps advance an understanding of both the varied and contested notions of regions and the politics of decentralization in contemporary Indonesia by illustrating struggles over territoriality. Lastly, this case shows that while the local elites pushing for the formation of Puncak Andalas province stand to benefit greatly, the residents of the largely peripheral areas that would constitute the new province could very well experience further marginalization and a deterioration of quality in terms of representation, government service provision, and environmental degradation.

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95 Of the eight new provinces that have been formed since the fall of Suharto, all of them have been split from a single mother province. Moreover, of the 11 potential provinces envisioned in the Ministry of Home Affairs' Grand Design for Regional Arrangement 2010-2025 (Desain Besar Penataan Daerah di Indonesia Tahun 2010-2025), all would be formed from a single contributing province. See also Ridwan Max Sijabat, "How Many Provinces Does Indonesia Need?" Jakarta Post, April 20, 2012, p. 10.
Since Puncak Andalas province would be created from pieces of three existing provinces, it would require a significant redrawing of the administrative map of western and central Sumatra, including the establishment of several new districts. From Bengkulu province the recently created (2003) district of Mukomuko would be added. West Sumatra province would contribute the entire district of Solok Selatan, and Jambi province would yield Kerinci district and Sungai Penuh, which would become the new province's capital. Additional areas would be split from other existing districts and grafted on to Puncak Andalas as new districts as well. Currently the Ministry of Home Affairs is considering a proposal to split Pesisir Selatan district.
in West Sumatra province, creating a new district called Ranah Indojati. Ranah Indojati would then become a part of Puncak Andalas. Jambi would also contribute a remote corner of Merangin district, which would be split off to form the new district of Jangkat. In addition, Kerinci would be split into two smaller districts, Kerinci Hilir and Kerinci Hulu. These district splits would not only enable the new province to meet the legal minimum requirement of five districts to create a new province, but they would also create "kingdoms of authority" (Firman 2009) for supporters. However, this project of administrative remapping is a daunting task requiring the cooperation of a range of actors in different provinces and at different scales of government.

The presence of KSNP also helps to bring the territorial coalition together for two reasons. The first is that they find in the park a common enemy, as all of the districts have a significant portion of their territory covered by the park. All of those supporting the creation of the province are relatively marginal elites, hailing from somewhat neglected corners of their respective provinces. This marginality is what brings them together, since for all of the elites in question the establishment of a new province would have several noteworthy benefits, including greater access to state resources. Thus the presence of the park helps to explain both why local elites might want to break away from their current provinces, and why the current provinces might let them go or even encourage them to bolt. In the latter case, the provincial governments may perceive these remote areas as drains on provincial resources, or areas that have to be subsidized. This dynamic is exacerbated by the fact that many of the districts in question (especially those in Jambi and Bengkulu) have noticeably
lower levels of infrastructure development. Thus if these relatively lagging remote areas were to become part of a new province, the contributing provinces would no longer be responsible for funding projects there\textsuperscript{96}. On the other hand, for the district elites that complain about the presence of the park, elevation to provincial status would give them a unified voice and more leverage against the Ministry of Forestry, which administers the park. It would also allow them to send legislators to the national parliament, who could exert pressure on the Ministry of Forestry to negotiate certain access rights to parts of the park\textsuperscript{97}. The Bukit Barisan mountains are widely thought to be rich in coal, gold, natural gas, and other resources, and so if local elites were successful in renegotiating access rights, they would experience a significant windfall. Moreover, even if efforts to negotiate legal access were unsuccessful, establishment of a new province would also enable them to control various forms of informal and illegal access to the park\textsuperscript{98}.

Lastly, regional elites might be drawn to supporting a new province because it would offer the possibility of moving up in the provincial pecking order. This would be true for leaders in both existing districts and those yet to be created. The leadership of all of the existing districts would benefit from their geographic and relational proximity to the new provincial capital, whereas for districts that have yet to be created, becoming part of a new province would increase their influence in

\textsuperscript{96} A 2008 study conducted by the National Planning Agency (BAPPENAS) explicitly noted that parent regions often attempt to offload their poor to new autonomous regions; the study found that higher concentrations of poor people are found in new regions.

\textsuperscript{97} This would certainly not be unprecedented. Zaini Abdullah, elected governor of Aceh province in 2012, has formally proposed to the Ministry of Forestry that some protection forests in the province be rezoned as production forests, which would open the door for oil palm extensification, logging, and mining. See Indriyatno, Hayat, "Aceh Governor Wants to Allow More Logging in Protected Forests" \textit{Jakarta Globe} 2/13/2013.

\textsuperscript{98} Several scholars, including Booth 2011 and Firman 2009, have asserted that potential access to natural resources has been a driver of province and district creation.
provincial affairs compared to the old province. For example, if and when Ranah Indojati district is created, the district headman will be one of 20 district heads in West Sumatra province, all presumably competing for influence with the governor, all attempting to foster coalitions at the national level. The new headman of Ranah Indojati in this case would likely be disadvantaged both by shear numbers and the fact that he would be competing against existing networks of regional elites. However, if Ranah Indojati became part of Puncak Andalas, the headman would be one of only seven, and would in that case have much more influence in provincial affairs as well as access to national parliamentarians, and might even have a greater opportunity to one day become governor himself.

4.3.1 Successful and Unsuccessful Provinces: The Importance of Regional Identity

Since 1998 numerous new provinces have been proposed, but only eight have been established. What makes the difference between a successful and failed campaign to form a new province? Geography offers a simple yet useful conceptualization of regions that helps to understand the political aspects of provincial formation in Indonesia and cast some light on the current potential for the Puncak Andalas ambition to be realized. Most introductory human geography textbooks discuss three types of regions: formal, functional, and perceptual. Formal regions are those that are united by some common unifying characteristic, such as nationality, climate, or vegetation. Indonesia is a formal region, as are its provinces and districts. Functional regions (also known as nodal regions), in contrast, are
centered on some type of activity; common examples include delivery or media regions. The broadcast radius of a local television station would be an example.

Lastly, perceptual regions refer to human attitudes towards places; perceptual regions (also sometimes referred to as "vernacular regions") are somewhat subjective as their limits might vary from person to person. "Dixie" is a commonly cited example of a perceptual region in the United States.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Year Established</th>
<th>Mother Province</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangka-Belitung</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>South Sumatra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banten</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>West Java</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gorontalo</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>North Sulawesi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Maluku</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Maluku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Kalimantan</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>East Kalimantan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riau Islands</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Riau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Papua</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Papua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Sulawesi</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>South Sulawesi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 lists the provinces that have been formed since the fall of Suharto. All of these can be classed as either formal or functional regions or a combination of the two. Gorontalo province, for example, has a distinctive history and cultural tradition (Kimura 2007). Gorontalo can clearly be defined as a formal region, and thus given the laws on regional autonomy there was a strong case to be made for the formation of this province. Booth (2011) describes the formation of Banten province on Java, which was split off from West Java in 2000. At that time West Java was the most populous province in Indonesia with a staggering 40 million people. Many in the government felt that such a large population made it impossible for the provincial government to fairly and efficiently provide public services. At the same time, the
people of Banten had a distinct history and culture and were also geographically separate from the majority Sundanese, who are concentrated in the highlands around Bandung. Thus in addition to arguments based on administrative efficiency, the people of Banten were successfully able to argue that they deserved to have their own province.

Other new provinces are more accurately described as functional regions. One example would be the Riau Islands (Kepulauan Riau), centered on the island of Batam. These islands have a long history of association with the Johor Sultanate, but more recently have been associated with Singapore and Peninsular Malaysia via the establishment of the SIJORI growth triangle (Kimura 2012). Thus these islands form a functional region of export processing that takes advantage of their proximity to Malaysia and Singapore. The history of the Riau Islands also suggests the area could be treated as a formal region as well. North Maluku and the Bangka-Belitung Islands both demonstrate characteristics of functional regions; these provinces were created in part to cut down on administrative costs due to the distance to the capital of their mother provinces. Thus virtually all of the new provinces created in Indonesia since the fall of Suharto had clear identities or economic orientations (or both) prior to their establishment as provinces.

Failed campaigns to create provinces also provide some lessons as to the difficulty of province formation and some of the common problems that can derail a campaign to form a new province. Roth (2007) explains the saga of the failed effort to form the province of Luwu Raya on Sulawesi, a province that would have
combined Tana Toraja and Luwu districts. These two areas have historical connections, but the extent of the Greater Luwu region was opened up to reinterpretation after the departure of the Dutch. Throughout the post-colonial era various powerful interests have attempted, with varying degrees of success, to redefine the region in accordance with their political agendas. The result is that there is now no clear consensus among local and national elites on the extent and identity of Greater Luwu; one might make the argument that the historical formal region has gradually become a perceptual region, and thus the case for provincial formation is much less compelling. Disputes among regional elites as to what areas would be included in the new province ultimately led to the failure of Luwu Raya.

4.3.2 The Formation of a Functional Region as the Basis of Province Formation

Puncak Andalas doesn't fit the bill as a functional, formal, or perceptual region. It is ethnically heterogeneous without a marginalized cultural minority. Thus in this case, a strategy relying on identity politics whereby religion or ethnicity are utilized as fulcrums to achieve political ends, would most likely be a non-starter. Moreover, there are no real defined patterns of commerce centered on a node that would define it as a functional region on the scale of a province; rather most of the trade in the area ultimately passes though the port of Padang, but the distance to Padang is widely held to be a burden on economic activity. In addition, it isn't a

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99 Each of these districts has experienced at least one split since the reformasi movement began.
100 It should be noted here that Luwu Raya likely failed in part to divisions within its supporting territorial coalition. Indeed, territorial coalitions and coherent regional identity should be considered as mutually-constitutive.
101 See Vel (2007) for an examination of efforts to form new districts in the island of Sumba in Eastern Indonesia. Sumba, she argues, is relatively homogenous religiously and ethnically and thus has some parallels with the current situation.
particularly large area with a huge population as in the case of West Java (the current population of the districts and subdistricts that would become Puncak Andalas is approximately 850,000). The districts that would become Puncak Andalas would be drawn from three existing provinces (Bengkulu, West Sumatra, and Jambi) and represent the most far-flung parts of those provinces. Thus unlike the instances described above, there isn't a strong or particularly compelling preexisting case for creating a new province on the basis of any of these commonly used logics. In the present case, most arguments for the new province focus on the distance from the districts involved to their respective provincial capitals as well as a general feeling of neglect on the part of local residents and their leaders. For example, the head of the Kerinci district legislative assembly was publicly quoted as saying "Jambi province must be split into two, that is, Jambi province and Puncak Andalas. This should have been done long ago, because the distance from the capital of Jambi to the districts and municipalities, especially Merangin, Kerinci, and Sungai Penuh, is very far." Elected officials and bureaucrats in these areas frequently cite disparities in provincial outlays between their districts and areas closer to the provincial capital as evidence of neglect. They also argue that they are too far away from their provincial capitals to effectively lobby for their districts, and the leaderships of districts closer to Jambi City, Bengkulu City, and Padang have an unfair advantage, both in terms of formal and informal political processes. Unfortunately for the local elites, the distance argument is likely not enough to compel national authorities to approve the formation of a new province\textsuperscript{102}, but it seems to have the effect of encouraging far-flung district elites to

\textsuperscript{102} The distance argument is commonly used in advocating for new regions; while it doesn't seem to be sufficient in and of itself to merit a new province, it has been an effective argument for new districts.
cleave to one another, in effect creating what might be considered a new type of region whereby similar circumstances are conducive to the emergence of personal ties and informal connection between political and business leaders of different districts and provinces.

For this reason local elites, in order to increase their prestige and financial opportunities, have to create some sort of regional identity if they ever want to see their dream of a new province realized (Radar Kerinci 2010). The most sensible way to do this would be to foster an economic functional region centered on a node, which would, according to the plan, be Sungai Penuh. However, so far there isn't much active support among provincial or national elites for forming a new province as it is still widely perceived to be an impossible vision. Thus for devoted supporters of the new province, the best approach is an incremental one. In other words, approach the task as a series of smaller goals. This makes it easier to mobilize active support for each incremental goal, and the administrative (and financial) barriers for these goals are much easier to overcome. These intervening goals are described in the following sections.

**Step One: Establish Sub-districts.** Sub-districts (kecamatan) are relatively small and are fairly easy to create. All of the requirements for new sub-districts except for

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This argument was used to justify the creation of Solok Selatan district in 2003 and is currently being used by advocates of splits in both Kerinci and Pesisir Selatan districts.

103 This statement is based on interviews with several of the prime movers behind the Puncak Andalas movement. One of the common threads that emerged from my discussions with these leaders is that they see the process of creating a new province as a long-term project; one mentioned the timeframe of twenty to twenty-five years.

104 Government Regulation 19/2008 spells out the role of the subdistrict and its head within the context of Indonesia's administrative hierarchy. Requirements for forming new sub-districts include the following:
one can be fulfilled within the district itself, and given the massive proliferation of sub-districts, the last requirement (approval of the provincial governor) seems to be a minor obstacle at most. A new sub-district is an easy objective to get widespread support for because it increases the recognition for the people in the sub-district.

There are also a few new jobs created for administrative positions and more government money flows to the sub-district\(^{105}\), so most people are in favor of their formation. But new sub-districts have two other functions. First, the head of the sub-district (*camat*) is the only official in the government hierarchy that is not elected\(^{106}\); instead the *camat* is picked by the district head. Thus *camat* positions can be used to reward loyal supporters and prepare them for positions as heads of district bureaus, and they can also be used to create a powerful electoral machine at the subdistrict level that generates votes. Second, according to regulation 19/2008, at least five sub-districts are required to progress to step two (creating a new district; discussed below).

Sub-district proliferation can be seen in several of the districts involved in the plan to create Puncak Andalas province. For example, Merangin district, which according to the plan would be split to form a new district (called Jangkat), increased from nine sub-districts in 2006 to twenty-four in 2012. Perhaps more importantly, the part of the district that would be ceded to form a new district now has five sub-

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1. Agreement from all village representative councils involved
2. Agreement from all village heads
3. At least 10 villages or wards (in urban areas the requirement is five)
4. Research on the part of the district or administrative municipality showing that the proposed subdistrict (and mother sub-district) meet a number of loosely-defined technical requirements
5. A recommendation from the governor.

\(^{105}\) The amount of money available to sub-districts varies from place to place depending on the programs that have been implemented by the provincial and central governments as well as any outside (multilateral, bilateral, or international NGO) involvement. In 2012 the governor of Jambi province announced grants of up to IDR1 billion (slightly more than US$100,000) per sub-district.

\(^{106}\) Heads of *kelurahans*, which are parallel with desas and are found in urban areas, are also appointed civil servants.
districts (formerly there were three), which fulfills the technical requirement.
Likewise Pesisir Selatan district, which also would be split into two districts (Pesisir Selatan and Ranah Indojati) to facilitate the formation of Puncak Andalas province, created three new sub-districts in 2012, increasing to six the number of sub-districts in the southernmost portion of the district, which would be split off to form a new district. Lastly Kerinci district, which lost five sub-districts when Sungai Penuh was split off as an independent administrative municipality in 2008, created four new sub-districts in 2012, for a total of twelve. District officials in Kerinci openly admit their goal is to create a new district; the head of the district assembly was quoted in a local newspaper as saying "if this subdistrict is made official then Kerinci district will have four new districts, so that the road to dividing the district into two governments is more open" (Sike 2011). This means that now Kerinci district has enough sub-districts to be split into two districts. Conversely in the two districts that would join Puncak Andalas province without district splits (Solok Selatan and Mukomuko) there have been no new sub-districts created in the past five years, which suggests the possibility that in this case sub-district creation is related to plans to split districts.
Step Two: Establish New Districts. According to the aforementioned 2008 regulation, at least five districts and municipalities are required to form a new province, and so currently Puncak Andalas is one district short of the requisite number. Establishing new districts is significantly more difficult than the creation of sub-districts though as it requires a special law to be passed by the national legislature or approval from a multi-ministerial committee headed by the Ministry of Home Affairs, but as noted above, hundreds of new districts have been created in the reformasi era. A large number of these new districts have been created on Sumatra, and in particular in the area that would become Puncak Andalas province. Merangin (formerly part of
Sarolangun-Bangko district), Solok Selatan (split off from Solok district), Mukomuko (split off from Bengkulu Utara in 2003) and Sungai Penuh (split off from Kerinci district) are all relatively new administrative entities.

New sub-districts help make the case for new districts, but popular support and elite coalitions are essential as well. In each of the cases described above coalitions of district, provincial, and national level actors were instrumental in forming the new districts. In the first few years after the passage of regulation 129/2000 most new districts were approved, and so these coalitions were able to take advantage of a particular historical juncture to elevate their position and status. Since the law was revised in 2008 it has become more difficult to create new districts, but there are currently campaigns in several stages of development afoot to orchestrate district splits that would contribute to Puncak Andalas province. The most advanced of these movements is the one to create a new district, Ranah Indojati, from the southernmost portion of Pesisir Selatan district in West Sumatra province. The plan has already been approved by the district leadership and the provincial government and has been submitted to the Home Affairs Ministry along with supporting technical documentation. The new district has widespread support, especially from residents of the six sub-districts who claim that they have long been neglected by the district government in Painan, the district seat of Pesisir Selatan. Moreover, they say that the distance to Painan is a significant hardship for them and that it reduces the efficiency of government. If the geographic characteristics of nearby districts are any guide, Ranah Indojati stands a good chance of being approved; Pesisir Selatan is twice as large as most of the other districts in the area and its population of approximately
450,000 is far higher than that of many other districts. In addition, local leaders feel that Minister of Home Affairs Gamawan Fauzi, himself a Minang, strongly supports the formation of the new district. Time is of the essence, though, since national elections will be held in 2014 and it is likely that Gamawan Fauzi's tenure as minister will come to an end.

Efforts are also underway in Kerinci to split the district in two, but the earliest this could occur would be in 2015 since the Sungai Penuh-Kerinci split happened in 2008 and there is a seven year waiting period for new splits. This split has widespread support throughout the usually fractious district; the most powerful members of the district assembly as well as the current and former headmen are very vocal in their support of the split and have had meetings to endorse the plan and coordinate their efforts. Members of the district assembly routinely make public statements in support of the split, framing the issue as an inevitable outcome. Moreover there are powerful supporters in the Jambi provincial assembly, including the wife of the former district headman.

Efforts to split Merangin into two districts (Merangin and Jangkat) are less advanced than in the other districts but they are underway and it is reasonable to

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107 Gamawan Fauzi was born in Solok, the mother district of Solok Selatan, one of the districts that would become part of Puncak Andalas. The fact that the proposal was channeled through the Ministry of Home affairs is notable itself, since most proposals for new provinces and districts are channeled through the national parliament. It makes sense then that the minister would be instrumental in this move, but this connection is only part of an elite coalition supporting the Pesisir Selatan split. Gamawan Fauzi previously served as governor of West Sumatra province. After he supported the reelection bid of Democrat party candidate SBY he was appointed minister. The new district is also supported by the chairman of the Democrat party for Pesisir Selatan, who currently serves in the West Sumatra provincial legislature. He is from Lunang Silaut, a town in the part of Pesisir Selatan that would become the new district, and hence would stand an excellent chance of being appointed and then elected district headman of the new district. Moreover, the current head of Pesisir Selatan district, through a member of the National Mandate Party (PAN), was elected in part due to support from the Democrat party.

108 This couple is also among the most outspoken supporters of Puncak Andalas province.
expect that they will gain momentum in the near future, especially if the Pesisir Selatan and Kerinci splits are approved. While I was in the field the district government of Merangin has not formally begun the research required to examine the feasibility of the split and the district leaders, though supportive of the split, are less vocal about it\textsuperscript{109}. However, there is a base of support for the creation of the new district, and the close ties between high level bureaucrats and elected officials in Merangin and Kerinci districts suggest that there is most likely coordination between them (Rakyat Merdeka 2007). As described above, the district government has created the necessary sub-districts to realize the split, and so it is likely only a matter of time before the movement gains momentum.

As mentioned above, new districts bring tremendous benefits for local elites. A new district requires a new headman. It also entails an enormous increase in funds from the central government in the form of general allocations, special allocations, and balancing funds. And in addition to the contracts associated with the construction of the new district seat, all of the new civil service positions provide ample opportunities for rent-seeking. For all of these reasons new districts generally enjoy widespread support among local residents and are seen as a realistic and worthy goal. Forming a new district has even become a campaign promise for at least one candidate for district headman\textsuperscript{110}. Therefore in and of themselves district splits are a lucrative goal, but in this case they are only a means to an end. These splits go hand-

\textsuperscript{109} However, at the time of writing this dissertation, a new district head had been elected in Merangin thanks in part to strong support from the Jangkat area. The new district headman's wife is from Muara Maders, which would presumably become the district seat of the new district.

\textsuperscript{110} Like many campaign promises, especially those sanctioning illegal activities, this was an oral rather than unwritten promise. After I personally witnessed this bupati candidate tell villagers that he would ensure the formation of a new district if elected he told me that he had already made arrangements with the Director General of Regional Autonomy at the Ministry of Home Affairs to make the new district a reality.
Step Three: Establish New Connections. Economic functional regions are characterized by mutually interdependent ties between towns, which currently are limited in the area that would become Puncak Andalas province. KSNP is a major obstacle to commerce, as there is only one road from the west coast of Sumatra into Kerinci District, which is essentially a large enclave within the park. Two additional roads run north and east out of Kerinci Valley, but other than that there are no other ways around the park and so it is in effect a massive barrier to regional integration, dividing the Puncak Andalas area into four mutually hard to access mini-regions (see figure 4.4). Currently the fifteen districts surrounding the park have proposed a total of more than 30 road projects through the park (see chapter 5). Four of these roads are essential for the future of Puncak Andalas province. Moreover, the creation of new districts helps to make the case that these roads are necessary.

Much of the local rationale for supporting roads is that they will spur economic growth. However most of the sub-districts around the park are relatively sparsely populated and are hence not very powerful politically, and so they have up until now not been able to muster much support for their road projects. Two small towns are of particular interest in this regard: Lempur in Kerinci district and Muara Maderas in Merangin. Historically both of these have been rich rice producing areas and because of their relatively isolated locations they have developed a distinctive local identity. Now this isolation is seen as a burden; both towns are hemmed in by KSNP, located
along roads that stop at the edge of the park, making each of the towns a sort of dead end. Muara Maderas is approximately six hours from Bangko, the district seat of Merangin, while Lempur is approximately two hours from Bukit Tenggah, the new seat of Kerinci district. Decentralization and the rescaling of politics has given a new significance to these areas, as both towns are also the homes of powerful and vocal minorities in their respective districts, and so if these two districts succeed in pushing through proposals for district splits, Muara Maderas and Lempur are the most likely choices to become the seats of the two new districts. This would not only increase the status and prestige of these two towns, but it would also provide a direct line of communication to the provincial governor as well as more influence in the national parliament, along with greatly enhanced financial resources (in the form of allocations from the central government) to "lobby" for improvements to the districts. In this scenario it would be far easier to make a compelling case that new linkages are necessary. In the case of Lempur these linkages would be two roads through the park. The first of these would be directly to Muara Maderas and Jangkat district, a route that has long been desired by some local residents and bitterly opposed by environmental groups.

111 The new district headman of Merangin has moved aggressively over the past few months to make the road a reality.
Figure 4.4: Connections in Puncak Andalas

The second road would connect Lempur to the small town of Sungai Ipuh and the sub-district seat of Penarik in Mukomuko, which would create an easy route from the interior to the coast. Lempur residents have long desired this road as well, and it to has been particularly contentious for environmental reasons as it would pass through
the core zone of KSNP. This road would also potentially spur the exploitation of coal resources in the mountainous interior, as a large coal mining company is currently constructing a modern port facility at the border of Mukomuko and Bengkulu Utara districts. Residents of Lempur also argue that they have historical and cultural ties with both of these areas, and this argument would likely carry more weight if Lempur were a district seat. Muara Maderas would also argue for the road to Lempur and a further connection through the park to Lebong district in Bengkulu province to the south.

In addition to these roads, two other proposed routes figure prominently into the blueprint for Puncak Andalas Province. Local leaders say the first, a road connecting Kerinci district to Bungo district to the east, would allow for improved market access to more heavily populated areas in Jambi and Riau provinces while providing a boost to the tourism industry in Kerinci district. The second road, from Muara Labuh in Solok Selatan district to the town of Kambang in Pesisir Selatan district, would provide another vital link between the high mountain valleys of the Bukit Barisan mountains and the west coast of Sumatra. Road proponents argue that this link would spur inter-district commerce and would also help Solok Selatan district develop natural resource-based industries because they would have access to port facilities on the west coast of the island. All together these new roads would significantly increase access to the region. If approved the roads together would provide two north-south arteries connected by three east-west roads linking the interior to the coast, providing a strong infrastructural foundation for the new province112.

112 Over the course of my fieldwork, I reviewed numerous spatial plans, and I made the observation that Christaller's Central Place Theory seems to be an important theoretical underpinning in many of
These four roads are crucial for the development of a coherent functional region. The roads would most likely increase commerce within the larger area and Sungai Penuh would serve as a natural hub of economic activity, helping to make the case that the region should be elevated to provincial status. And much like steps one and two, it is much easier to develop a base of popular support for roads (at least in the case of this part of Indonesia) than it is for a province. Indeed in at least three of the districts involved in Puncak Andalas province, some candidates for headman have based their entire political campaigns on promises that they will build roads through the park. New roads, like new districts, enjoy widespread support which enables local elites to form issue-focused coalitions. At the same time, roads have significant payoffs for local politicians, as they are able to either directly or indirectly influence the outcome of the bidding and tendering process for construction contracts. Roads and other infrastructure projects are favorites for district governments throughout Indonesia in part because they offer such great potential for graft. However, the roads at Kerinci Seblat National Park should be seen in the context of new province formation; because these roads are integral to the formation of a functional region the stakes are much higher.

4.3.3 What's in a Name?

This discussion describes distinct steps for creating a functional region. However, another noteworthy aspect of this case is the name of the proposed province. All of these documents. I asked several BAPPEDA professionals about this, and they confirmed that Christaller's ideas are very popular in government planning circles in Indonesia. This is relevant here because the roads and new districts mentioned in this chapter would create an almost textbook example of Christaller's model, with Sungai Penuh serving as the highest order center, and the prospective district capitals as lower order hubs.
the provinces established in the post-authoritarian era have names that refer to their geographic extent or location (see table 4.2). For example, Bangka-Belitung province refers clearly to the islands that constitute the new province. West Papua refers to a specific geographic location. Puncak Andalas does not follow this pattern; rather it refers to a specific topographical feature. Again this might be dismissed as a trivial curiosity, but upon contemplation this curious choice lends support to the case made here. As I argued above, there has never been any unifying political or cultural unit that encompasses all of the constituent areas of Puncak Andalas; in other words, there has never been any formal region here. In fact, the Kerinci area has been described historically as relatively isolated or a transition area between the Minangkabau dominated areas to the north and areas under the influence of the Jambi Sultanate to the south (Bonatz et al 2009, Watson 1978). Moreover, the coastal areas that would be included in the new province consist of a mixture of people as well; Pesisir Selatan and Mukomuko are both Minang rantau areas, but the latter region has also been historically tied to Bengkulu and the Rejang people that inhabit southwest Sumatra (Andaya 1993b). Therefore since Puncak Andalas encompasses a variety of people, choosing a geographic name (e.g. Kerinci Province) risks alienating one or more groups, which given the importance of building popular support for the province would be counterproductive. Due to the presence of the national park, the name Kerinci is also associated with conservation. However, this connotation doesn't support the idea that the area is worthy of having its own province. Puncak Andalas, "the peak of Sumatra" does have the potential to serve as a marker of regional identity. The name is historically rooted, suggesting a long-standing significance. It also has a
glorious ring to it, which intentionally or not conjures up comparisons to the concept of the *mandala* whereby kingdoms in pre-colonial Indonesia were seen not as bounded political units but rather as centers of power and influence, radiating from the ruler and attenuating with geographic distance (Anderson, 1990, Kathiritahmby-Wells 1995, Kingsbury 2005). In this conceptualization Puncak Andalas represents Olympian heights, a symbol of identity visible to the people living on its slopes. Thus we see that while Puncak Andalas is being pushed as a functional region via a series of administrative and political steps, it also seems that the seed is being planted that the area represents a sort of formal region as well.

### 4.4 What are the Consequences?

The stakes are indeed high for the regional elites who stand to gain a great deal from the creation of the new province, but most if not all of the negative consequences might be shouldered by local residents if the province does not come to pass. Whether or not the new province is created there have and will be significant changes for residents of these areas. As Kimura (2012:1) explains:

...people living in areas with newly-drawn local boundaries experience an immediate change in patterns of everyday life. Their leaders suddenly change because new districts or provinces come with new mayors, district chiefs, or governors. Rules change for a range of issues from tax codes and local budget allocations to public service provision. And the fragmentation affects the physical aspects of everyday life. Where you go to perform even the most mundane tasks such as registering your car or filing for a marriage license may suddenly change because of new boundaries.
This is indeed true, and in many cases the ease (or difficulty) of obtaining government services depends on where you are. Residents of Kerinci district joke about having to pay the highest bribes to obtain a driving license; the reasoning is that since civil servants in Kerinci must pay the most to obtain a job, they must charge the highest bribes in order to recoup their investments. As mentioned previously, new districts tend not to fare as well as older, established districts in terms of service delivery. This is in part due to a lack of skilled personnel in the district government; district splits tend to dilute the talent pool (BAPPENAS 2008, USAID 2006). New officials are also less likely to be familiar with standard operating procedures and the regulations associated with their positions, leading to increased possibilities for elite capture and a decline in public satisfaction with government performance (Firman 2013, Vel 2009).

Ironically, one of the main arguments for the creation of the new province is that the local people are neglected by the provincial centers in terms of expenditures and service provision; this is also a major justification for district splits as is witnessed in Kerinci and Pesisir Selatan. The common term for this is to be treated like a step-child (dianak-tirikan). From a geographic perspective this argument is understandable; all of the districts and potential districts are among the farthest in their respective provinces from their provincial capitals. However, along the way in the course of making the case for new districts and provinces there seems to be a process of almost intentional marginalization. Each step of the way a certain group or geographic region is further marginalized because they are further removed from established centers of power and policy. This may help to make the case that the next
round of administrative proliferation is needed, but it is not sufficient in terms of the law, and certainly there is a limit to how much regions can be split. Thus if the province does not materialize but the constituent districts do, the residents of the new districts may find themselves even more marginalized and shut out by established elites and informal networks of political patronage in the existing provincial capitals. This neglect would likely fuel encroachment and other illegal activities in KSNP.

Consider the five sub-districts in Merangin that would be split off to form Jangkat district. These sub-districts are already remote, far from not only the provincial capital at Jambi City but also the district seat at Bangko. In addition to their isolation, these sub-districts are among the poorest in Merangin in terms of standard of living and among the least reached by government services. Splitting these sub-districts off from Merangin would administratively concentrate a group of people that are relatively poorer and underserved by the government, separating them from an established government that is likely far more equipped to address the aforementioned problems than the district government would be (as in the aforementioned case of Lebong). There is also the possibility that, once the mother district is aware of a desire on the part of several sub-districts to break away, that those sub-districts receive less attention from the district government. The same could be said for districts attempting to break away from existing provinces to form new provinces; knowledge of the plans could lead the provincial government to

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113 This statement is based partially on observation and interviews, but also on an interpretation of district statistics. While most districts in Indonesia do not calculate per capita income for each sub-district, they do record annual numbers of Hajj pilgrims and percentages of residents with government registration cards (KTP). I used these numbers as proxies for household income and effectiveness of government service delivery; the Jangkat sub-districts were among the lowest in the district. The same holds true for Mukomuko district when compared to the rest of Bengkulu province and the three (now six) southernmost sub-districts of Pesisir Selatan.
deprioritize spending in the districts planning to bolt. Moreover, if the formation of the new province fails, there may be lasting effects in terms of the influence of assembly members from the breakaway districts, and the relations between the province and the districts may suffer in other ways.

All of these processes have consequences for KSNP. Burgess et al. (2011) recently used MODIS satellite imagery for the years spanning 2000-2008 to analyze the effects of new district formation on deforestation rates in Indonesia. They concluded that there is an increase in forest clearance where new districts are created. Their findings apply to national parks, though the rate of forest clearance was slightly lower. Kerinci Seblat National Park is currently experiencing significant problems with deforestation stemming from agricultural encroachment within the park. These problems are by all accounts worse in newly-created districts. Moreover, many of the district governments around the park are antagonistic towards the park, and in some cases district leaders take "behind the scenes" steps to undermine the park's borders (see chapter 5). It stands to reason that the creation of new districts and a new province will increase direct and indirect pressures on the park. As noted in the case of Lebong, new district proponents typically ignore the limitations imposed on them by the park. For example, the chairman of the committee to support Ranah Indojati district recently remarked that new coal mining operations and oil palm plantations would help the proposed district generate operating funds, but given that at least fifty percent of the proposed district is covered by the park and the current land use within the district, it is difficult to imagine where the mines and plantations will be located if not in the park. This illustrates how, by resisting decentralization, the MoF and
KSNP have sidelined themselves from these unfolding processes, in the process inadvertently marginalizing conservation and environmental priorities from district and provincial planning processes. Moreover, the roads that have been shown to be integral to the new province's fate have been bitterly opposed by local, national, and international conservationists because of the impact they would have on animal habitats and ecosystems (see chapter 5). These conservationists also argue that the new roads would facilitate even more poaching, illegal logging, and encroachment, which is consistent with experiences elsewhere on Sumatra. In addition to these direct impacts, elevation to provincial status would likely give political elites in the area and their clients more influence at the national level; this would likely be manifested in calls to degazette parts of the park, as statements to this effect are frequently heard from district leaders in the areas around the park. Indeed degazettment of parts or all of KSNP might become the central preoccupation of leaders of the new province.

Thus the negative consequences will almost certainly not be felt by those pushing most adamantly for the new province, but rather by the residents of the districts as well as the ecosystems that support the agricultural activities on this part of Sumatra. Scarce government resources that might be better allocated towards improving government service delivery in underserved areas have in many cases been diverted to the several sub-goals related to the formation of the new province.
4.5 Conclusions

Since Indonesia gained independence from the Dutch in 1945 the country's internal borders have been shifted and redrawn, and new provinces, districts, and administrative municipalities have been created. During the Guided Democracy and New Order periods, most instances of new region creation were initiated or at least coordinated from Jakarta and have, directly or indirectly, figured into an overall strategy of centralization and control. For example, the formation of Riau and Jambi provinces from Central Sumatra in 1957 can be seen as part of the central government's response to the emergence of the PRRI (*Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia*: Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia) movement on Sumatra. Booth (2011: 36) refers to this split and others carried out in the 1950s as part of a "divide and rule" tactic implemented by a central government facing armed insurrections in several regions and the threat of more violent outbreaks in others." Thus it can be argued that administrative proliferation prior to 1998 was a centrally-directed and driven process. However, since the fall of Suharto, Indonesia has experienced unprecedented administrative proliferation. Decentralization has provided opportunities for locally and regionally anchored elites to pursue new provinces, and so the process of administrative proliferation has become much more decentralized and in many cases new provinces are the result of regional movements and coalitions.

This chapter has described the effects administrative proliferation has already had on the people of central Sumatra and KSNP. I have shown that elite coalitions are pushing an agenda to create a new province. In order to increase the chances of the
new province being approved, these coalitions utilize a step-by-step strategy, focusing first on a number of smaller intervening goals which are easier to achieve but which also improve the overall probability for the province to be approved. This dynamic is a result of elite capture stemming from decentralization and democratization and the new opportunities provided by these movements. Lastly I have shown that efforts to create new provinces, which are based in part on arguments that peripheral areas have been neglected by power centers, could very possibly end up increasing the marginalization of the poorest and least served by district and provincial governments.

If successful, though the establishment of Puncak Andalas could establish a new precedent whereby isolated, neglected, and remote corners of existing provinces are cobbled together to form new provinces, which could lead to further administrative balkanization of the Indonesian archipelago.

The case of pemekaran in Kerinci suggests that local elites have a significant role in steering new region formation and that increased opportunities for rent-seeking through the appointment of civil servants and the awarding of government contracts are among the principle drivers (and possibly the single most important motivation) for pemekaran. The combination of increased local freedom is developing the regional budget and increased funds from the central government provide an ideal environment for corruption, rent-seeking, and political patronage. Pemekaran has also provided an opportunity for the emergence of a new local political machine (the "Siulak group"), which thus far has proven to be more corrupt than the previous district regime. It is widely known that corruption was rampant during the tenure of the former head, but many residents of Kerinci Valley recall that, regardless of the
graft, development projects were completed and district offices were led by
bureaucrats with experience and training consistent with their duties. The new
regime is characterized by political appointees being placed in high positions for
which they have little or no qualifications.

One of the major problems with pemekaran in Indonesia is that there is little to no
oversight from the central government. The whole process is initiated at the district
level and the central government has thus far failed to design an adequate system for
measuring the feasibility of proposed administrative splits. The implementing
regulations allowing even below-average districts to apply and be approved for
administrative splits. The ambiguous requirement that pemekaran embody the
"aspirations of the people" (aspirasi masyarakat) creates a significant amount of
latitude for local elites and power-brokers to organize coalitions to support the
implementation of pemekaran. There is no metric for gauging "aspirasi masyarakat," and so the statistical studies that are commissioned to support the creation of new
districts in fact provide little clue as to how new districts will perform.

This chapter has focused mainly on indirect drivers of environmental change at
KSNP. In the next chapter I will examine another manifestation of Refomasi era
politics that has led to more direct pressures on the park.
5.1 Introduction

The execution of Wang Weiqin unfolded in the middle of a crowd of soldiers and onlookers who had gathered to watch the most severe legal penalty the Qing state could impose. Two soldiers brought forward the basket holding the knives that the procedure required. Others stripped the victim and bound him by his queue to a tripod in such a way that the front of his body was fully exposed to the state executioner and his assistant. The executioner began by slicing off pieces of flesh from the convict's breasts, his biceps, and his upper thighs.... (Brook et al 2008:1)

Death by 1000 cuts, or lingchi chusi, refers to a form of execution used in China for approximately 1000 years until it was banned in 1905. Lingchi chusi was reserved for the very worst crimes in Imperial China and conjures up images of a slow, tortured, and inevitable doom. I use this gruesome form of execution as a metaphor to describe a process currently underway at KSNP where conservationists and park managers say that the specter of road construction poses an existential threat to the massive protected area. In the previous chapters I discussed how decentralization reforms have changed the balance of powers between the central government and the districts. I also explained how, even though the districts benefit from these new powers, the central government has thus far failed to delegate adequate authority to the districts to raise revenues to fund development projects. Instead decentralization reforms have created additional incentives for the districts to increase primary sector activities, since this is one of the only ways they can increase discretionary funds. Districts argue compellingly that outside investors are more
likely to locate their operations in places where they have relatively secure access to
natural resources, and so they are losing out not only on taxes and other direct
revenues, but also the jobs and downstream industries that would accompany outside
investment. According to the districts the park hampers their development in two
ways: 1) they are not able to develop the land in the park, and 2) they are not able to
build roads through the park so that the limited natural resources they do have access
to can be developed.

These contradictions are manifested in the more than 30 roads the various districts
have proposed to be built through the park. The problem for the districts is that each
of the roads would require special approval from the Minister of Forestry, since road
construction in national parks is forbidden by law. As of the writing of this
dissertation, several of the proposals were under deliberation, but none had been
approved. For the districts and their residents these struggles are significant. On
Sumatra and in Indonesia in general, roads are visible symbols of development. They
make it easier for farmers to get their produce to market and create new trading
opportunities. Roads are also important tools of patronage in local politics (see
Chapter 3), and they allow local elites greater access to state resources in the form of
lucrative contracts. These benefits come with costs, however; roads often lead to
adverse environmental outcomes and social tension. The positives and negatives of
roads are distributed unequally, with benefits generally accruing to political and
economic elites while those unconnected to networks of patronage, control, and
access suffer the environmental and social 'bads'.
I made the case in Chapters 3 and 4 that decentralization reforms have put into motion processes that directly and indirectly increase pressure on Kerinci Seblat National Park. This chapter describes how road proposals are used by district elites as they challenge the central government's definition and claim over forest resources. The politics surrounding roads are a very visible manifestation of many of the characteristics of post-authoritarian era politics described in Chapter 3. I describe
strategies, both legal and illegal, used by district elites to contest access to forest resources. Indonesia's decentralization reforms are the proximate trigger for the new developments currently unfolding in and around Kerinci Seblat National Park, but the issues involved are not new. This story deals with classic conservation and development issues: parks versus people, central versus decentralized authority, conservation versus economic development, and market integration. Moreover, the issues at KSNP are ultimately rooted in the economic and political history of Sumatra and Indonesia in general; these longer term conditions create an essential inertia that factors into the form contestation over resources takes as well as the results of these struggles. The role of decentralization has been to modify the relative power of actors at different scales ranging from global to village and to alter the relationships of authority and accountability between these actors. Struggles over roads at Kerinci Seblat are a manifestation of these new arrangements. Bearing this in mind, this chapter seeks to address the following issues and questions:

1. How is the existence of Kerinci Seblat National Park impeding local economic development in its surrounding districts while frustrating plans of local elites to increase profits from extractive activities? This question addresses the overall theme of the park as an obstacle to effective decentralization.

2. How are district elected officials able to use the formal powers granted by decentralization to facilitate and encourage illegal activities that in turn lead to increased pressures on the park? This chapter reveals how district elites are able
to work through the government to structure "rule breaking" (Robbins et al 2009) activities at KSNP. This question relates to the overall theme of reverse statemaking by examining how newly-empowered district elites are able to use their aura of *stateness* to challenge the central government's claim on forest resources. This question also relates to the broader theme of *remapping* and *reterritorialization* by illustrating specific examples of these spatial practices.

3. How do roads proposals serve as rallying issues upon which priorities of actors at different scales converge, and in what potential ways could the interests of these actors diverge in road building ambitions bear fruit? This question relates to the dissertation's overall theme of how decentralization and democratization have in some cases led to outcomes that marginalize local people around KSNP.

### 5.2 Justifications for Roads

One of the most contentious debates stemming from the implementation of decentralization reforms in the districts and provinces around KSNP centers on the issue of roads. Road construction through national parks is forbidden by national law without the consent of the Ministry of Forestry. The Ministry has not approved any of the proposed roads ostensibly because of ecological impacts, but roads also pose a threat to the Ministry's control over forest resources (Peluso 1992, 1995). The MoF, like other bureaucratic entities responsible for land, forests, and other natural resources, is both a regulator and rent seeker (Bryant 1997; Peluso and Lund 2011), and so increased access for district elites potentially decreases the ability of the MoF
to reach lucrative conservation and/or exploitation agreements with multinational corporations, international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and other non-state actors. Roads are also opposed by local, national, and international conservation organizations, but they have widespread support from most other sectors of society. District governments, for example, argue that roads provide an economic advantage, providing shorter routes to existing markets and additional routes to new ones. For farmers in the mostly agricultural communities surrounding the park, new and better roads decrease transportation costs. Other commonly used justifications for road projects are that they will help to open up isolated and underdeveloped areas or that they will reconnect villages and regions that have traditional or historical ties.

As mentioned in previous chapters, most of the districts around the park argue that the park is an obstacle to development. Not only can they not benefit from the timber, ore, and land sequestered within the park, but the lack of existing roads serves as an enforced isolation that unfairly disadvantages them in relation to other districts. In many instances they have a point. For example, Kerinci district in Jambi province, which is a densely populated enclave completely surrounded by the park, is accessible only via one of three roads, which adds to travel times and increases the cost of consumer goods and very likely has adverse impacts on district economic development. It takes twelve hours by road to reach the provincial capital (Jambi City) and seven hours to reach the nearest port and major airport (Padang). The third route out of the district leads over the Bukit Barisan mountains towards the

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114 By road Padang is approximately 250 kilometers from Sungai Penuh, the former capital of Kerinci district. The fact that it takes seven hours to travel 250 kilometers provides some indication of the condition of the road. Likewise, the first 150 kilometers (from Sungai Penuh to Bangko) of the 10-12 hour, 400 kilometer trip to Jambi City takes approximately 5-6 hours.
coastal town of Tapan in Pesisir Selatan district. This 40 kilometer journey takes approximately two hours on a motorcycle; longer (and occasionally impossible) in a car, bus, or truck. A similar story can be told for scores of villages surrounding the park. A significant portion of the 10,000 kilometers I motorcycled while doing my fieldwork were across mud, gravel, and rock roads linking these villages with the main district and provincial roads. Progress on these roads is slow and takes a toll not only on the vehicle but also on one's body. In addition, these rough roads increase the cost for everything that crosses them.

Figure 5.4: Campaign banner for candidate for headman of Kerinci district: "Make it a reality!
Opening of the evacuation routes between Kerinci and Dusun Tuo and Kerinci and Ipuh."
As noted in chapter 3, roads have become a key issue in district level politics. The condition of roads is frequently in the news, and political challengers often point to the condition roads as an indictment of the performance of the current district leadership.

5.3 Impacts of Roads

There are two major local groups that are opposing the construction of roads through the park. The first is composed primarily of a loose group of conservationists, including NGOs and local nature lovers. They oppose the roads primarily because of the follow-on effects of encroachment, logging, and hunting (described below). The second group opposed to roads is the staff of the park itself, from the park director on down to the forest rangers. This group differs from the first primarily because their objections are legal in nature; they oppose the roads because they are *illegal*, and thus they see it as part of their professional responsibilities to oppose their construction. Many park staff that I talked to privately approved of at least some of the road projects, and thus they don't have any ideological or moral objection to some of the proposals.

One of the main pillars of the conservationists' arguments against roads through the park is that they will adversely affect the natural environment and will threaten biological diversity in the park. Over the past twenty years a whole mini-science has sprung up to research the ecological impacts of roads with studies examining the effects of transportation networks from the landscape scale on down to molecular-level analysis (Forman and Alexander 1998; Coffin 2007; Balkenhol and Waits 2009,
Koelle 2012). Although a comprehensive review of the advances of road ecology are beyond the scope of this dissertation, a brief overview of major impacts is germane to this discussion. Perhaps the most visible impact of roads on wildlife are dead animals along the shoulders and in the centers of roads. Forman and Alexander (1998) estimate that up to one million vertebrates per day are killed on roads in the US. New roads obviously increase roadkill totals and it stands to reason that roads through protected areas would experience higher rates of roadkill. But roads also fragment habitats for some animals leading to the splitting up of larger populations into smaller, sometimes less viable groups, since the population of these smaller populations fluctuates more widely over time. Road ecologists have documented a wide range of avoidance behaviors triggered by noise, pollution, and an increase in stress hormones (ibid 1998). Other species that feed on carrion may be attracted by roadkill (Coffin 2007). Roads also alter the type of plant communities found near them; the road corridor tends to be dominated by herbaceous vegetation with fast-growing plants that take advantage of the ample sunlight and moisture from drainage (Forman and Alexander 1998). Roads can also act as avenues for invasive vegetation as vehicles can carry and deposit seeds. The dispersal of these seeds is further aided by air turbulence caused by traffic on heavily-used roads (ibid 1998). The dust from roads covers surfaces and interferes with photosynthesis, respiration, and transpiration (Coffin 2007). Lastly, roads impact ecosystems and hydrology. Roads facilitate runoff and thereby increase the rate and extent of erosion; more sediments entering streams can alter channel morphology and discharge rates (Coffin 2007). This can lead to an interesting but ecologically devastating complex of effects: faster streams
often have less vegetated banks, which, when combined with siltation of streams causes increased temperature of water which in turn stresses certain species of fish that are temperature sensitive. At the same time, other species that are not as temperature dependent experience more favorable conditions (Coffin 2007). As impervious surfaces they reduce rates of infiltration, percolation, and thus aquifer recharge.

A second pillar in the road opponents' critique of roads is the indirect or secondary effects they have on forests. For those that employ them, these arguments are generally based on observation and experience rather than scientific study, but they are nonetheless valid concerns from the perspective of conservationists and are supported by a wide range of case studies from elsewhere in the world (Chomitz and Gray 1996; Laurance et al. 2001, Rudel and Horowitz 1993). In many instances roads open up new areas to settlement and cultivation. This is consistent with the follow-on dynamic described by Rudel and Horowitz (1993) whereby 'lead institutions,' be they governments or private enterprises, establish roads through forests to access resources or to connect up isolated regions (see chapter 6 for a full analysis). Land along the left and right sides of the road is in many cases unclaimed and unregulated, and so pioneering farmers move in and begin cultivation. Additionally, conservationists argue that roads increase access for illegal loggers and hunters. The former problem is particular acute at KSNP, as the number of forest police is already insufficient to patrol existing roads and borders, and stories abound of midnight trucks filled with timber exiting the park. Evidence of surreptitious and small scale clearance can be seen in many places on the periphery of the park. The
latter problem is also quite severe at KSNP; tiger poaching is a serious and ongoing challenge, and in recent years nature lovers and park staff have reported dramatic declines in bird populations.

Figure 5.3: Cultivation and clearing on a steep slope along a newly-opened road on the periphery of KSNP. Photo by Bettinger.

These impacts are compounded by the economic and physical contexts in which roads are constructed on Sumatra. Road construction in Indonesia is rife with corruption from the sub-district level all the way up to the national scale (Olken 2007). Aspinall (2009) demonstrates how local elites collude to control the tendering and bidding process while Kuncoro et al (2013) describe how elected officials solicit bribes and kickbacks from businessmen in exchange for road construction and
maintenance contracts. As a result, to recoup costs contractors often use lesser-quality materials and techniques when constructing roads, leading to an inferior product. Interviews with district officials indicate this type of corruption is characteristic of the districts around KSNP as well. These negative outcomes are made more apparent by geographic factors. In the mountainous areas surrounding the park, steep, unbuttressed road cuts through deeply weathered parent material undermines slope stability, which when coupled by high rainfall leads to frequent landslides which wash out the roads. In addition to temporarily cutting off communities from the outside world, landslides alter stream hydrology and can affect species composition (Coffin 2007). Any road passing through the mountains must utilize numerous switchbacks to wind tortuously over the ridges with very steep cuts into the surrounding hills. Virtually all of the roads around the park are two lane roads, and so the steep gradients force the truck traffic to go very slowly, resulting in significant backups\textsuperscript{115}. In some cases an entire slope or even the top of a hill is removed to make room for the road. However, all of central Sumatra lies within the wet tropics, and so there is a significant amount of rainfall over the course of the year. In tropical climates with heavy rainfall, the rate of chemical weathering is exceptionally high (Ritter et al 2006), resulting in the rapid breakdown and decay of rock which leads to mass wasting. Thus the major components of the Bukit Barisan mountains is deeply weathered rock, regolith, and soil (see figure 5.6 below). This means that the shear strength of slopes decreases dramatically as the slope gets steeper, and so unlike the very steep road cuts characteristic of roads through the

\textsuperscript{115} This aspect of traffic on Sumatra also encourages drivers to take risks to pass slow moving traffic on curves and switchbacks. As a result there are frequent accidents and traffic fatalities are a common occurrence.
primarily granite Appalachian mountains, the slopes of the steep road cuts through the Bukit Barisan are very unstable and extremely susceptible to slope failure. The heavy rain that serves as the agent of rock weathering also serves double duty as the agent of slope failure, since heavy rains trigger frequent landslides (*longsor*) which block the roads and pose a danger to drivers.

Figure 5.4: Road cut on the Sungai Penuh-Bangko road in Central Sumatra, constructed in 2010; the photo was taken in early 2012. Photo by Bettinger.
5.4 The Politics of Roads

In the three case studies that follow, I demonstrate how aspiring district elites use a particular discourse of the park to gain popular support in district elections. This allows these elected officials to assert an electoral mandate for road construction; they can claim they are representing the aspirations of their constituents (aspirasi masyarakat) as they seek to maximize the flow of benefits from construction contracts and natural resources to themselves and their supporters. The first case describes a form of counter-mapping that is used to discursively construct a geographic identity for a new district. A second case study demonstrates how district elites make use of the formal powers to facilitate and encourage illegal activities, which undermine the park, and from which they benefit through new informal networks and arrangements. A third case study demonstrates how the interests of district elites and long neglected villages converge in the form of a proposed road. Decentralization reforms have created conditions where stakeholders at these two scales find common cause, but the eventual development of the road would most likely lead to a divergence of interests, with the costs and benefits being shared unequally between the district and village level stakeholders.

Two important issues of concern to political ecologists stand out as relevant to this discussion. The first of these is that an overreliance of technical solutions often masks embedded sociopolitical issues and impacts (Hecht 1985; Bryant and Bailey 1997). Roads are the quintessential technical solution to development problems in Central Sumatra; district leaders assert that roads will enhance development by decreasing the distance to market for farmers and will open up new trading
opportunities for entrepreneurs. Roads enjoy widespread support as they are favored by politicians, bureaucrats, and common people. But each of these groups favors the opening up of new roads for different reasons. This leads to the second postulate: costs and benefits associated with environmental change are for the most part distributed among actors unequally. Because these different groups have varying levels of power and influence, their capability to determine the ultimate outcomes of development projects like roads is unequal. It follows then that more influential actors will reap more of the rewards and shoulder less of the burdens, while weaker actors tend to experience more of the environmental hardships while enjoying fewer benefits. Using the tools of political ecology we can tease apart these various interests to understand where they converge, and predict where they will likely diverge in the future and what the consequences of this divergence will be. By looking at the strategies that are used to mobilize support for a particular road project, and by observing how support for road projects coalesce, we might be able to identify potential sites of future environmental degradation and social dislocation.

5.4.1 Case 1: The Kambura Road and the Formation of a Geographic Identity

Official district-produced maps of Solok Selatan, a mountainous region on the southern periphery of West Sumatra province, show a road linking Muara Labuh, the largest town in the district, with Kambang, a village in Pesisir Selatan district located on the western coast of Sumatra (see Figure 5.5). The road is also portrayed in the district's spatial plan for the period 2011-2031 (rengana tata ruang wilayah, RTRW), a document which illustrates and describes the long term development vision for the
district. However, if you travel to Solok Selatan you will find that the road does not actually exist; rather these maps represent the district government's imagined geography. As mentioned in Chapter 3, RTRW plans are developed by district planning boards (BAPPEDA) and while they must comply with broad national guidelines, they reflect the development aspirations of the districts themselves. The road figures prominently in the strategic plan because it provides a direct route to the coast for the district's expanding mining output. The 'Kambura' road is named for the towns that bookend its path through the hills and down to the coast. Officials in Solok Selatan say the road is still in the planning stages, but they see its eventual construction as an inevitability. The reality is a bit more complicated; since the road would pass through KSNP, it would require special approval from the Ministry of Forestry. Though the MoF has already rejected the road, district officials have resubmitted the proposal and have budgeted money for the road's construction.

The maps produced by the government of Solok Selatan are an interesting case countermapping, which has, over the years, been used in Indonesia for the purposes of 'appropriat[ing] the state's techniques and manner of representation to bolster the legitimacy of "customary" claims to resources' (Peluso 1995:384). Typically those that employ countermapping techniques are local communities, indigenous groups supported by non-governmental organizations and international donors. This case differs from most instances of countermapping in that it is an official political entity that is using maps to challenge the central state's authority. The maps are part of a broader narrative of the impact of Kerinci Seblat National Park on the district as well as an important part of the district's emerging geographic identity. This identity
serves the interests of district elites empowered by processes set in motion by
decentralization who are seeking the road in order to enhance the benefits they
already realize from privileged access to natural resources.

Solok Selatan is a new district, formed in 2003 after being split off from Solok
district to the north. The rationale for the district split was that Solok district was too
large, which hindered administrative efficiency, and the resource endowment of what
would become Solok Selatan district was deemed sufficient to support a new
administrative entity. Some local informants, however, say the split was driven by
well-connected local elites seeking to take advantage of new laws to increase their
access to state resources, both in the form of grants to districts from the central
government and access to the new district's natural resources. Those pushing for the
creation of the new district were eventually elected to powerful positions in the new
government, giving them access to a wide array of patronage powers. The result has
been the establishment of a new center of political power and decision making that is
relatively remote from larger markets for its agricultural produce and ports from
which to ship raw materials.

For these elites the road is very important because it will decrease the distance to
port facilities in Pesisir Selatan. Conservation activists insist that this is part of a
larger plan which would enable district elites to more easily and profitably ship
timber, mined ore, and other commodities out of Solok Selatan. These elites would
benefit directly because they own land that would be mined and indirectly as they
would be able to issue licenses to mining companies in exchange for kickbacks.
According to local conservationists the park would suffer in two ways: first from the
construction of the road corridor through the park, which would fragment habitat and provide a point of entry for loggers and poachers, and secondly because increased mining and logging would lead to encroachment since the companies would, with the sanction and protection of the district government, move beyond the official borders of their concessions and mine and log within the park.

This obviously is not the sort of justification that is likely to gain the approval of the Ministry of Forestry, and so the district's administration has been working to construct a narrative of the new district's geographic identity, which includes historical connections to Pesisir Selatan district. Officials in Solok Selatan say that there was a well-travelled route between the two districts that for centuries was used by locals to trade potatoes, sugar, and other inland products for fish and other coastal specialties. As a result of this commerce, the two areas share kinship ties and cultural affinities, but when the borders of the park were established in the mid-late 1990s, the route was severed as access to the footpath was cut off. They argue that in addition to general economic development, the road would foster a renewal of these historical ties. Villagers on either end of the proposed road admit that there were direct trading relations between the two areas, but that traffic on the road dried up in 1990 when roads in both areas were upgraded, which improved access for vehicles on either end of the road. Better roads encouraged local villagers to take longer, but easier to traverse routes.

The local government also claims that the route is needed as an evacuation route\textsuperscript{116}. In interviews they point to the number of active faults in the district as well as the district's proximity to Mount Kerinci, the highest active volcano in Indonesia.

\textsuperscript{116} Padang Ekspres (newspaper) 11/12/2911: "Kambura Jadi Jalur Evakuasi".
They say the new road is needed because in the case of a natural disaster, the existing roads out of the district would quickly become clogged, which would hamper access to emergency crews and relief supplies. This vulnerability also forms an important part of the district's geographic identity, an identity that necessitates the construction of the Kambura road. Local conservation NGOs dismiss this logic, though, since the proposed road would take a steep and winding path through one of the most seismically active parts of the district, thus greatly limiting its functionality as an escape route. Moreover, according to interviews with high level bureaucrats in Solok Selatan, there has been no feasibility study or environmental impact assessment to support the assertion that the road is needed, or how it would be built if it were to be approved.

Though these justifications for the road are rejected by local NGOs, they are effective at mobilizing support amongst the voting public. The concern over evacuation routes seems to be widespread in the district, and many people in other parts of the district feel that renewing historical ties is a legitimate justification for the road. Indeed, some people in the district already think the road exists. But the road is not universally supported in the district government. High ranking bureaucrats admitted to me that the road has drawn attention and resources away from more pressing issues in the district, and while some informants personally are not in favor of the road project, they are compelled to publicly support it because they were appointed and can be dismissed by the district's headman. The road, according to
many informants, is the most important political issue in the district, and this is due to the district headman's dogged insistence that it be built.\footnote{It is also remarkable that the governor of West Sumatra province, of which Solok Selatan and Pesisir Selatan are parts of, has publicly stated that the road is not needed.}

The Kambura road case illustrates how district elites discursively create and promote a particular vision of the district's geographic identity that places great weight on the construction of the road. This stands in stark contrast to the Suharto years, when differences between districts and provinces were minimized (see Chapter 7). The case also shows how decentralization has led to fragmentation in planning processes and how planning is subject to the whims and priorities of local elites. In Solok Selatan the road would greatly aid local elites as they seek to maximize their benefits from natural resources. In Pesisir Selatan district, on the other hand, the road is not as vehemently championed by the local elites. It appears neither on spatial planning documents nor on maps for the district, which lends support to the aforementioned hypotheses that the road discourse functions as an important political symbol for aspiring elites.
5.4.2 Case 2: Renah Pemetik: Encouraging Frontier Settlement

The second case centers on an isolated enclave of Kerinci district called Renah Pemetik, a smaller, fertile valley that is connected to the main Kerinci Valley by a narrow pass. According to local sources, due to its remoteness Renah Pemetik was
virtually unpopulated until the 1940s when, during the Second World War, farmers moved into the area to grow rice, fleeing the Japanese occupation forces who were at the time appropriating all rice surpluses produced in the main valley. When the Japanese were defeated these farmers moved back to their homes, abandoning their field in Renah Pemetik. In the 1950s a few farmers from the closest village outside the valley (Pungut) began planting cinnamon in the area, but utilization of the areas was still limited because of its isolation. In the 1970s a new wave of farmers entered the valley to clear farmland, forming settlements that would eventually grow into the five administrative villages that exist today.

Though a dirt road was constructed into Renah Pemetik in the 1980s, access was still difficult by motor vehicle in the dry season and often impossible in the rainy season. These factors have limited migration into the valley, and in 2010 there were approximately 700 families there. When compared to the rest of Kerinci district, Renah Pemetik is very sparsely populated. However, in 2010 the district government began improving the road, widening, smoothing, and hardening it while altering the route to shorten travel times. This endeavor is a pet project for the current district head, who has kinship ties with the families of the initial settlers. The new road is six meters wide and has been hardened to a village in the center of the valley, with work continuing to one of the more remote villages. The road has concrete-lined one meter deep drainage ditches on either side, which are designed to channel water away from the road during the rainy season and are not found on other roads in the district. This road, which represents a significant investment for an area populated by 700

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118 The original settlers came from the current district headman's village complex in Siulak, Kerinci, and until very recently Renah Pemetik valley, though separated by mountains, was in the same administrative subdistrict as Siulak.
families in a dead-end valley with no through traffic, has greatly improved access into Renah Pemetik.

This may seem like a profligate use of scarce resources until one considers the geographic context. Since construction began the district head has proclaimed his intentions to convert the sparsely-populated area into a 'lumbung padi' ('rice barn'\textsuperscript{119}). The fundamental reasoning behind this is sound, since the valley is relatively flat and covered with rich volcanic soils and has ample water resources. From an economic perspective, though, the valley's isolation decreases the potential for commercial agriculture there. To address this, the district head has announced plans to develop irrigation infrastructure and two additional roads linking the region with the main Kerinci Valley as well as an adjacent district to the east (Bungo), which would presumably provide a ready market for Renah Pemetik's increased agricultural produce. The district has also already built a new school and clinic in Renah Pemetik.

The problem with this plan is that the two additional roads would pass through the park and would hence need to be approved by the MoF. Though there are no signs that approval is forthcoming, the district leadership seems convinced that the roads will become a reality. Interestingly, in none of the district head's public statements about the road and the development of the Renah Pemetik area does he mention of the park. According to local NGOs as well as field interviews and observation, the population of Renah Pemetik is increasing rapidly. Farmers are highly confident that the proposed roads will be completed, and this is fueling the influx of migrants. However, along with the increase in population has come an increase in deforestation in the national park surrounding the enclave. According to local informants, many of

\textsuperscript{119} This expression is similar to the English expression 'breadbasket'.

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the newcomers are not spontaneous smallholder migrants but are rather sharecroppers working on land 'owned' by district elites. There are even indications that certain village heads in Renah Pemetik are selling park land with the informal sanction of the district head. According to numerous residents, park land is currently being sold for two million rupiah (about US$222) per hectare if the buyer clears the land himself, or four million rupiah (about US$444) per hectare for cleared land\textsuperscript{120}. This is significantly cheaper than land in other parts of the district. Moreover, this opportunity is not available to everyone; only those with connections to district elites are permitted to buy in. Thus it can be said that much of the new clearance is based on speculation that the roads will be built and is facilitated by district elites.

This information gathered from field informants is supported by an event that occurred in October 2012 which was widely reported in local newspapers (Jambi Ekspres 2012, Januar 2012a,b,c). A task force consisting of personnel from the park, district police, and army conducted an operation and arrested five farmers that were present on 100 hectares of illegally cleared land\textsuperscript{121}. In the days that followed, hundreds of district residents converged on the district legislature's office building to demand the release of the five encroachers. As the story unfolded it was revealed in the newspaper accounts that those arrested were merely working land controlled by powerful district elected officials. Park officials publicly acknowledged these connections and drew attention to the scale of the clearing, which they argued could

\textsuperscript{120} Since these transactions involve park land they are illegal and hence there is no title of ownership. This in part accounts for the discounted price, but those buying land in this system are demonstrating their faith that the district leadership will eventually prevail.

\textsuperscript{121} The amount of land here suggests external backing and involvement that extends beyond these five farmers. Most encroaching smallholders cultivate between one and two hectares, which on average is the maximum that can be worked by a family.
not have been done by smallholders and was instead evidence of stronger backing and
greater influence. Eventually the encroachers were released and their alleged backers
went uninvestigated and the issue was dropped.

The fact that the population is increasing in Renah Pemetik allows the district
government to make the case that this "isolated area" (*daerah terpencil*) should be
linked up with other regions. As noted above, any new road through the national park
would require approval from the Minister of Forestry; in other words, an exception to
national law. It might be difficult to justify this exemption for a mere 700 households,
but the more people that move into the area the greater demand there is for improved
infrastructure and the easier it is to make the case that there indeed should be a road.
Thus by widening the road and informally encouraging migration the district
government has created a positive feedback loop. Better roads lead to more
immigration into the valley, which in turn strengthen calls for additional
infrastructure.

The district headman has been able to leverage formal powers assigned to him by
decentralization reforms to encourage this migration. But the dismantling of the
Suharto system of upward accountability comes into play as well, as he has also used
his formal powers to directly undermine and weaken the park. On one of my field
visits to Renah Pemetik I discovered by using my handheld GPS unit that the road
connecting the two valleys passes illegally through the park. When I asked a park
staffer about this, the informant told me that I was mistaken, so I double-checked the
route on a subsequent visit. During our next conversation my informant told me that
the road was indeed built illegally through the park but that this fact is not common
knowledge. According to this source and others the district government instructed the contractor to reroute the road during construction so that it diverged from the originally planned route to take a slightly shorter course through the park. Park officials admit a degree of embarrassment since they only learned about the "intentional mistake" after the road was completed and nothing could be done. This episode highlights the difficulties faced by the park's managers as they struggle to control the park's long boundary with a skeleton crew of forest police. It also illustrates the lack of accountability towards district governments which implement programs and projects that directly undermine or damage the park, and the district headman's understanding of this dynamic. The new road through the park has already been flanked by extensive coffee cultivation on either side, and erosion of the slopes where the cut was made is already clearly visible.

Figure 5.6: A landslide on the Renah Pemetik road has triggered the backup of a stream within the park's boundaries. Photo by Bettinger
The benefits from increased access to Renah Pemetik are not shared evenly among all district residents, though. This case study indicates that group membership, in this case close ties to or membership in the current district headman's regional group, plays a strong role in determining access to resources. Previous research (Berry 1989) has shown that cultural ties including kinship or village membership are in fact very important factors in resource control, but in most cases around KSNP these ties have generally been utilized informally, beyond the bounds of formal government. The case in Renah Pemetik shows that decentralization has created the conditions whereby these group ties become institutionalized at the district level.

5.4.3 Case 3: The Serampas Road: Cross-Scale Convergence of Interests

The third case study shows how local aspirations in a formally peripheral area have been appropriated by district elites to lobby for a road that would greatly benefit these elite interests. Serampas is the name given to an area and its inhabitants in Merangin district in Jambi province. While historically Serampas has been a difficult to reach corner of Sumatra owing to its rough topography, it has been populated for hundreds of years and has a strong adat tradition and oral history (Neidel 2006; Hariyadi 2008). Indeed, in many areas around central Sumatra, including Kerinci Valley and parts of Mukomuko in Bengkulu province, people claim that their ancestors that founded their current villages originated from Serampas. The region consists of five villages; two of these are located on a sealed road that connects to the district capital, but the other three (Tanjung Kasri, Lubuk Mentalin, and Renah Kemumu) are located within the national park along a poorly maintained spur road
that dead ends at the most remote village (Renah Kemumu). There is also a 20-kilometer footpath through the park linking the latter village with the Lempur complex of villages in Kerinci district. Traditionally there has been a significant amount of traffic along this path and there are strong kinship ties between the Kerinci villages and the Serampas. Over the years the traffic has decreased along this path, but some people, including groups of school children, use the path to make the seven hour trek to Kerinci from Renah Kemumu.

The road through the park which links up these three villages to the main district road has long been the subject of a great deal of tension between conservationists and the park on the one side and the residents of Serampas on the other. As mentioned previously, access to these villages has historically been limited by geographic conditions, but this situation is not unique to Serampas. Throughout central Sumatra there are inland valleys that until recently could only be accessed on foot, and there are a number of villages in upland areas around the park where access remains difficult during the rainy season. However, while roads to other villages have been improved over the past twenty years, the situation in Serampas is complicated because Tanjung Kasri and Renah Kemumu are located completely within the borders of the park, and so the types of road upgrades that have been completed elsewhere have to be approved by the MoF. Serampas residents have long objected to this enforced isolation, and many residents maintain that the lack of a good road is a violation of their constitutional rights as Indonesians. Prior to decentralization though local residents' complaints fell on deaf ears, both among district officials and park managers. In fact, until very recently the road to Tanjung Kasri was passable only by
two-wheeled vehicles and only in the dry season. Renah Kemumu, which is separated from its neighbor village by two rivers, was not accessible by motor vehicle at all. However, when a large earthquake struck the region in 2009 the lack of access hampered relief efforts, resulting in increased casualties. In the wake of this disaster the national legislature allocated funds to improve the road and the MoF approved the plans with a number of caveats regarding the dimensions of the road.

Though the road has been improved to Tanjung Kasri, the continuation to Renah Kemumu has stalled because money has run out. Residents of the area attribute this to corruption in the road construction process; they say that if the originally budgeted funds would have been sufficient for the construction of the road, but because of the off-the-top bribes paid by the contractors, the appropriated funds were not sufficient. Clearing has been completed about half the distance between the two villages, with steep gradients and cuts through hills to create a passable dirt path where previously there was only a footpath. Though at the time of my fieldwork there was still some heavy equipment parked along the route, the project seems to be abandoned, and so the steep gradients and cuts into the hillsides have been left without any kind of buttressing, reinforcing, or other improvements to reduce erosion, which is very noticeable on the uncompleted road.

The residents of Renah Kemumu, and to a lesser extent Tanjung Kasri want the road to be completed. The reasons for this are understandable; in Renah Kemumu the price of gasoline in 2012 was 12,000 rupiah per liter (approximately US$1.33), compared with the subsidized rate of 4,500 rupiah per liter (US$.50) at the pump. In Tanjung Kasri the price is 10,000 rupiah per liter (US$1.11). Moreover, since most
people in Renah Kemumu don't have motorcycles they have to pay for transport to the main district road; from Renah Kemumu and Tanjung Kasri the price is 2,000 rupiah US$.22) and 1,500 rupiah per kilogram (US$.16), respectively. These high prices have the double effect of lowering the profitability of all agricultural produce in the area while simultaneously inflating the cost of all goods brought into the area\textsuperscript{122}. It also limits the crop choices available to the farmers, and according to them, the encroachment that occurs in the area is driven by the fact that the only way for farmers to make money is through expansion of tree crops like cinnamon. Thus the residents argue that they are caught in a sort of "poverty trap" (Sachs 2006) which prevents them from making the investments necessarily to improve their productivity and hence their profitability and by extension their standard of living. Renah Kemumu residents also want the 20 kilometer footpath from Renah Kemumu to Kerinci district upgraded so that it is passable using a motorcycle (approximately 1.5 meters wide). This would allow them to transport their cinnamon to the large market in Kerinci district, which geographically is much closer than the district capital and market center of Merangin district.

Improvements to the existing road and permission to upgrade the forest path are not forthcoming, however. A special independent fact finding team was dispatched to the area by the Minister of Forestry in 2011, and although the proposed road from Serampas to Kerinci is still being deliberated within the MoF, there are indications that it will not be approved. This continued lack of action has increased tensions between Serampas residents and the park. The resentment is so high that villagers

\textsuperscript{122} Interestingly this has forced the farmers to "go organic" (or "stay organic") as they can't afford fertilizer or pesticide.
speak of a detailed plan to sell dozens of hectares of land to a group of approximately 60 families from outside the region for 900 million rupiah (US$100,000), which would be divided amongst the households of Renah Kemumu\textsuperscript{123}. The plan is being coordinated by two influential retired government officials in the district capital. These officials are said to have reached an agreement in principle with a well-known financier who has already organized the migrants. The people of Renah Kemumu have not decided whether to approve the sale yet\textsuperscript{124}. While some members of the community are quite defiant towards the park, they realize that selling the land would be an irreversible step and might invite strong intervention from the central government. Moreover, they worry about land availability for their descendents and recognize that they might begin to lose control if outsiders begin to outnumber natives. Regardless of these considerations, residents of Renah Kemumu describe the plan in terms of an ultimatum to the park to approve the road upgrades.

Meanwhile, the next election for head of Merangin district will be conducted in 2013, and several of the candidates have made repeated trips to the area, promising to push for the road's approval. Visiting candidates have distributed livestock and seeds and in some cases cash to voters. Since decentralization reforms made district officials directly elected by their constituents, the road has become a political issue, and aspirants for office have appropriated the plight of the Serampas to make themselves more attractive as candidates. These politicians stand to gain more than

\textsuperscript{123} The land that would be sold is, like all land in the area, in the park, and so the villagers have no legal title to it. The people of Serampas claim \textit{adat} rights to thousands of hectares, a claim that is not acknowledged by the MoF.

\textsuperscript{124} Land ownership in Renah Kemumu, like many places in Indonesia is largely governed by local \textit{adat} conventions that allow both for private ownership and hereditary inheritance, as well as common property and usufruct rights which periodically revert back to the community.
votes from their support for the road project, though. If they are elected then they will be able to appoint cronies and supporters to the district's bureau of public works, which would be responsible for coordinating the tendering and bidding processes for any construction project. The fact that the budgeted improvements following the earthquake were never completed strongly suggests the presence of corruption.

In the case of the Serampas road, the interests of the district elites and the village residents converge. Both want the road, but for different reasons. For example, district officials would prefer a six meter road from Renah Kemumu to Kerinci, whereas locals want a paved motorcycle path, which would limit access to the area to certain types of vehicles. The difference would be in the amount of traffic passing through the park. The goal of local residents is increased access to Kerinci for themselves only, whereas district officials envision a new inter-district artery and evacuation route (Bandot 2013). Therefore although interests at different scales merge behind the idea of the road, if it were to be approved these interests would likely diverge. District elites would control virtually all aspects of the road's construction, and the improved access would most likely encourage in-migration, since as mentioned above migration generally follows the opening of new roads. The new road would also likely lead to increased penetration of the state, which could have dire consequences for locals. Hall (2011:837) describes the ongoing "land grab" as it relates to commodity booms in Indonesia and Southeast Asia. As access to the Serampas area increases, it could potentially become a frontier for cash crops, with state actors, private corporations, and migrants all competing against local residents for access to land (Hall 2011). Since the residents of Renah Kemumu and Tanjung
Kasri live within KSNP, they have no formal title to their land, which makes them vulnerable to various strategies employed by powerful actors attempting to usurp control over land (Potter 2001; Hall 2011; Li 2011). Currently there is some in-migration, but numbers are low and male migrants must marry into the community to have access to land. Thus until now the Serampas have been able to control movement into their territory which has enabled their traditional land management institutions to persist. However, it has been shown convincingly that outside migrants can disrupt and weaken traditional management systems in other parts of Indonesia (Bebbington 2004, Bebbington et al 2006). This disruption takes at least two forms. The first due to sheer numbers; vast numbers of migrants overwhelm an area, increasing stress on local institutions of government and resource management. The second effect is by exposing and aggravating divisions within the local community (Li 2002). Presumably, as in other cases, village elites might ally with outside interests to sell access rights to village or park territory to outsiders, as has happened in many places around KSNP, including the previously discussed case of Renah Pemetik. These village elites and their district level partners could stand to benefit greatly from this type of arrangement, but the rest of the villagers would likely be worse off, especially if adat systems were weakened.

5.5 CONCLUSIONS

Political and economic processes play a large role in how natural resources are managed (Daniels and Basset 2002). This chapter has demonstrated how Indonesia's decentralization reforms have invigorated formal and informal struggles over access
to natural resources at Kerinci Seblat National Park. I have argued that Sumatra's historical reliance on primary sector activity, at smaller scales such as the household and village level as well as for larger political units, shapes development trajectories into the future. The decentralization movement has made access to resources much more valuable to local elites, and so the national park has become what Peluso and Lund (2011:668) call a "new frontier of land control": "a [site] where authorities, sovereignties, and hegemonies of the recent past have been or are currently being challenged by new enclosures, territorializations, and property regimes". Road proposals have become an important weapon in the arena of struggle between the districts around KSNP and the central government. The case studies have demonstrated the ways in which newly empowered local elites seek to build support for road proposals.

This chapter has also shown how district governments facilitate challenges to central authority by utilizing formal powers devolved to them by decentralization reforms. Two examples are illustrated, the first demonstrating how district officials conjure the Kambura road, allowing it to be treated as an inevitable part of the district's development process. The second case shows how formal powers are used to construct roads and other infrastructure, which facilitates migration into Renah Pemetik.

Thirdly, Robbins et al. (2009:560) note that in conservation areas, "the reality of resource use and access is often characterized by informal negotiation, illegal extraction, and rule bending". These authors refer to the realities that structure these dynamics as "hidden institutions"; although these activities are illegal there are
defined rules of access. One of the major contributions of the case studies is that they illustrate the potential utility of roads in structuring the rules of rule-breaking in favor of district level elites. These elites understand that the park's enforcement capacity is limited, and so there is great potential for rule-breaking in the form of selling land as well as access to trees and minerals in the park. Thus the case studies reveal the evolution and emergence of hidden institutions of access at KSNP.

Fourth, although most clearly articulated in the final case study, from these examples is clearly demonstrated how decentralized politics, which has empowered districts while making them downwardly accountable, has led to a convergence of interests between district elites and villagers. District elites benefit from roads in several ways. The simplest and most universal is through corruption associated with road building contracts. But we also see from these case studies that local elites can benefit through improved access to natural resources. Villagers also benefit from improved access because transport costs are lowered. To the list of beneficiaries we must also add migrants, who benefit from increased access to land in the national park. However, this chapter has demonstrated the temporary nature of these conditions, since after roads are built the costs and benefits from road construction, and particularly the substandard roads that are generally built on Sumatra, are distributed unevenly, with villagers often shouldering a far greater share of the detrimental environmental impacts.

These projects also support the assertion made in Chapter 3 about diminishing public policy capacity in the post-authoritarian era. None of the road proposals described in this chapter have feasibility studies or any other kind of research
associated with them. The districts merely want the central government's permission to build the roads, which would serve as carte blanche to administer the project in any way the districts choose. This lack of oversight, standardization, and supervision is a key characteristic of decentralization and has thus far hindered the development of good governance at the district level. In fact, I was only able to find feasibility study documents for two of the road proposals. These roads would link Lebong district in Bengkulu with Merangin district in Jambi and Musi Rawas district in South Sumatra and are covered by the same document, which the Lebong district planning office proudly provided me. This document, which is in excess of 100 pages, does not include a field survey or proposed route; the only geographic information is of the most general kind. The "feasibility study" component of the report consists of the results of a Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) analysis conducted over the course of two days. During these two days members of the district planning bureau (BAPPEDA) along with staff from the district public works department brainstormed and recorded the various considerations and how they fit into the SWOT framework. The team was able to come up with 13 strengths of the proposed road, but only four weaknesses, and so the conclusion of the team was that both of the roads are indeed feasible, a finding which given the structure of the exercise was all but inevitable.

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125 Interestingly, the report points out that 57% of the land in the district has a slope of at least 40%, and 26% is between 15-40%, which underscores how little of the land in the district is useful for agriculture, not only because of the presence of the park, but because of the mountainous terrain. 126 "Kesimpulan kelayakan peningkatan jalan Lebong Meranging, berdasarkan penilaian dengan metologi SWOT, dengan parameter: ekonomi, sosial, fisik, kelembagaan dan lingkungan adalah: layak untuk dikembangkan" (Kabupaten Lebong 2011: V-11).
This chapter, along with chapter 4, has focused primarily on district level processes that directly and indirectly affect the park. In the next chapter I take a closer look at the villages around the park to understand how their relationship with the park has changed over time, and what effect this changing relationship is having on both the villagers and the park.
CHAPTER 6: VILLAGE SITES OF COOPERATION AND CONTESTATION

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters I focused primarily on the interactions between the district and provincial governments and the management of KSNP, as well as the direct and indirect pressures on the park stemming from formal and informal political activities in the districts. However, a major component of my dissertation research involved visiting villages in and around the park to interview villagers and their political and customary (adat) leaders. This is because Indonesia's decentralization and democratization reforms have redefined the relationships between the various levels of government and have created incentives for the emergence of new types of coalitions between village and district elites, which are independent from, and in many cases in opposition to, the priorities, policies, and programs of the central government, and so an understanding of these relationships and priorities is key to understanding the overall effects of decentralization and democratization on KSNP. In this chapter I will relate and analyze information gleaned from these village visits in order to provide insights into the relationship between the park and the people living on its periphery in order to explain village-level resource conflicts as well as village-scale drivers of environmental change. This chapter first describes the physical aspects of the villages around the park. I then describe the attitudes and practices of the park's managers, both in terms of official policies as well as the personal attitudes of park staff, towards the people around the park and vice-versa.
Next I discuss villagers' perceptions of the park followed by a discussion of the history of collaborative activities between the park and its neighbors over the years and how these have changed. This includes a discussion of Ministry of Forestry policies on local collaboration as well as a brief analysis of KSNP management documents covering a time span of approximately fifteen years. In the last section of the chapter I discuss how decentralization has affected processes of agricultural encroachment into KSNP. I argue that decentralization has created political and economic conditions that have enhanced the flow of local and non-local smallholders into the park.

This chapter aims to address the following questions and issues:

1. How have the central government's centralization and territorialization projects served to marginalize villagers and their customary systems of land management and social organization (adat) from the control of forest resources? The chapter also provides further elaboration on the issue of marginalization, which is a unifying theme of the dissertation, by showing how marginalization actually occurs, and the patterns of forest degradation that result from this marginalization. I will show how the national park has typically reflected national and international conservation priorities, which has led to a minimal role for local people and their lifeways in management and planning.
2. What has been the role of KSNP and more generally the Ministry of Forestry on local peoples' patterns of use of natural resources? I will demonstrate first how components of the statemaking and territorialization efforts of the Suharto regime undermined local systems of governance and resource management as well as the effects this has had on village economies. I will also describe how villagers have historically contested the national government's interrelated centralization and territorialization projects with respect to the control of natural resources.

3. How have the new political realities of democratization and decentralization been reflected in MoF policies, and how has this been manifested in KSNP's formal and casual interactions with the villages around the park? I will describe the waning influence of these national and international priorities in the era of decentralization and democratization. I will show that while the park's rhetoric towards local people has changed in the reformasi era, in practical terms the park has been slow to adapt to the political realities of the post-Suharto era. In other words, the park's approach in dealing with its neighbor villages remains rooted in the practices of the authoritarian New Order regime. This relates to the overall theme of understanding the park as an obstacle to decentralization. I will also describe how decentralization has empowered village elites to more boldly and openly challenge the central government's claim on resources, which illustrates how divided sovereignty has provided new legitimacy for local resource users that
have historically been sidelined by the park. Whereas challenges at the
district level are most obvious in the road proposals described in chapter 5, at
the village level they are most clearly seen in increased rates of deforestation
for agricultural encroachment in various areas around the park.

6.2 General Characteristics of the villages around the park

6.2.1 Economic Aspects

According to park officials and documents, there are more than 400
administrative villages directly adjacent to KSNP, with 134 having agricultural lands
or agroforests located within the park's boundaries\textsuperscript{127}. An additional 14 villages are
located entirely within the park. These 14 villages as a general rule occupy special
use zones and are permitted to continue their agricultural activities but are not
permitted to clear any new fields. Between 80-90\% of the people living in these
villages earn their incomes from agricultural activities. They farm different things in
different places depending in part on the characteristics of the local climate. The
most desirable crop is oil palm (\textit{Elaeis guineensis})\textsuperscript{128}, and over the past two decades
there has been a tremendous increase of oil palm cultivation on Sumatra by both
plantation corporations and smallholders (Feintrenie et al 2010). This expansion has
drawn a large number of migrants from Java seeking employment in plantations and

\textsuperscript{127} This number has likely increased slightly since my fieldwork since villages are periodically divided
into additional villages for the reasons described in chapter 4. Moreover, other sources, including
dissertation and documents from non-government organizations, cite higher totals for villages
bordering the park.

\textsuperscript{128} I use the term "oil palm" in reference to the actual tree; the term "palm oil" is generally used to refer
to the industry.
the eventual opportunity of owning part of a plasma-nucleus estate\textsuperscript{129}. Oil palm is viewed by scholars, government officials, and farmers alike as having a great deal of promise for improving economic and social conditions on Sumatra, so there is a great deal of support for it. However for smallholders oil palm requires a fairly significant investment as well as high opportunity costs, as the tree requires 3-4 years before it begins to produce marketable fruit, so many migrants begin as laborers. For this reason, villagers that are able to finance their own oil palm plots prefer to open up new plots in the forest rather than to convert their existing food crop plots\textsuperscript{130}. In addition, oil palm trees are largely limited to lowland areas due to climate and soil conditions (although I observed villagers attempting to grow oil palm at approximately 1200 meters; see chapter 7 for details). Moreover, the more isolated villages around the park tend not to have much oil palm, but this is likely due to lower accessibility rather than a rejection on the part of the farmers (ibid). In other words, virtually everyone from the provincial and district governments on down to the villages wants oil palm. According to villagers, two hectares of the tree provides a good income, and five hectares, which by most accounts seems to be the maximum easily manageable by a smallholder and 2-3 hired hands, provides enough income to send two children to university.

Another extremely desirable crop is robusta coffee (\textit{Coffea canephora}), but this is limited to highland areas as it will not grow productively in the lowlands. Cacao is

\textsuperscript{129} A "plasma-nucleus" estate is a plantation arrangement in which a private corporation is granted a land concession to grow a tree crop and processing factory (nucleus). Individual landholders are also granted land, but they must raise the tree crop in question and sell their produce to the processing plant. After a certain number of years, often seven, they are given title to the land.

\textsuperscript{130} Generally speaking if one encounters a villager cultivating young oil palms exclusively, it is usually an indication that the villager is working for someone else.
also grown in the uplands, but this crop is not as popular in central Sumatra as it is in North Sumatra province or the northern areas of West Sumatra province. Potatoes and chili peppers are also commonly grown. In some places local farmers say that they are limited by their knowledge (e.g., "we only know how to farm potatoes") which is likely true in some instances. This rudimentary knowledge leads to over-liberal use of inputs such as fertilizer and pesticide as well as poor soil management and tilling techniques. However, large areas given over to potato cultivation also suggests that the farmers are directed and/or supplied by some outside investor that dictates what they will grow, and most potato and chili farmers have ongoing relationships with a village middleman that extends loans at the beginning of the planting season and buys up the entire crop at harvest time. In these cases many farmers said that they viewed the relationship with the middleman as more or less fair\(^{131}\), while at the same time they admitted that they didn't know and had no easy way of finding out the market price for these products in large cities. In other words, a relationship of trust between themselves and the middleman is very important to the farmers. They also expressed a preference for transporting their produce to the market themselves, but cited distance and the poor condition of the roads as a limiting factor. Moreover, transporting potatoes requires a truck.

Lastly, another important part of the village agricultural economy is agroforestry. In the uplands around the park agroforests consist mainly of rubber (\textit{Hevea brasilienis}), Sumatran cinnamon or cassiavera (\textit{Cinnamomum burmannii}), durian (\textit{Durio sp}) and other trees producing resins such as dammar. In some places these agroforests were planted more than 100 years ago, providing both food and cash

\(^{131}\) Though as noted in a previous chapter there are some that feel disadvantaged by this situation.
income to some of the older villages, but in the Kerinci villages cinnamon cultivation really took off in the 1920s after the Dutch built the road connecting Sungai Penuh to Padang (Werner 2001). According to Neidel (2006), cinnamon cultivation experienced a further boom in the late 1960s when the US, who was at the time the largest consumer, ended trade relations with Vietnam, which was the largest supplier. Then in the 1980s cinnamon cultivation experienced a third boom when world prices increased dramatically (Hartanto 2009). Each of these booms was accompanied by a wave of forest clearance and the establishment of satellite villages (see below) which would eventually become formal villages. Because of this history Kerinci is currently the largest cinnamon producing region in Indonesia. The traditional planting cycle averages approximately 15-20 years for cinnamon, 30 years for rubber, and 70-100 years for dammar and durian trees (Thiollay 1995). Traditionally agroforestry plots, known locally as *ladang*, allow farmers to intercrop annual crops such as rice, tobacco, or tomatoes at early stages of growth. Since these agroforestry plots contain so many different species, they embody a significant amount of local site-specific traditional ecological knowledge (Hariyadi 2009, Thiollay 1995). Thiollay (1995) notes that these agroforestry systems are very effective when the population density is relatively low, but when population increases, either naturally or due to migration, they tend to come under pressures leading to overharvesting or clearance, which applies to how cinnamon is currently grown in Kerinci and surrounding districts, as in many places agroforestry plots are being cleared so land can be sold to incoming migrants, who in turn grow coffee (see chapter 7 for a case study). Moreover, cinnamon is seen as an investment (the bigger it grows the more it is worth), and so
successful merchants as well as government officials from Sungai Penuh and other market centers buy land to be tended by contract workers (anak ladang, literally "field child").

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Villages adjacent to KSNP</th>
<th>Villages within KSNP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bengkulu Utara</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dharmasraya</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merangin</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muara Bungo</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mukomuko</td>
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<tr>
<td>Musi Rawas</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pesisir Selatan</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sungai Penuh &amp; Kerinci</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.2 Educational Aspects

All of the villages I visited have primary schools, and many even have lower secondary schools. This is in part the result of a nationwide campaign during the Suharto years to build a three room school in every administrative village in the country (Booth 2003). Villagers say that overall the level of education has improved remarkably over the past two generations, as has the use of Bahasa Indonesia, and so this aspect of the nation-building project seems to have been effective. In some places around the park older people are not able to read, and some have difficulty communicating in the national language. But according to interviews and official
statistics, literacy rates among youths are quite high. However, in many places there is a significant drop off in school attendance after lower secondary school (the equivalent of middle school in the US; there is also a smaller drop off in attendance after elementary school). According to informants, this drop off is greatest in places that are farthest away from a high school. Farmers say that they want their children to go to high school, but in remote villages this requires either the purchase of a second motorcycle\textsuperscript{132} so the child can drive himself/herself to school, or for one of the parents to take the child to school and pick him/her up in the afternoon. Due to the distance and condition of the roads, in many places the commute to or from school can take an hour or more. Thus schooling entails a significant burden and opportunity cost for parents in terms of the costs of transportation and the potential labor given up by enrolling the child in school, and so for this reason many people claim that they are not able to send their children to secondary school.

Based on my observations and information from informants, this condition seems to affect mainly the poorer people in the community, as wealthier parents often send their children to the district capital or sub-district centers for schooling. There they board with relatives or friends, and the parents generally pay a fee or work out some form of compensation. Thus the isolation and poor infrastructure in many places around the park serves to reinforce socioeconomic differences and limits the career opportunities for many young people such that the most realistic path for them is to be farmers like their parents. In this way a positive feedback loop is created whereby a pattern of low socioeconomic conditions that can contribute to encroachment in the

\textsuperscript{132} In the poorest and most remote villages most of the villagers do not have ready access to even a first motorcycle.
park is reproduced. First the existence of the park creates enforced isolation in certain villages by making it illegal for district governments (and even the villagers themselves) to upgrade the road infrastructure. The lack of infrastructure lowers profit margins on agricultural products while making it more expensive in terms of both time and money to transport children to school. This makes it more difficult to obtain an education, which in turn limits economic possibilities, which in turn leads to further encroachment into the park. Because of poor road infrastructure, this agricultural livelihood is marginal at best, which means that the new farmer will likely rely on his children for labor.

6.2.3 Pattern of Village Settlement and Distribution

Some of the villages are several centuries old (most notably in Serampas, see Chapters 5 and 7), but the vast majority of them have been developed over the past 100 years. Some of the most troublesome areas in terms of encroachment and poaching are relatively newly settled areas that have been colonized by groups further away from the park over the past 50 years. For example, Pauh Tinggi and Pesisir Bukit, which will be discussed in the next chapter, were founded in the 1960s by people from the Siulak area of Kerinci district, and as noted in chapter 5 the Renah Pemetic area was settled primarily in the 1970s and 1980s, also by people from the Siulak area. Other villages in Mukomuko and Bengkulu Utara were established in the 1990s. These settlement patterns will be further discussed in section 6.6 below.

Many of the villages are spread out and relatively remote, located along difficult to access roads. These villages might be thought of as the furthest extent of pioneer
advancement before the establishment of the park halted expansion into the wild uplands of central Sumatra. Prior to the establishment of the park, groups of settlers would commonly split off from mother villages to establish satellite settlements closer to newly-cleared lands in upland valleys (Feintrenie et al. 2010, Neidel 2006). As time went on, these villages would develop their own leadership structure, but they would still maintain kinship ties to their mother villages. The Lempur complex of villages in Kerinci district (see chapters 4 and 5) is an example of this pattern of settlement. In other places, villages were founded by Javanese migrants that were brought or moved on their own to work on Dutch plantations in the 1920s. During World War II, most of these plantations shut down, and only a few of them resumed operations after the war, and so many of the workers founded villages in the uplands, opening up new land in the forest for cultivation. Bangun Rejo (see chapter 7) is an example of this pattern.

This remoteness has the effect of making it virtually impossible for rangers to monitor all of the villages effectively. At best, the field staff can only visit them infrequently, but the reality of the situation revealed in discussions with rangers is that many areas go virtually unpatrolled, with several years elapsing between ranger visits. Thus the effectiveness of KSNP and its territorial integrity depend in large part on the acquiescence of local people and their willingness to respect the borders of the park. Rangers indicate that there are some areas that they avoid patrolling on a regular basis because their relationship with the villagers is poor and in some cases has erupted into violent exchanges (see Chapter 7). By all accounts these types of conflicts have increased in the post-New Order era. On the other hand, NGO
Informants claim that rangers often avoid the most remote villages because of the difficulty of access means that they are away from the comforts of their homes and offices for extended periods, suggesting that the park lacks adequate institutional mechanisms to ensure that all areas are patrolled. One informant told me that many forest police "only patrol at their desk" (patroli atas meja saja), indicating that many rangers are more interested in fulfilling the bureaucratic requirements for advancing in rank than being in the field. Rangers and other staff are governed by the same rules as other branches of the professional bureaucracy, earning merit points for attending meetings, writing reports, and participating in trainings. They earn fewer points for actively patrolling, and so this might be considered an institutional disincentive working against effective patrolling. Based on my own observations it appears that both inadequate motivation and resources contribute to policing gaps, but the relative contribution of these factors varies depending on the ranger post. Leadership seems to be a key variable here; in some places the rangers were genuinely committed to their jobs, whereas in other places they seemed less than eager to venture into the field.

6.3 Attitudes of the park towards people on the periphery

6.3.1 The park's early years and the conspicuous absence of a local perspective

As noted in chapter 2, during the 1970s and 1980s when the preliminary surveys were being done in anticipation of the establishment of KSNP, much of the support and direction for these efforts came from the FAO and international conservation NGOs such as the WWF and Flora and Fauna International. The documents resulting
from these surveys as well as the preliminary management plan for the park reflects a focus on traditional "fortress conservation" priorities, such as protecting endangered species as well as the forest in general. There was very little consideration for the people living around the park, likely in part due to the fact that many places currently experiencing problems with encroachment were at that time still relatively sparsely populated. Moreover, many of the people living in the area that would become the park maintained agroforestry plots, which to the untrained eye can easily be confused with secondary or even primary higher elevation forest, and so the consultants charged with surveying the park very likely underestimated the level of human modification and activity in the peripheral areas (Neidel 2006, Thiollay 1995). Thus in the early years of the park the human element was not a part of the management focus aside from enforcement. The unquestioned prioritizing of formulaic science-based conservation strategies was certainly enabled by the authoritarian Suharto regime; the park's planners didn't think about the local people because they didn't have to.

However, from an official perspective, the attitude of the park and the Ministry of Forestry in general towards the people around the park is slowly but surely changing. To illustrate this I turn to some representative examples of official park documents to show how the language describing the park's management goals and priorities has changed over the years since one of the first annual reports was compiled in 1995 (KSNP 1995). At that time, the park had three principle goals:
1. Protect ecological processes due to their importance as life support mechanisms, including the preservation of biodiversity and genetic resources

2. Make the park a center of research and education

3. Increase protection efforts so the benefits of the park can be felt by humanity at large, including through tourism activities.

These goals as well as the initial establishment of the park were very characteristic of the Suharto regime's way of governing lower levels. Lindayati (2002:42) describes this as the "pre-social forestry phase" of forest management, which entailed a "complete rejection of local community forest access" to forest resources. There was very little consultation with the villages and people living around what would become the park as to the extent of their lands when the borders were demarcated. As a result, there were and continue to be conflicting claims to the land as many agroforests and cultivated plots were sequestered within the park. It is very clear from my village visits that some of these durian, cinnamon, and rubber agroforestry plots pre-date the park. In some instances entire villages were enclosed in the park. At this early stage there is no mention of the people living around the park in the management plan, and the only mention of them throughout the entire document (and others produced around the same time) is in terms of the threat they pose to the park; it is clear that the park managers at the time perceived local people to be the greatest threat to the integrity of the park. In fact, in this initial year approximately 5% of the park's budget (approximately US$25,000 according to historical exchange rates) was
targeted at programs to develop local economies\textsuperscript{133}, whereas 16% of the budget (approximately US$75,000) was set aside for relocating a total of 700 households from inside the park. This was to be an ongoing project in subsequent years as well. This is particularly interesting because it reflects a preference for removing people rather than accommodating them into the management structure, a relic of the "Yellowstone model" of park management (Ghimire and Pimbert 1997, Southgate and Clark 1993). This portrayal of local people as the major threat also obscures the fact that in the early stages of planning the park's boundaries were redrawn several times, and in fact approximately 150,000 hectares was removed from the proposed area so that it could be set aside as logging or production forest concessions. These facts also reflect two converging goals of the Suharto regime during the authoritarian era. The first goal was extending central control over virtually all natural resources of the archipelago, including forests and minerals, and invalidating local claims to these resources. The second goal, which dovetailed with the first, was to create institutions seen as integral to the modern state (in this case the national park), thereby strengthening the state's identity (i.e., "nation building") while in the process gaining international recognition. In this way the establishment of the park and its early management plans represent an example of what Anderson (1983:487) refers to as "the resurrection of the state and its triumph vis-à-vis society and nation." It is important to recognize that the park's management style reflects the authoritarian nature of the New Order regime, and that strategies such as relocating people were made possible by the strong central government.

\textsuperscript{133} These programs included orchid cultivation and planting fruit trees in the buffer zone.
Moreover these details are an indication that when the park was first being established there was an awareness that some of the land that would eventually become the park was indeed inhabited and used. The report goes on to indicate that the relocation project could ultimately not be completed (though an unspecified number of households were in fact relocated) because the Ministry of Forestry was not able to secure land from the Ministry of Transmigration. Indeed according to informants that were working at the park in these early years, there initially was a plan to resettle all of the people from the Serampas area (see chapters 5 and 7) to areas away from the park; according to these informants the residents of Serampas were enthusiastic about these plans. However, the Serampas people tell a different story in which they were bitterly opposed to any relocation, collecting signatures for petitions and writing letters to officials at the park, the MoF, and in the district and provincial governments in an effort to forestall the plan. Neidel's ethnography (2006) claims that the Serampas people were on many occasions harassed by forest police who led them to believe that they would be evicted at any time. As a result the villagers delayed planting food crops and subsequently suffered from famine. Curiously after 1995 there is no mention of relocation projects in any park documents.

6.3.2 The ICDP and the "local turn"

Whereas the first management plan reflects traditional international conservation priorities as well as the concerns of the central government, the KSNP ICDP project, which was implemented in 1996, reflected a new paradigm which attempted to link the goals of conservation and development (World Bank 1996b). This new paradigm
was based on the assumption that by improving social and economic conditions in areas around national parks and other important natural areas, the pressures on the park would be eased (Blaikie and Jeanrenaud 1997, Rudel 2005). In the words of the World Bank (1996b: 3), the ICDP would work to "reconcile the management of protected areas with social and economic needs of local people." The project, which included a Global Environment Facility (GEF) grant for US$15.5 million (at the time the largest GEF program ever) and a World Bank loan of US$21.3 million, was the largest ICDP project in the world and was intended to serve as a model for approximately a dozen other ICDPs in Indonesia (McCarthy and Zen 2008, Wiratno et al 2004). This new approach represented an explicit acceptance of the presence of people on the conservation landscape and mirrored a broader global trend whereby neoliberal norms and assumptions were injected into the management and design of protected areas. The literature on neoliberal conservation is vast, but in general neoliberalism involves an assumption that many problems facing national parks are the result of market failures and inefficient government (Clapp and Dauvergne 2011). Important prescriptions from the neoliberal perspective include deregulation and greater reliance on market mechanisms. Igoe and Brockington (2007: 442) succinctly summarize neoliberalism as it relates to conservation:

...local people are increasingly seen as having fundamentally flawed relationships to both nature and the market. As the most proximate and visible threat to protected areas, they are often treated as the primary threat. According to the dominant perception, their hope lies in being brought out of nature and into the market so that they can return to nature as competent conservationists.
Even though the ICDP included a greater role for local people, the strategy is still fundamentally top-down, and it entails preconceived notions about the people living around the protected area, including the assumption that local management systems were inefficient and backwards (Lindayati 2002). Moreover, the ICDP project furthers the aforementioned goals of the Suharto regime by providing a mechanism whereby the state could continue to assert its claim to forest resources while at the same time ensuring international legitimacy for these efforts under the banner of conservation and development. For the Ministry of Forestry as an organ of the New Order, the ICDP provided tremendous financial resources, and so it was easy for the MoF and by extension the park to adopt language more accepting of local people. In other words, the MoF adapted itself according to the demands of the World Bank and other international funders, but in terms of on the ground practices the MoF, acting through national parks such as KSNP, stayed true to its roots as an integral component of the New Order.

Although the ICDP had four components, the one most germane to this discussion is component B, the Village Development Component. This part of the project involved programs in 134 (all of the villages with land within the park; later scaled down to 74 due to implementation difficulties) of the villages adjoining the park. The procedure involved negotiating Village Conservation Agreements (VCAs) with the villages whereby the villagers agreed to halt all activities within the park. In

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134 It is worth noting here that one of the larger components of the ICDP involved upgrading the capabilities of the park headquarters and staff. This included furnishing the park with a state-of-the-art GIS lab and up-to-date remotely sensed imagery, as well as funds to hire staff specially trained in the interpretation of imagery and creation of mapping products. Thus the ICDP project improved the park's capacity to monitor its borders, theoretically providing enhanced surveillance capabilities to the State.

135 The four components were a) park management; b) village development; c) improving forest concession management; d) monitoring and evaluation.
exchange they would receive Village Conservation Grants (VCGs) of approximately US$50,000 which could be used for development projects chosen by the villages. As time went on, though, reaching these agreements proved to be more difficult than had been anticipated, and implementation difficulties in the villages led to suboptimal results. In many places projects failed because of insufficient training and follow-up. In other places there emerged accusations that village elites appropriated for themselves or channeled to family members and associates the majority of benefits from the program. In 2002 the World Bank decided to pull the plug on the ICDP project, representing a significant turnaround since originally the project was intended to run for 30 years in five year intervals. The Bank's post implementation assessment of the project read like a dysfunctional child's elementary school report card: "Outcome: Unsatisfactory; Sustainability: Unlikely; Institutional Development Impact: Modest; Bank Performance: Unsatisfactory; Borrower Performance: Unsatisfactory" (World Bank 2003). The Bank pinned much of the blame on the corruption of the various levels of government, but also argued that lack of awareness on the part of local people about the importance of the environment was another key factor. Though this theme will be developed more fully below, this is consistent with broader observations (Fortwangler 2007, West 2006) on failed ICDPs where according to neoliberal advocates of ICDPs, failure is often blamed on the ignorance of the local people. Although it was ultimately considered a failure by the Bank, the ICDP marked a departure from the earlier approach and indicates greater appreciation for the socioeconomic conditions in the villages around the park. However, the Bank admitted that the changes brought about by decentralization were having a significant
impact on their ability to administer a centrally-directed intervention, and the institution predicted that the ongoing reforms would continue to play a key role in determining the success of conservation at the park in years to come.

6.3.3 The post-ICDP return to traditional conservation concerns

The 2002-2006 management framework reflects the influence of consultants working with the ICDP but also indicates a sort of reaction against the perceived failure of the massive project and a refocusing on environmental and ecological goals. Local people are accounted for, but their involvement is deemphasized and they are treated as passive consumers of non-timber forest products. The goals in this management framework include the following:

1. Protecting watersheds
2. Preserving biodiversity
3. Protecting endangered and endemic species
4. Stabilizing regional climate
5. Providing nature recreation
6. Promoting research, education, and training
7. Provide non-timber forest products for people on a sustainable basis in designated zones.

The goals clearly prioritize traditional conservation concerns and reflect a current of resurgent protectionism and rejection of the ICDP concept that was gaining
momentum towards the end of the 1990s (Barrett and Arceses 1995, Brandon 1998, Terborgh 1999, Wilshusen et al 2002). However, the park's apparent return to typical conservation activities also indicates some recognition of the new political realities of decentralization. More important than local people in these new priorities seems to be attention to regionally-oriented ecosystem services. Former consultants that had been involved in the ICDP project confirmed to me that this was part of a strategy to emphasize the utility of the park to the district governments in the wake of decentralization. Thus by this point the park's planners and their consultant associates had evidently realized the imperative of making the park seem relevant to district and provincial governments, and it was thought that by doing so the district governments would be more willing to cooperate in protecting the park, and that district heads would pressure village heads to more effectively monitor encroachment, poaching, and illegal logging. However, this was a rhetorical shift only and there were no substantive changes in the way the park was managed or the kinds of access and decision making powers granted to district or village governments. Tellingly, this new approach coincided with a huge increase in illegal logging throughout Indonesia (see chapter 3), which affected KSNP as well. Most analyses of this rise in illegal logging tie it to the chaotic transition from authoritarian to decentralized rule, which, as noted in previous chapters, provided ample self-enrichment opportunities to those who were able to gain control of district governments. Under different circumstances the efforts to emphasize the regional ecosystem benefits might not have come to naught, but in decentralizing Indonesia it has become abundantly clear that those that profit most from environmentally damaging activities are generally insulated from the
adverse effects of those activities\textsuperscript{136}. This is a legacy of the dysfunctional and unfinished nature of the decentralization reforms.

\textbf{6.3.4 Encouraging "participation" in park management}

In 2004 the Minister of Forestry implemented a new regulation concerning collaborative management in nature reserves (\textit{PERMENHUT 19 2004 Tentang Kolaborasi Pengelolaan Kawasan Suaka Alam Dan Kawasan Pelestarian Alam}), which instructed national park managers to increase their efforts to incorporate local people into certain management activities, including maintenance of border markers, monitoring of flora and fauna, rehabilitation of ecosystems, developing interpretive programs and media, preventing forest fires, and increasing participation in the community through activities such as citizen forest patrols. Officials from both the park and the Ministry of Forestry stated that the purpose of this new regulation was to make the nation's national parks more compatible with the pace of decentralization as well as keep up with global trends in conservation. The new mission priorities of the park, promulgated in 2005, reflected this directive (KSNP 2006b):

1. Protect and preserve the forest
2. Conservation of the protected area
3. Conservation of biodiversity
4. Developing nature tourism

\textsuperscript{136} The Lapindo mud flow disaster in which negligent drilling triggered a huge (and ongoing) eruption of subterranean volcanic mud is an excellent example of this. Although geologists have stated definitely that the mudflow was the result of the company's activities, the company has escaped culpability. Moreover, the principle shareholder in the company, Aburizal Bakrie, is likely to run for president in 2014, backed by the Golkar party.
5. Control of forest fires
6. Establishing a support zone
7. Empowerment of the community economy (ekonomi masyarakat)
8. Developing local cooperation, partnerships, and networks
9. Increasing the professionalism of the staff.

The management plan goes on to explicitly state that:

For KSNP, the involvement of society in the management of the park is greatly anticipated, and society can play a role and actively participate along with the park office in management to achieve collaborative management with society. It is hoped that in this collaborative management framework, society will receive benefits from all of the management activities that are implemented (18).

These new goals came in the wake of the collapse of support from the World Bank and WWF, and so the park's budget was dramatically cut. But although the park was suffering from shortages in terms of personnel and financial resources, staff initiated several new programs aimed at incorporating local people into certain aspects of park management in the first decade of the twentieth century. The official documentation of these projects suggests different ideological underpinnings than those from the Suharto years or the ICDP project; in addition to references to partnership (kemitraan) and sustainability (keberlanjutan), park documents begin to mention independence (kemandirian), cooperation, and the local economy. The philosophical basis behind these new programs seems to reflect a broader trend within Indonesia of reviving the economic idealism of Mohamad Hatta, one of the
cofounders of the Republic of Indonesia in 1945. Hatta championed the idea of the "people's economy" (*ekonomi kerakyatan*); according to his vision the overall goal of economic activity should be to meet the needs of all of the people, in particular the economically disadvantaged. Hatta saw village cooperatives rooted in equity and the traditional notions of mutual aid (*tolong-menolong*) and community labor (*gotong-royong*) as major pillars of the people's economy. Small-scale enterprises that relied on community control of capital and the factors of production were an important part of this ideal as well. Hatta's vision stands in stark contrast with the centrally-directed modernization focus of the Suharto years, and an acceptance of this contrast appears in numerous park documents pertaining to co-management activities. For example, the planning documents from the Model Village Community Empowerment program (*Desa Model Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Di Sekitar Kawasan Taman Nasional Kerinci Seblat Master Plan*) define the objective of the new approach:

An approach based on the participation, initiative, and strength of society is obviously in opposition to a centralistic approach to growth dominated by a version of the phases of development of the New Order, because this approach no longer fully relies on the mechanisms of the market to provide resources for development" (BTNKS 2006a: 6).

Despite the new rhetoric, though, the Ministry of Forestry's support for these efforts was minimal. Though the management plans and annual reports through the reformasi era reflect a grudging acceptance of the importance of local people and

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137 The emergence of Hatta's language in park documents to me also reflects disenchantment with market mechanisms arising from the Asian financial crisis, which is widely considered to be one of the principle causes of the fall of the New Order. The massive economic difficulties that accompanied the fall of Suharto meant that a new legitimizing strategy was needed.
governments in determining the overall success or failure of conservation efforts at the park, as noted in Chapter 2, the structure of the park didn't change much, nor did the bureaucratic hierarchy or the types of professionals working at the park. This lends greater support to the contention that the park has failed to respond meaningfully to the new political realities of the reformasi era and remains mired in the patterns of the New Order. Moreover, it is instructive to consider the types of participatory activities authorized by the 2004 Ministry of Forestry regulation. None of the aforementioned activities involves any real decision-making authority for local people, which has been shown to be one of the major determinants of successful decentralization (Ribot et al 2006). As I argued in chapter 3, this is another way in which the national park has impeded decentralization. Instead, all of the activities involve implementing projects the park management has already designed and planned. In many cases the participation is limited to manual labor (as in the case of afforestation projects and border marker maintenance). It has long been understood by planning and community development experts that these types of "participation" are often counter-productive. For example, Arnstein (1969:218) notes that

Citizen participation is a categorical term for citizen power. It is the redistribution of power that enables the have not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future....Participation without redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process for the powerless. It allows the powerholders to claim that all sides were considered, but makes it possible for only some of those sides to benefit. It maintains the status quo.
Arnstein goes on to describe a "ladder" of citizen participation. All of the participatory activities currently underway at KSNP would fall under the lower end of this participatory continuum where "participation" refers to paying lip service to local concerns and priorities, and serves as a sort of rationalization for the continuation of centralized control and direction. This fact is not lost on the people around the park, who often observe that the park treats them as a source of cheap labor.

6.3.5 The Rangers' Perspective

As for the personnel, for the most part park staffers are sympathetic with local people, and among those that are most understanding of local peoples' plights is the park rangers, as they often live in rural communities around the park. Most rangers I interviewed offered up some compassionate rationale as to why people encroach, poach, or log illegally, but they all maintained that it was their duty to enforce the law. They say that in many cases people unknowingly violate the law, and thus the rangers argue that better signage and public information campaigns would go a long way towards solving many of the problems the park is facing. Rangers that had worked in the park during the Suharto era all said that there have been big changes since regional autonomy laws were implemented, and most seemed to recall pleasantly the Suharto days. Many explained that the forest police were respected during the Suharto years because they were representatives of the state and had the backing of the army, but some instead noted that they were feared rather than respected. The difference now however is that people are more frequently non-cooperative or even

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138 I met very few people during my village visits that claimed not to know where the park boundaries were; instead many villagers admitted to me that they pretend (pura-pura) not to know where the markers are if and when the rangers appear.
openly hostile towards the rangers. One ranger even said that during the Suharto years he would always be served tea if he visited a farmer's residence, but now he worried that he might be poisoned instead. The rangers universally attribute this new dynamic to regional autonomy and the higher level of freedom on the part of the district government, as well as the reduced role of the army in law enforcement and government in general. They also noted that the decentralization of forest administration in the districts has led to less cooperation between the district forestry services (Dinas Kehutanan) and the park itself, and that district forest police are generally poorly trained and equipped when compared to the national park rangers. Many park rangers I interviewed proudly informed me that they had been trained at the national police academy in Riau, and that they were highly proficient with firearms, although since 2010 they were no longer allowed to carry firearms at the direction of the former park manager. In contrast, they are generally looked down on district forest police, who are now appointed by the districts rather than the Ministry of Forestry.

6.3.6 Official characterizations of local people

The opinion of the rangers stands in stark contrast with the park's official documents, including annual reports and management plans all the way down to accounts of more mundane activities such as border marker maintenance and community meetings. There is a very strong current in these documents suggesting that the people around the park are ignorant of conservation and that they don't understand how important conservation is. For example a park-sponsored research
project (Pattipawaej 2005) concluded that the encroachment problem is rooted not only in the low socio-economic status of the villages but also in a very low level of awareness towards conservation, which causes people to use resources without thinking about the consequences. Park reports assert that people commit forest crimes because of a breakdown in law enforcement stemming from reformasi, but there is little if any attempt to analyze political-economic incentives that have resulted from these same reforms. Local people are portrayed as ignorant of the ecological functioning of the park, and thus there is a clear privileging of management based on scientific principles of ecology and forestry. This attitude is a tactic of control and is reminiscent of the Suharto regime's perception of the citizenry in general as a "floating mass" (massa mengambang) that is "still ignorant" (masih bodoh) and in need of modernization. This doctrine and policies based on these assumptions was used to shut down virtually all political debate in the 1970s and remove formal politics from the world of the everyday Indonesians (Antlov 1995, Samson 1973, Crouch 1978). As will be shown in the next chapter, this attitude contributed to the marginalization of local systems of resource management (adat) and thus reflects the general bias towards scientific management, which can be considered a form of rendering technical (Li 2007) as was a cornerstone of the Suharto regime's official approach to the management of forests. The country's national parks were gazetted during the Suharto years and fit the mold as an accoutrement of the modern state; it is easy to see how these baseline assumptions have carried over to the post-authoritarian era, especially since the structures of the Ministry of Forestry with respect to national parks have not faced decentralization pressures. In other words, the MoF in general
could be considered a relic of the Suharto years, and its control over the country's massive forest estate depends in part on the presumption that they are the most capable in terms of managing the resource.

6.4 Attitudes of the people towards the park

For the most part, people resent the presence of the park because they are excluded from it. Like many of the district officials, the majority of villagers I interviewed expressed the opinion that the park was set aside by the Suharto regime according to New Order priorities, and thus it represents to them the Java bias described in chapter 3. Some suggested that the park had been created to protect the trees so they could be part of future logging concessions for cronies of the regime. Others suggested that Suharto personally received huge payments from European countries to preserve the park. The overall perception though is that the park represents an illegitimate land grab on the part of the central government. However, in contrast to the park's view of villagers as ignorant of conservation and ecosystem services, I found the opposite to be true in virtually every village I visited. Career farmers as well as elected heads and especially adat leaders were aware of the ecosystem services provided by the forest and were interested in maintaining and preserving those services. My perception was that people at the village level were far more cognizant of ecosystem services than elected officials and professional bureaucrats at the district level. However, the importance of conservation and ecosystem services to local people was mainly utilitarian in nature; they were interested in ecosystem services that benefited them directly, such as the filtering of
water and regulation of the local climate. They were less sympathetic to the park's goals of protecting biodiversity and to a lesser extent addressing global warming (though several informants pointed out the importance of the park for the global community). This is significant because attention to regional scale ecosystem services does not demand the same level of protection as some other aspects of the park's mission, such as the strict preservation of tigers, and so a management approach more oriented towards safeguarding regional ecosystem services might potentially allow for some forms of forest access that are currently prohibited. For example, a management strategy based on the protection of a watershed, for example, might allow for agroforestry activities and the collection of non-timber forest products.

Acceptance of the park's role in combating global warming was tempered by a widespread feeling that the park was an unfair burden and that it had been unfairly expropriated by the national government. One common counter-slogan embodies this: locals often reappropriate the Indonesian acronym for KSNP (Taman Nasional Kerinci Seblat, TNKS) as Tanah Nenek-moyang Kita Semua ("the land of all our ancestors") or Tolong Nenek Kami Sesat ("help our ancestors that have been defiled"). One local informant noted that "KSNP is famous as the 'lungs of the earth' (paru paru dunia), but at the same time the lungs of the people (paru paru kita) around the park feel constricted and suffocated. How does the park address this issue? What is the contribution that the park gives to the people?" I heard variations on this refrain throughout the course of my fieldwork in many different places. While these slogans show how local people perceive the burdens placed upon them by international
conservation interests to be unfair, the reference to ancestors also indicate a deeper reaction against the very idea of the park. To illustrate this point I turn again to Neidel's (2006) detailed account of the effects of the establishment of the park on the Serampas people. The creation of the park, Neidel argues, was made possible by "the discursive erasure of local history and the remembrance of particular administrative histories" (9). In the planning stages of the park, the MoF, FAO, and other groups portrayed the area that would become the park as unpeopled wilderness, but Neidel further argues that the park doesn't protect pristine ecosystems,

...but rather discursively constructs them out of landscapes shaped by the interactions of humans and biophysical forces. [The] legitimization of these protected areas if exercised through a metaphorical erasure of certain histories and remembrance of others...serves to strengthen state control while obfuscating local claims to resources and/or demands for compensation (36).

The aforementioned slogans then should be seen as a critique of the state's centralization and territorialization projects and hence were used as a moral justification for officially illegal activities ranging from gathering of non-timber forest products to illegal logging. During the Suharto era then this fits the bill as "everyday resistance" (Kirkvliet 2009, Scott 1985). Because of the power of the state people had to be somewhat cautious in their expressions of defiance. Reformasi has brought about huge changes in that acts considered illegal by the park and the Ministry of Forestry are now deemed legitimate by the district government. Therefore expressions of defiance are much more open and slogans such as "the land of our ancestors" represents the reverse of the process Neidel described; instead of a
"discursive erasure" there is a discursive remembrance of local history as people overwrite the history and claims of the park, and by extension the central government.

6.4.1 An Expanded Role for Civil Society

Another important aspect of the relationship between the park and its neighbors has to do with the new space created for civil society organizations in the wake of the collapse of the New Order, in particular non-state sponsored NGOs. During the Suharto years the state was able to firmly control most non-governmental organizations, and those that did exist independently from the state for the most part occupied carefully circumscribed niches (Aspinall 2005a, Nyman 2006). However, since the end of the New Order many new NGOs have been founded all over Indonesia (Warren and McCarthy 2009). Since 2001 there has been a blossoming of small, 2-5 person operations in some of the villages near the park. One reason for this, according to my NGO sponsor, was that during the Suharto years dissent was suppressed and people were silent because they were afraid, but now that the Suharto era has come to an end there has been a tremendous outpouring of activism, expression, and critique at the community level. During my fieldwork I had the opportunity to observe and work with several of these conservation-oriented NGOs. One interesting aspect of the NGOs is that they do not work in isolation; they have come together under an umbrella organization that they founded which brings together small groups from all four provinces around the park (AKAR: Aliansi Konservasi Alam Raya). Thus decentralization has created incentives for and allowed civil society organizations to accomplish a feat that has largely vexed district
governments: they have been able to organize, plan, and coordinate across district and provincial borders.

Although these NGOs are concerned with conservation, as a general rule they also feature social justice and community empowerment as part of their core missions, and therefore they believe that the way forward for the park is working with communities and by increasing village input and participation in management activities. They are also very critical of corruption in the local government, and so these NGOs occupy a sort of political neutral zone between the park and the district administrations. These groups have pioneered village patrols and are pushing for more co-management types of activities, including community forestry which would grant secure tenure to longtime local farmers living around the park. They are not shy in critiquing the top-down organization of the park, and they are very vocal about the lack of a true management role for local people. In this way these NGOs are able to articulate the concerns of many of the people living around the park. This has created a significant degree of friction between the park and the NGOs, with the former blaming the latter for unrealistic expectations, and the latter blaming the former for intractable policies. On the park's end, some of the friction is rooted in the structure of the park, but some of it is based on personalities of park staffers struggling to maintain their authority in the wake of the fall of the New Order. This counter-productive relationship between the park and the local NGOs suggests another area in which the park and the Ministry of Forestry have not adjusted to or accepted the new realities of decentralization. The result is that a potentially useful ally and resource for implementing conservation activities has been marginalized. For example, one NGO leader explained in
exasperation that "the park is too mired in rules, and this is a very high wall that is separating KSNP from society". The NGOs frequently complain that the central office staff at the park only do conservation activities because it is in their job description; they aren't really invested in the mission of conservation like the NGOs. One very important upshot of all of this is that the NGOs have developed partnerships with bilateral and international organizations, including USAID, the WWF, and FFI, and so they provide a route through which donors can largely bypass the state and work through local groups rather than the park's management. However, this requires the international donors to modify their approaches somewhat, and the local NGOs have to a certain extent been successful in pushing their priorities on the international donors.

6.5 Towards an Understanding of Patterns of Encroachment

6.5.1 The Erosion of Local Control Over Land and Forest Resources

In chapter 5 I argued that the districts' road proposals through the park are the most visible direct manifestation conflict between the park and the district governments. Though villagers are often involved in the disputes over roads, it is forest encroachment that most clearly depicts the dynamics of conflict between the village scale (the villagers themselves) and the central government (in the form of the park). In this section I will describe how decentralization and democratization have affected the amount and nature of encroachment. There is some degree of agricultural encroachment in virtually every village around the park, but some places can be considered hotspots. These hotspots can be divided into two basic categories.
The first is areas where long-standing disputes over the border exist, and thus encroachment has been a long-term problem. In these areas it is mainly local people that are responsible for expansion into the forest. The second category is new areas of encroachment perpetrated primarily by migrants from other districts and provinces.

These patterns of settlement both reflect different aspects of what I term here a "frontier mentality" on the part of certain groups inhabiting central Sumatra. The frontier mentality and the economic assumptions and patterns that underlie it are an integral part of land management and use patterns that are on the one hand rooted in centuries of practice on Sumatra but on the other encouraged by the political economic conditions that have emerged as a result of democratization and decentralization. Historically in central Sumatra young, unmarried males have opened up new land in preparation for having a family, and heads of households try to open up land as a reserve for their children. Traditionally this expansion was governed by customary law, which purportedly ensured that land was managed relatively sustainably. For example, von Benda Beckmann and von Benda Beckmann (2009, 2007) provide rich accounts of the Minangkabau system of traditional tenure, which is evident in many of the districts around the park, while Watson (1984, 1978) documents the complex traditional tenure system of the peoples of the Kerinci Valley and Galizia (1996) describes the tenure arrangements of the Rejang and Lebong people that inhabit the southwestern periphery of the park. These authors show that in virtually all places in and around what would become KSNP there existed an indigenous system of tenure and land management. The point to be taken here is not necessarily that these systems were inherently conservationist in nature, but rather
that they were successful in preventing large scale migrations (as noted in the case of the Serampas in chapter 5). However these patterns have been altered and influenced by the penetration of the cash economy, which was facilitated by the Dutch colonial authorities, and the centralizing mission of Suharto's New Order.

![Figure 6.1: KSNP Boundary marker amidst encroaching cultivation. Location not to be disclosed.](image)

The first of these factors, the colonial experience, has already been discussed in the introductory chapter, and while its importance cannot be overstated in influencing the current situation around the park, it is a factor that is not unique to Indonesia and is in fact central to world systems theories of history and international politics (Rudel 2005, Wallerstein, 1974). The second factor, the New Order's centralizing project, is a manifestation of post-colonial statemaking more specific to Indonesia. As noted in
the introductory chapter, the centralization project involved a great deal of standardization as the Suharto regime created a vertically-articulated top-down hierarchical system radiating from Jakarta which established the dominance of the central state's institutional arrangements (McCarthy 2006). One of the problems that had to be overcome though was that throughout the archipelago there existed scores if not hundreds of locally-rooted systems of land management and social organization, collectively referred to as *adat*. One of the major centralizing triumphs of the New Order was to replace these systems with a standardized model of administration based on the Javanese village (*desa*) system. The legal instrument that facilitated this massive and far-reaching transformation was the Village Act of 1979 (*Undang undang 5/1979 Tentang Pemerintahan Desa*).

The village law, along with Act 5 of 1974 on the Principles of Local Administration (*Undang undang 5/1974 Tentang Pokok-pokok Pemerintahan Daerah*) created the legal foundation to standardize the functioning of local government all over the country (Kato 1989, Charras 2005). The official goal of these laws was to replace all of the old regulations, many of which were carryovers from the Dutch colonial administration in order to create the legal tools to accelerate rural development. As mentioned in the explanatory text of 5/1979, "those [old] laws and regulations did not create uniformity in village government and did not stimulate the community to develop. Therefore the present villages and village governments have various forms and structures; each area has its own characteristics which often hinder intensive upgrading and control to improve the community's welfare" (quoted in Bebbington et al 2006:1960). The New Order's approach to local
government represented a real departure from the colonial era, since the Dutch had a far greater tolerance for plurality due to the fact that in most places off Java they utilized indirect rule until the end of the colonial period. Thus there was a certain degree of diversity in terms of local governance arrangements which allowed some space for adat systems to continue. Bebbington et al (2006) goes on to explain that the new law made the village head (Kepala Desa) upwardly accountable to the district head rather than downwardly accountable to the villagers. This was significant for two reasons: 1) it removed incentives for the village head to work for the true best interests of the village and 2) it made the village head part of the top-down structure of power originating in Jakarta, since at that time district heads were selected by the Home Affairs Ministry (McCarthy 2006)139. After the new system was implemented, village heads became the point person for coordinating central government directives and programs at the village level, and a host of new organizations and community groups were created to implement these standardized development programs: "these were supposed to be present in every village and played a mix of community, development, and surveillance roles. Other organizations, such as cooperatives, farmers' associations and especially groups affiliated to political parties were replaced by government-sponsored ones all over the country" (Bebbington et al 2006: 1961).

139 See Mietzner (2009: 126) for an excellent account of how local leaders, including district headman and village heads were selected. Local parliaments could draft a short list of candidates for executive positions which would then go to the central government. "Most importantly, the composition of parliaments was such that it was virtually impossible for a candidate not backed by the regime to get nominated, let alone elected to top the shortlist. The government's electoral machine, Golkar, controlled comfortable majorities in almost all local legislatures, and even the parliamentarians of the other two parties sanctioned by the regime, PPP and PDI, had to undergo intensive screening by the authorities before being allowed to take up their seats".
The Village Act represented the apex of state penetration into the day-to-day lives of villagers and the ultimate expression of the modernization project. McCarthy (2006:205) refers to this as the "negation of pluralism" that completed the "reshaping of institutions down to the village level". Kato (1989:104) describes the effects of the village law on communities in Riau: "the desa are now nearly formalized in administrative terms. They are structured so as to be highly responsive to directives from above. Unfortunately they are less responsive to needs from below...." The village law enabled the remapping of local geographies as administrative boundaries were redrawn and old systems of political organization were erased and replaced. The connection between village administration and traditional law in many cases was severed, and new policies implemented via the village head (kepala desa) even disrupted planting cycles. Again Kato (1989:105) illustrates the effects in Riau; note the ecological as well as the social effects of the abandonment of the traditional system in this area:

Previously the rice planting season was communally regulated in Koto Dalam. Magicians (dukun) decided when to start preparing seed beds by consulting the movement of Orion's Belt (bintang tiga) and an age-old calendrical system. People gathered in a field on an appointed day, prayed together, had a cow or water buffalo slaughtered, and performed appropriate rituals on some riceland. A feast was held afterward in the field. There the adat leaders announced the planting schedules and regulations to be observed during the period of rice cultivation. For example, cattle had to be tied or taken to the grazing ground and chickens were to be penned. There were penalties for violations. The coordination of rice planting no longer takes place. Since 1981 people have been induced to plant new varieties of rice which mature much more quickly than the local varieties. As a result, they plant rice whenever they like, in the expectation of harvesting rice

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140 Two examples from the vicinity of KSNP include the Minangkabau nagari-jorong system in West Sumatra and the marga system common in parts of Bengkulu and South Sumatra provinces.
twice or three times a year. Unfortunately, there has also been a rampant increase in field rats and grasshoppers, which can now find food on riceland practically at any time of the year, so this expectation has not materialized. Some people in Koto Dalam have begun to wonder whether they should again coordinate their rice-planting calendar, but there is no way to build up anew an organized body which can coordinate inter-desa activities.

The Village Act represents the incorporation of local society into an organized, controlled, surveyed and surveilled centralized hierarchy. This resulted in the standardization of the local in Indonesia, the culmination of an ambitious effort to render the local technical and legible after which technical solutions could be applied to increasing productivity, improving health and education, and raising the standard of living. However the reality of the village law was to marginalize and in some cases erase a vast store of indigenous knowledge and practice, an experiential database of *metis*¹⁴¹ that would tear down resilient communities and refashion them as the lowest order units integrated into a national system of politics and economy. In many cases this left communities vulnerable to outside perturbations, whether ecological or economic. This upheaval would undermine traditional systems of land management and lay the groundwork for decades of conflict between communities and the Kerinci Seblat National Park.

### 6.5.2 From Controlled Access to Open Access

In many areas in and around the park the dismantling and delegitimizing of *adat* systems means that forests to which previously access was controlled have now become open access resources. For example, Suyanto and Otsuka (2001:2) note that:

¹⁴¹ Scott (1998) uses the Greek word *metis* to refer to specific experiential and practical knowledge.
...from our observation, primary forest areas are largely open access, at least for community members, even though the village chief is supposed to be a custodian of communally-held primary forest areas. As a result, forests have been cleared on a first come, first serve basis, which has led to the rapid exhaustion of forest land and its conversion to cropland in many areas.

Park staff as well as *adat* leaders from the villages around the park indicate that the marginalization of *adat* during the New Order years created a vacuum of land management. But it was not only the marginalization of traditional systems of land and resource management that led to encroachment and other forms of deforestation. Another contributing factor was the incorporation of village, subdistrict, and district officials into the expansive network of patron-client corruption that sustained the Suharto regime. McCarthy (2002) observes that village heads, for example, took part in the corruption of local logging because they had no control over whether the logging took place or not, so they were only left with the choice of benefiting by taking part, or missing out on benefits by not taking part. In many cases village officials and local people were overwhelmed by outside loggers, either the military itself or those connected to the military, and so there was no way to control or regulate access and extraction. In summary,

...logging networks operating at the district level had extended downwards to embrace *adat* leaders and village heads, and this was connected with a shift in local power relations. The rearrangement of the village government in accordance with the village government law, together with the injection of capital by outside entrepreneurs, weakened the ability of the *adat* community facing outside intervention. The principal *adat* head became an instrument of outside interests on whose patronage he depended. After the restructuring of village administration, village heads were no longer under the tutelage
of the adat elders; they were now directly responsible to a subdistrict head (camat), who (informally) benefited from logging. Adat sanctions could not be brought to bear on loggers violating adat principles or local leaders who used their office corruptly. To some degree the community had lost its ability to control logging that damaged forests and endangered surrounding farming lands (McCarthy 2002: 875-6).

As noted in chapter 3, when the New Order fell, in many places the corrupt networks of bureaucrats and "elected" officials were able to remain in power. Elsewhere, although new elites gained control of districts, the corrupt structures and ways of administering access to and control of natural resources that had been established during the Suharto years were still in place. The one major difference is that the unifying central authority that in many ways had constrained the predations of local elites was no longer as effective, and so these elites were no longer upwardly accountable. It was at this important juncture that KSNP took on a new value, as district officials have been able to broker access to the park. Because of this, inter-district and province migration has increased significantly, as KSNP has become a destination for those seeking land due to the enforcement difficulties mentioned in chapter 2. In the next chapter I will describe a case study which illustrates how this encroachment becomes a problem that is beyond the management capacity of the park's administration.

Based on the historical background as well as the interview data I gathered in the field, the encroachment pattern that has emerged as a result of decentralization exhibits some characteristics of two classic models of encroachment. The first of these, the "frontier model of development", is explained in van Schaik and Rao (2002). They describe a frontier as "an area of unstable land use at the edge of
wilderness" (424) which gradually replaces the "remote pattern", which is characterized by low population densities, extensive land use, and largely subsistence-oriented production. While they describe encroachment as environmentally destructive, their theory is somewhat teleological and developmentalist, since the four stages of the model ultimately lead to the relaxation of pressures on the forest:

1. Migrants are attracted by available convertible land or some other natural resource (mining) from areas considered to be open access. As I argued in the preceding paragraphs, a major impact of the New Order was that *adat* institutions, which had previously controlled access to resources were marginalized, thus turning controlled-access regimes into de facto open access regimes in some places, while in others it transferred the control of access from local communities to officials with connections to the Suharto regime.

2. As more and more migrants enter the frontier area, the resource in question (land) becomes scarcer and more valuable, and so pressure on the resource increases. This is consistent with information provided by local informants who say that the influx of new migrants increases the pressure on local residents to encroach further into the park as well for fears that they will be left out or that all of the most accessible land will be taken by the migrants.
3. The frontier then closes when extractable resources become depleted and free land becomes scarce enough to enforce a lifestyle that requires less land per capita and extensive cultivation gives way to intensive cultivation. Van Schaik and Rao refer to this as the "crisis state".

4. The "stably settled phase" follows when stable intensive land-use patterns are established and is characterized by horticulture and intensive cultivation. In this stage degraded land is restored to productivity or allowed to rehabilitate itself naturally. According to the authors, intensive cultivation requires less land and allows society to conserve more land.

This land conversion progression is a hopeful scenario, but the realities of Reformasi serve to undermine the transformation in Indonesia and so rather than witnessing a gradual market-driven end to encroachment, KSNP and other protected areas are experiencing a massive free-for-all. The first two stages of this cycle have taken place at several locations around the park. However, the third stage is hindered by the fact that the land in the park is considered to be open access due to the lack of enforcement and local management systems. Further contributing to this is the fact that in some places encroachers are able to clear land for free, and in other places they "buy" the land at prices much lower than the market would bear if the park did not exist and a true market for land was allowed to emerge. In this way the park is providing a subsidy for the local economy. The further transformation to the "stably settled phase" is frustrated in part by Sumatra's continuing reliance on primary sector
activities, including the expansion of agricultural lands. This suggests that the classic economic transformation, whereby excess rural workers are absorbed into the urban market, thereby providing a cheap source of labor for a rapidly expanding secondary sector, is also hampered by the perceived availability of land in KSNP and other protected areas on Sumatra (Harris and Todaro 1970).

Related to this is the issue of "sleeping land" (tanah tidur), which refers to agricultural lands that are not currently in use for one reason or another. Sleeping land is widely perceived to be a problem in most of the districts around the park, and in fact one park manager claimed that there are currently approximately 30,000 hectares of unused farmland in Kerinci district alone, which, if true, would exceed the amount of encroached land in the park in Kerinci. Village residents often express indignation at the fact that there is so much uncultivated land, because to them it represents misuse of a valuable and scarce resource. This problem is rooted in the patronage dynamics of the New Order. As I noted previously the top-down structure of Suharto's regime coupled with the marginalization of adat allowed for a great deal of land concentration into the hands of those that were able to attach themselves to the regime. By all accounts the "sleeping land" is owned by district (and in some cases provincial) elites, who have no incentive to cultivate the land, and since those in search of land can acquire it for free (or at well below market prices) in the park, an effective market for land has not developed and so it is relatively inexpensive for the local elites to hold onto land, since access to the park has distorted the value of land. This dynamic would suggest that it would be in the best interest of the district elites to stop encroachment so that the price of land would increase, but virtually all sources
confirmed that these same elites are major financiers of encroachment in several locations.

The question that arises is why have these first two stages only recently (over the past two decades) been manifested around KSNP. Rudel and Horowitz (1993) describe two mechanisms whereby deforestation is encouraged in large, previously untouched forest blocks. The first mechanism involves "lead institutions" (Rudel and Horowitz 1993) which open up new regions for development, usually by building a penetration road into the forest. Free-riding groups and individuals then take advantage of the improved access. In the case of KSNP, one of the most important drivers of encroachment is new roads. When new roads are opened, and as has been shown in chapter 5 when district officials loudly trumpet plans to open new roads, peasants quickly move in to colonize the areas that will be opened up by the road, as land at this point is basically a free good. Support from the district elites diminishes the risks of pioneering to the point where poor colonists will gladly move in. The second mechanism involves a "growth coalition" consisting of government officials, business interests, and smallholders: "large rain forests only undergo extensive settlement and deforestation when large numbers of people tied together in some form of complex organization work together to open up a forested region for development" (Rudel and Horowitz 1993:24-5). In the case of the districts around the park, the newly empowered district governments, their business associations, and migrating farmers constitute a growth coalition that drives encroachment in the park.

Decentralization has played an important role in changing the incentives for lead institutions as well as the emergence of growth coalitions involving smallholders.
Local people provide support for local leaders promising to build roads, and so a symbiotic relationship develops between district elites and villagers that want to expand their landholdings. During the Suharto years district elites gained access to state resources through their upward-oriented connections to the regime, and so there was no reason to involve villagers other than as labor. However access now depends upon support from below. Previously local people could not find government officials that were responsive to their desires to have new roads but the new political configuration ensures that they do. Moreover, the creation of new districts and concomitant rounds of village and subdistrict formation creates additional layers of elected officials and professional bureaucrats that are increasingly close and responsive to these local aspirations.

6.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I have described the historical relationship between KSNP and the people living on its periphery. One of the key points that should come out of this chapter is that the New Order, through the village law and other interventions in local life, created a vacuum in terms of local land management. *Adat* systems of controlling access to land and natural resources, which had by all accounts been effective, were shunted aside by the New Order while at the same time a structure was imposed in which village officials were not accountable to their communities, but were rather the tips of the tentacles that comprised the New Order regime. In other words, through the Basic Forestry Act and the Village Act the New Order systematically dismantled institutions that had functioned to control access to forest
resources. As I have noted, these local institutions were not inherently conservationist, but a key aspect that served to limit extractive pressures was the fact that there was no spatial or scalar divide between those that benefited from the exploitation of the natural environment and those that suffered the effects of concomitant environmental bads. The diminished role of *adat* systems in resource management had the general effect of converting controlled access regimes to conditions of open access. The New Order also altered the dynamics of accountability for leaders at the local level such that they were no longer accountable to their communities, but rather local leaders became part of the New Order hierarchy. As such they facilitated the plundering of natural resources, in the process enriching themselves. *Reformasi* served to decapitate this vertically articulated system, providing freedom for these village officials to utilize their networks to benefit from further pillaging of forest resources. Moreover, the marginalization of *adat* has had lasting effects, as local elites often encourage encroachment by outsiders in some cases. This organized encroachment, backed by wealthy outsiders and investors, can overwhelm and weaken local communities and the traditional systems of land and resource management.

KSNP national park, as an instrument of the New Order, contributed to these conditions. In the park's early years there was no consideration of local priorities or livelihood patterns. This is very characteristic of the New Order's developmentalist approach and the park served to "render technical" (Li 2007) issues of conservation, bracketing (1998) them in such a way that local people were identified as the major threat to the park. This bracketing allowed the broader political-economic forces that
were in fact leading to increased pressure on the park to pass unexamined and hence continue unabated. In other words, the park served to displace attention away from the unsustainable and predatory extractive practices of the Suharto regime, in the process vilifying villagers and in fact exacerbating local pressures on the natural environment by undermining traditional resource management institutions.

The park then has historically served interests and priorities emanating from the national and international scales while ignoring or marginalizing those at the local level. This continued into the reformasi era since the MoF and KSNP have not been forced to decentralize authority over protected areas. Arthur Mitchell, a consultant with the ICDP project, noted that the major goal of the program was "the systematic devolution of management responsibility to the people living around the protected area" (2001:2). However, one of the fundamental flaws is that there has never been any rethinking of the role of local people and governments in terms of the park's management. I have shown by comparing the park's official documents with its practice in the field that even when the park and the MoF accepted the role of local people it has always been on the park's terms and conditions, and local people have only been afforded a very minimal role in park activities. The villages around the park have always been viewed as something to be acted on, either they have deficiencies that need to be remedied by things like the community empowerment model village program or they are to be co-opted or used as a tool. All of the current programs to remediate village communities seem to have goals like empowerment and building institutional capacity. All of these things have been traditionally components of adat society, which the New Order essentially destroyed. And now an
organ of the central government is trying half-heartedly to rebuild these things and it is quite ironic.

We see again in this chapter how the park has been intransigent in terms of working with local governments, and in many cases the local governments have enacted policies that undermine the park. There is at the time no middle ground between them. However, Reformasi has empowered civil society, and several local NGOs have been founded over the past 10 years in the districts around the park. These NGOs are in the pocket of neither the park nor the district governments, and so potentially the NGOs could serve as a sort of mediator or middle ground between the two sides, but unfortunately the park has not recognized the potential for these groups and instead has relegating them to the same role it has for local people in its programs: as implementers.

There has been a steady parade of ideas from the outside that has affected the people around what is now Kerinci Seblat National Park. This includes external notions about what adat is, nationalism and the birth of the Indonesian state, the modernization project of the Suharto years, and then ideas about biodiversity conservation, ecosystem services, and so forth. All of these have left a mark on the people in the area, and the continuing exercise by higher authorities has altered the space available as well as the role for local management institutions like adat, and so the form of adat has changed over time; it is an evolving institutions. A major weakness though is the park has failed to adequately address local livelihoods and the practical realities of decentralization and democratization. However, the next chapter will examine some specific cases studies to illustrate this weakness.
7.1 Introduction

On August 31, 2010, Nalim, the headman of Merangin district in Jambi province published an edict ordering approximately 10,000 people to vacate land they had been cultivating, in some cases for more than a decade, within two months or else face forced eviction. The major problem was that the farmers, who mainly grow coffee, had encroached on land within the borders of Kerinci Seblat National Park, and the Forestry Ministry had been pressing the district government here and elsewhere to take action against illegal encroachment. On November 12 a multi-agency taskforce, including rangers from the national park, members of the district's forest police, Jambi provincial police, and local law enforcement officials attempted to enforce the eviction order. They were unsuccessful, and the encroaching farmers remain on what they claim is their land.

In neighboring Kerinci district similar events were unfolding in a different way. Here the district government was also under mounting pressure from the MoF to deal with the problem of encroachment. Gunung Tujuh ("Mountain Seven") lies within the boundaries of KSNP and is of particular interest to tourists and conservationists alike because of the presence of Lake Gunung Tujuh, the highest lake in all of Southeast Asia. There are three villages near the park entrance here: Pauh Tinggi, Harapan Jaya, and Pesisir Bukit, which actually straddles the national park's boundary. In this area there are more than a thousand families illegally farming in the park.
Like the Merangin case, the headman of Kerinci issued an edict ordering the encroachers to leave the park. However, when it came time to execute the order the bupati, who is widely considered to be "anti-park," refused, arguing that the boundary lines of the park are not clear, and so according to the headman there was some question as to whether the encroachers were actually in the wrong. Interviews with encroaching farmers as well as village administrators indicate that they do indeed know where the borders are. According to one informant, "when [the park rangers] come we act as though we don't know where the borders are." The headman's refusal essentially to execute the order torpedoed the park's law enforcement efforts, since the understaffed and under-resourced management relies on surrounding regions for cooperation.

Meanwhile, at another site in Solok Selatan district, encroaching villagers have actually received a national award from the Ministry of the Environment for their efforts to safeguard the park. The village of Bangun Rejo has managed to become something of a media darling, and even the management of KSNP trumpets the village as a positive example of the potential of village-park cooperation and what could be in other locations. These three scenarios illustrate the interesting outcomes of decentralization and democratization reforms at the village level and are the subject of this chapter, which uses several case studies to examine the local level intersections between access to resources, politics, and conservation at KSNP. In short, this chapter is about the micropolitics\textsuperscript{142} of resource access and Reformasi. I have shown in previous chapters that one of the biggest changes that has come about

\textsuperscript{142} The term "micropolitics" refers to contestation and negotiation over resources taking place at the village level and is used to describe primarily informal processes.
since the fall of Suharto is that actions on the part of local scale actors that would have been deemed illegal during the New Order now have an aura of legitimacy due to the creation of new nodes of "stateness" at the district level. Along with this change comes the fact that certain policy tools that would have been available to the central government during the New Order are now off the table. One example of this dynamic is that forced evictions have been deemed morally unjust by the media, some elements of the newly emergent NGO sector, and to a certain extent by district and provincial governments. This chapter illustrates the practical consequences of this moral shift for KSNP through the case studies described below. This chapter seeks to address the following issues and questions:

1. What specific forms have conflicts between villagers and the national park taken since the end of the Suharto era? I focused a significant amount of time and effort gathering data in the Gunung Tujuh area of Kerinci district. This area has long been a zone of conflict between villagers and the park, and now in the Reformasi era the district government has gone from being a proxy of the New Order to being an influential and independent player whose interests currently align with the villagers at Gunung Tujuh. However, part of the value of this case study is that it illustrates circumstances under which political alliances may shift as the interests of district and village actors diverge. This question directly addresses several themes of the dissertation, including statemaking and reverse statemaking and rescaling of political processes.
2. What sorts of strategies are villagers and their leaders employing in efforts to gain access to state forest resources, and how effective have these strategies been? Through the use of case studies this chapter focuses on the discursive practices local people use to challenge the state's claim over resources and to gain access to KSNP. I will describe three strategies specifically: 1) the use of human rights discourse to resist the park's enforcement efforts; 2) the reassertion of *adat* rights to support claims to lands that have been usurped by the park, and 3) unofficial, tacit agreement with the park that reflect the on-the-ground realities of the Reformasi era. This question addresses the dissertation's broader themes of reterritorialization, marginalization, and contestation of the concept of conservation.

3. How is the role of *adat* changing at the national, district, and village scales in terms of political processes and the management of natural resources? As noted in chapter 6 the role of *adat* was greatly reduced during the New Order, but now decentralization and democratization have brought important changes to how *adat* is conceived, represented, and used. However, defining *adat* in the context of decentralizing Indonesia is easier said than done, and both the *structure* and *form* of decentralization and democratization have led to *adat* becoming highly politicized. Moreover, a recent successful legal challenge to the central government's claim on all *adat* forests provides unprecedented opportunities for local people to manage forest resources according to their
own priorities, but it also makes it easier for predatory elites to take control of state resources, thereby denying local people access. This question also addresses some of the more general themes of the dissertation, including reterritorialization and remapping, contesting the concept of conservation, and processes of marginalization.

7.2 Gunung Tujuh: A History of Park-People Confrontation

7.2.1 Background: Roots of Conflict

Gunung Tujuh refers to a part of Kerinci district that lies within the boundaries of KSNP. Gunung Tujuh is of particular interest to tourists and conservationists alike because of the presence of the Lake Gunung Tujuh (Danau Gunung Tujuh), which at 1,950 meters above sea level is the highest lake in all of Southeast Asia. The spectacular lake is formed in a volcanic depression and is named for the seven peaks ringing the area. However, like virtually all places around the park, the area is inhabited as well, and the footpath that takes visitors to the lake first passes through hundreds of hectares of technically illegal fields cultivated by the residents of three villages: Pauh Tinggi, Harapan Jaya, and Pesisir Bukit. These three villages straddle the park's boundary, and thus perhaps not surprisingly the Gunung Tujuh area has been the site of significant conflict between the residents of these villages and the park over the past fifteen years.

As noted in chapter 4143, settlement in this area began after the Second World War as people moved from the Siulak area of Kerinci Valley to open up new farmland. Traditionally the people utilized shifting cultivation with long fallow

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143 These are the same people mentioned in my description of the Rawa Bento fiasco.
cycles, but in the 1970s and 1980s agricultural production shifted towards a focus on external markets, and so the system of shifting cultivation gave way to a pattern of opening the forest, cultivating the land, and then selling the land. Currently most of the people in villages farm paddy rice in the flat areas outside the park while maintaining dry cultivation on the slopes of the mountains inside the park. These fields are technically illegal, but the main problem from the park's point of view is not the existing fields but rather the expansion into the park, which has continued unabated for several years.

7.2.2 Violent Expressions of Defiance

The people in the villages have always maintained that they have been victimized by the park. Current village officials say that back in the 1990s when the borders of the park were being negotiated, they were indeed visited by officials from the Ministry of Forestry along with some foreign consultants, who seemed interested in the village economy and carefully marked the extent of territory claimed by the villages, including their agroforests. The villagers claim that they were assured that the park's boundaries would be placed beyond the limits of their land, and so they were cooperative. However, when the border markers were eventually physically placed, they crossed cultivated fields and thus hundreds of hectares were absorbed into the park. The park never took action against those already cultivating fields in these zone, but the villagers claim that the placement of the park's boundaries has

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144 The official administrative history of these villages is somewhat convoluted and not important for this dissertation, but in the 1990s none of the current villages existed as administrative units; rather they were wards of the village of Pelompek, which is located several miles away on the main road through the district.
meant that they have been unable to secure formal titles of ownership to their land. However, an uneasy truce existed between the two sides.

In the years immediately following the fall of Suharto relations between the park and the villagers around Gunung Tujuh deteriorated, and in 2001 the long-simmering tension erupted into violence. The people burned the ranger post along with approximately a dozen cabins that had been constructed for visitors. The violence erupted in response to the arrest of four villagers who had allegedly been logging illegally in the park. A mob of villagers set upon the three rangers stationed at the post, who fled into the woods to escape. The villagers were reportedly egged on by a village leader, who used the public address system of a nearby mosque to direct the crowd to "Kill the Officers!" (Bunuh Petugas!). Eventually reinforcements from the park and the district police arrived, but the three rangers had to be hospitalized with serious injuries. According to the park's official inquiry, this incident occurred because people felt freer to express their objections against perceived authoritarianism, and the recommended solution was for the district government to step up policing efforts and support for the park in the area. However, locals insist that the incident derived from pent-up resentment on the part of the local farmers, who claimed that they had been harassed and arrested by rangers for taking wood to fulfill the needs of the village, while the rangers themselves had been colluding with outsiders to extract timber and sell it illegally. The district assembly conducted their own investigation of the issue and concluded that the park was at fault as well. The farmers that had been arrested for cutting trees were eventually released, and there

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145 These cabins, which represent the highest level of tourism development anywhere around the park, were operated by KSNP and were by all accounts quite nice. The site also had two trained elephants (owned by the Ministry of Forestry) and offered rides for visitors.
was no further action against the villagers. The cabins were never rebuilt, but the
park did build a new ranger post, however it is much closer to the main road and is
only sporadically manned. Many of the rangers I interview during my fieldwork said
they felt betrayed by the lack of follow up in this situation, and asserted that the
Gunung Tujuh incident emboldened villagers in several other sites in and around the
park where other violent incidents have taken place.

Figure 7.1: Author at the site of the destroyed ranger post in 2007. Cleared fields in the background.

After the incident the park greatly reduced its presence and patrols in the Gunung
Tujuh resort, while encroachment increased. In 2010 the park conducted a survey of
encroachment sites and found that several thousand heads of households had opened
up thousands of hectares of land there. By all accounts encroachment increased gradually after 2001 as villagers opened up new fields for their children, but in 2008 the rate increased significantly as people from other parts of Kerinci district began paying villagers to clear new land. The reason for this spike, according to villagers, NGOs, and park officials, is that one of the candidates for district headman told people in other villages in the district (in particular, his own home village) that if he was elected he would allow them to open up fields in the park. Many people took him at his word, and he was eventually elected amidst an unprecedented new wave of forest clearance.

However, after taking office the new headman came under pressure from the Ministry of Forestry and the provincial governor to take action against the encroachers because the rate of forest destruction was starting to draw national attention. The district headman agreed to cooperate with a joint operation to be carried out by KSNP, the district police, and the army to evict the encroaching farmers. The eviction was scheduled for late 2010, and approximately three months prior to the operation signs were posted around the park notifying villagers of the headman's declaration and subsequent plans. The well-publicized impending eviction triggered a significant amount of consternation among the encroaching farmers as they were not sure what to expect. However, at the eleventh hour the district headman, who from the beginning was reluctant to comply with the eviction request,

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146 The encroachment inventory was for the entire district of Kerinci and covered three sites: Batang Merangin, Gunung Tujuh, and Kayu Aro. Total encroachment for the entire district was 25,619.6 hectares and 8568 heads of households, but the data is not broken down by location. The park officials that did the inventory however told me that Gunung Tujuh has by far the most encroachment. The 2010 annual report in fact indicates that the level of encroachment at Gunung Tujuh was the most pressing problem facing the park that year.
engineered a reprieve for the encroachers by issuing a legally questionable executive decision decreeing that the park's borders should be resurveyed before any eviction could take place. His reasoning was that many villagers claimed that the park's borders were incorrectly marked in the field (either by design or in error), and so they should be double checked to ensure that no one was unjustly evicted. The eviction operation was postponed indefinitely, and as of the writing of this chapter no action had been taken against the encroaching farmers. The district headman's actions reveal a great deal about the form of decentralization, since by all accounts he did not have the legal authority to issue the order requiring that the borders be resurveyed. Park officials still view the Gunung Tujuh situation as a crisis, but they complain that they can't move against the encroachers without the support of the district government.

The most recent case of anti-park direct action at Gunung Tujuh took place during my fieldwork. In 2011 the park allocated funds for an afforestation project covering three blocks of land at Gunung Tujuh where farmers had been persuaded (or compelled) to quit the land. Each block was roughly 500 hectares and was to be planted with surian, a fast growing tree species (*Toona sp.*). The work was facilitated by the army and workers from outside the community were hired and brought in to perform the labor. After several weeks of hard work all the seedlings were planted, but when I returned to the area approximately two months later, nearly half of the seedlings had been intentionally pulled up. Local informants claimed not to know

147 This order would entail action on the part of the national mapping agency, an arm of the central government.
who was responsible for the sabotage, but they explained the reasons for it: frustration with the park's management policies.

Figure 7.2: Sign warning villagers at Pesisir Bukit not to encroach on park land.
7.2.3 The Tenuous Convergence of District-Village Interests

The case of Gunung Tujuh is interesting because it gives a face to the conflict between the park and the district government and reveals how vulnerable the local people are in reality. The headman of Kerinci district has been very vocal in his opposition to the park and has turned the Gunung Tujuh case into a political issue. Vilifying the park has garnered widespread support for his administration and has helped to deflect attention away from charges of corruption. The villagers and migrating encroachers have benefitted as well, as they continue to open and sell the park's land. However, encroaching farmers do not have secure title to their land, and hence express apprehensions about what the future holds. They have realistic fears that they may at some point be evicted from their land.

These fears are justified given the nature of the convergence of interests between the villagers and district elites (the district headman) that results in district officials using their informal powers to tacitly endorse and even encourage encroachment in the park. Decentralization has given the districts greater power to manage their natural resources and so they can reach deals with businesses for projects outside the park. One potentially lucrative resource is water; in mountainous Sumatra the many streams have steep gradients which means there is a significant amount of untapped potential for the generation of hydroelectric power. At the time of my fieldwork, a major national conglomerate was actively planning to develop a hydroelectric station on the Batang Merangin River. It which flows out of Lake Kerinci, which receives its inflow from most of Kerinci district\textsuperscript{148}. One of the major investors in the conglomerate subsequently signed a memorandum of understanding with the national power provider to sell energy generated at the 350 megawatt station.

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conglomerate is Jusuf Kalla, who was vice president of Indonesia during Yudhoyono's first term in office and is a potential presidential candidate for 2014. The hydroelectric station, which would supposedly generate enough electricity for all of Jambi province, would provide a great deal of revenue and relatively high paying jobs for Kerinci district. Kalla has publicly proclaimed the importance of intact watersheds for the project to help prevent siltation of the reservoir that would be created by the dam but has avoided directly references the high rates of deforestation and encroachment in Kerinci. In this way Kalla and the conglomerate he speaks for, have avoided politicizing the issue, but the tacit warning contained in his statements is clear.

The point to be made is that in the recent past the district headman has encouraged encroachment because of political expediency, and so the interests of the district elites and the villagers coincide temporarily. However, the villagers still do not have title to the land that they are occupying, and if Kalla's statements are any indication as to potential developments, the villagers and migrants responsible for deforestation in Kerinci could quickly go from being a political asset to a liability if their activities are perceived as jeopardizing this or any other project. Moreover, the current district head, who was reelected in 2013 and cannot be reelected, could decide to move against the encroaching farmers if by doing so he could improve his standing in the eyes of the hydroelectric concern (or some other outside investor). Indeed some of the local NGOs raised the possibility that district governments are allowing and even encouraging encroachment with the idea that at some point in the future the district or provincial government might be able to renegotiate the borders of the park.
such that degraded areas are degazetted, including areas that have been encroached upon. In this case the land would revert back to the districts, which would then formally exercise control over the land. According to the NGO hypothesis, certain district heads employ this strategy with the long term goal of gaining access to mineral resources, as they would be in the position to evict encroachers, who would have no title to the land\textsuperscript{149}. This possibility is not lost on the villagers, who complain that they cannot afford to make investments in sustainable land management practices since they do not know if they will have access to the land in the future.

Hence like some of the other cases described in this dissertation, although decentralization and democratization have benefitted villagers around KSNP to a certain degree, this situation derives from the fact that village interests are aligned with those of district elites, rather than the fact that villagers have truly been empowered by the reforms, which is not the case. The intransigence of the park and MoF on the issue of people living on the park's periphery contributes to the long term uncertainty facing encroaching farmers and thus puts them in a vulnerable situation. While the lack of enforcement creates a doorway for encroachers to access the park and move in, the situation creates disincentives for sustainable management. One wonders if rezoning areas of the park that were long ago converted to allow cultivation or agroforestry would help to alleviate this situation by providing secure tenure to farmers, which would encourage them to adopt more sustainable agricultural practices (this would potentially provide an ideal site for agricultural extension

\textsuperscript{149} One NGO representative suggested obtaining geological maps of the park to determine if there is any correlation between the location of mineral deposits and the encroachment hotspots. I was intrigued by this idea but was unsuccessful in obtaining detailed GIS layers of the mineralogy of the park and surrounding districts. I know for certain, however, that this information exists, as most of the districts around the park have extensive inventories of mineral deposits.
services) and would protect them against the potential caprices of the district government. In this way the park would actually improve the implementation of decentralization by providing a kind of check and balance against the regional government.

7.3 Lembah Masurai: A New Site of Conflict and a New Discourse

Lembah Masurai is a subdistrict in the Jangkat area of Merangin district. As noted in chapter four, Jangkat is a hard to access area well off the beaten path. Lembah Masurai is on the bumpy road to Muara Maderas, which due to the presence of the park, represents the end of the line. Lembah Masurai is an interesting case because, despite its isolation, it has been the destination for thousands of migrants from places as far away as Lampung in southern Sumatra. The farmers first started arriving in the late 1990s, when, according to locals, a retired policeman from Pagar Alam in South Sumatra province requested permission from a local village head to farm coffee on abandoned forest concession land. Due to the excellent soil the new farmer experienced windfall profits, and sent word back to friends and family in South Sumatra that there was money to be made in Merangin. More farmers came, each asking permission from the local authorities. At the time there was perceived to be ample land available, since two logging firms had abandoned their concessions, and so the migrants at first occupied these areas. Eventually, however, there were so many outsiders that newcomers no longer felt the need to fulfill the customary requirement of asking local authorities for permission. As the number of farmers increased they started encroaching into the park. At the same time, tensions increased

150 The most recent estimate is that 15,000 households have moved into the area.
between the now outnumbered locals and the pioneers, and by the mid 2000s there were increasing reports of robbery, assaults, banditry, and even murder. Like the aforementioned Gunung Tujuh case, the situation in Lembah Masurai began to attract national media attention, and so the MoF along with the provincial government began to pressure the district headman to act. In this case the district headman more willingly cooperated with the province and ministry, and a multi-agency field task force was assembled to move on the encroachers to first warn them and then physically evict them if necessary.

On the surface this case seems similar to the Gunung Tujuh situation described in the preceding section, but there are some key differences. The overwhelming majority of encroachers at Lembah Masurai were from outside the area, and there was no question that the fields inside the park had been recently cleared, and so there was no easy out strategy that would allow the district head to avoid confrontation with the encroachers. In addition, in the weeks leading up to the scheduled eviction, the encroaching farmers were able to gain the support of several well-resourced regional and national NGOs, including CAPPA (the Community Alliance for Pulp and Paper Advocacy) and the Union of Indonesian Farmers (*Serekat Petani Indonesia*, a particularly influential organization). Representatives of these NGOs set up shop in Lembah Masurai, working to organize the farmers. These NGOs were extremely successful in framing the case as an issue of fundamental human rights, arguing that the farmers would face hunger and their children would be put out of school if the evictions were to take place. The NGOs claimed the evictions were part of a plan to free up the land for oil palm plantations. This very powerful discourse portrays an
arbitrary and authoritarian government acting against small-scale farmers and was even picked up by the World Rainforest Movement (WRM). WRM's website, which has since removed its description of the incident, called for support for...

...family farmers who have settled in abandoned forest concessions of around 10,000 hectares [and] are facing the threat of being displaced to give the land for oil palm plantations. The farmers who settled in that land 12 years ago started growing coffee, which is now the main source of income of the families and also a very important product for the local economy. They have now been told to leave the land, or else they will be forcibly evicted.

The appeal went on to say that the farmers moved into the area because of a "management vacuum" and provided information so that supporters could send an advocacy message to Indonesian president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. However, while it is true that there are some small-scale farmers, interviews with locals as well as park and NGO officials indicates that most of the farmers are employed by large-scale financiers (one of whom is reportedly a major financial supporter of Serekat Petani Indonesia) and are mobilized by organized networks that recruit laborers from other provinces to work on the expanding coffee farms.

Problems with the combined operation began the day before it was supposed to begin, when the heads of five nearby villages refused to participate because they had not been consulted or involved in the formation of the team. On the day of the scheduled eviction operation, the integrated task force moved into the area and began pulling up coffee plants and burning huts belonging to the encroachers. By the end of the second day, however, they began encountering stiff resistance from the farmers, who by that time had mobilized and formed a mob. The integrated task force began
to splinter, as the highest ranking army officer ordered his men to fall back rather than
risk a violent confrontation with the farmers. Soon the highest ranking police officer
did the same, and by the end of the third day the task force had disintegrated and
retreated from the area. The farmers and their supporting NGOs proclaimed victory,
and to this day the situation persists.

The result of the shift in demographics and the failure of the district government
to enforce its will have been the establishment of a relatively autonomous enclave.
The outsiders at Lembah Masurai have established schools, mosques, and other
community services on their own, and for the most part there is little presence on the
part of the district government in the disputed area. No one in the local government
knows how to handle the problem; the repressive measures that might have been
utilized during the Suharto years are no longer an option. The human rights framing
of the situation has been a particularly useful weapon for the farmers (and the
investors that are recruiting and capitalizing them), and since the Lembah Masurai
case unfolded this discourse has been adopted in other sites of conflict over control of
land.

There is also a very important political dimension to the attempted eviction as the
district headman of Merangin was up for reelection in 2012. The campaign became
particularly contentious over the course of 2012 and two major challengers emerged.
It was clear at the time that every vote was going to count in the election, and thus the
district headman's opponents recognized that the 12-18 thousand encroachers in
Lembah Masurai were also potential voters. One of the challengers worked
feverishly to register the migrants as voters in Merangin, which required an official
change of residence and an unofficial gratuity to the new voter. The incumbent
district headman ended up losing the election, where the winner was elected in part
thanks to strong support from Lembah Masurai and the Serampas area.

The Lembah Masurai and Gunung Tujuh cases illustrate a major weakness of
Indonesia's decentralization reforms: it is in many instances in the district headman's
best interest to disobey national law and directives from the central government. In
the case of Kerinci district, the district headman was able to undermine the planned
eviction, and he benefitted politically from this as he was reelected in 2013 in part
thanks to strong support from the Gunung Tujuh area. On the other hand, the Bupati
of Merangin was defeated in his bid to be reelected in 2012, and most observers
attribute his loss to a lack of support in Jangkat. It is clear then that, like the situation
at Gunung Tujuh, it was in the district headman's best interest not to cooperate with
the central government, but he chose to attempt to enforce the law and as a
consequence was defeated in the election. Had he decided differently and provided
he was able to woo the encroachers, the situation would be such that the more
encroachment there is, then the more secure his political future would be. Hence it is
very clear that access to the park is a very valuable political carrot. At the same time,
there is nothing compelling the district government to enforce the borders of the park;
the head of Kerinci district actually encouraged people to move into the park and then
refused to cooperate with the central government, and in both cases he was rewarded
by being elected.
7.4 Serampas: Renewed *Adat* Claims

The Serampas area was discussed in both chapters 4 and 5 because the dynamics of decentralization have made this area very important for district elites; it might be thought of as a keystone upon which plans for both roads and a new province rely. However, the people of Serampas have not been mere pawns of higher powers in this *reformasi* era; they have also reasserted their *adat* claims to KSNP land. These efforts represent a second strategy used by local people to contest the central government's claim on forest and land resources, a strategy which has yielded significant results elsewhere in Indonesia and which has become much more important given recent events in the country.

*Adat* is most commonly rendered in English as "customary law", but this translation sufficiently conveys neither the complexity nor the context-dependency of the term\(^{151}\). Though the meaning and scope of *adat* has been contested for more than 100 years, *adat* and its role in governing access to forest resources has always been shaped by extralocal actors and agendas. The Basic Forestry Act of 1967 which was the foundation of New Order forestry policy recognized *adat* forests, but made them legally the property of the state, and although *adat* systems were in theory recognized, the law explicitly stated that these systems could not be in conflict with national priorities. In 1999 a new forestry law was passed which replaced the old one, but it maintained the stipulation that *adat* forests were state forests. Hence these laws served as legal mechanisms whereby the central government usurped control over virtually all village forests in the Indonesian archipelago. *Adat* was problematic to

\(^{151}\) I define *adat* as a term referring to locally-rooted systems of social organization. I feel that this term succinctly corresponds to what the early Dutch and Indonesian legal scholars were endeavoring to describe in their work.
the New Order regime in both theory and practice; as noted in the introductory chapter the notion of adat as a legitimate source of management expertise was in conflict with Jakarta's modernization project, whereas the existence of heterogeneous, locally-rooted systems of social organization were an obstacle to top-down administration and control of natural resources, upon which the New Order largely depended for reasons elaborated in earlier chapters. Hence, during the Suharto years many adat communities were labeled as "isolated communities" (masyarakat terasing) and therefore in need of remediation (Bakker and Moniago 2010, Duncan 2007). The "remoteness" of adat communities also made them susceptible to communism in the eyes of the central government (Davidson and Henley 2007). Though adat forests continued to exist in the villages around KSNP, there is ample evidence to support the existence of the general trend of erosion of adat authority, as field researchers have shown that in the years following the implementation of the Village Act of 1979 there were problems with uncontrolled extraction from adat forests as well as forest clearance by both outsiders and members of the local villages (Belsky and Siebert 1995, Hartanto et al 2008, Sutono 2011).

Reformasi however dismantled the system that had marginalized adat society as an alternative mode of social organization, and almost immediately following the resignation of Suharto, adat-based claims started to become very powerful tools in contestation over control of land and natural resources (von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann 2011, McCarthy 2005). In several districts and provinces

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152 Duncan (2007) describes one such effort, the Program for the Development of Social Prosperity of Isolated Societies (Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Sosial Masyarakat Terasing) which sought to incorporate adat groups into the nation state through a five year period of social engineering that attempted to change various aspects of the group's culture, such as agricultural techniques and religious beliefs and often included forced resettlement.
across the country laws were passed to reinstate traditional systems of administration and territorial organization. Perhaps the most notable example of this occurred in the year 2000 when the entire province of West Sumatra abandoned the Javanese desa system that was implemented after the passage of the Village Act and returned to the unique Minangkabau nagari-jorong\textsuperscript{153} system of local administration. When this bi-level system was replaced by the desa system in the 1980s it required a significant redrawing of the administrative map of the province, as desas are much smaller units than nagaris\textsuperscript{154}. Thus the recognition of the traditional Minang system of administrative divisions was not a return to the pre-New Order status as the nagari-jorong system, and in fact the entire character of governance in a more general sense had been irreversibly altered. However, this move would create expectations that other reforms would be made to institutionalize specifically Minang customs of law and resource management as well, including the ulayat system, which refers to the administration of village territory. Recognition of ulayat rights would be particularly contentious, since prior to the New Order when this system was still in place, virtually all of the land in West Sumatra was claimed by one nagari or another, and elaborate rules were in place to govern access to forests and the resources contained within (von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann 2011). Any revival of the ulayat system however would obviously create tremendous potential for conflict with

\textsuperscript{153} It is difficult to describe an appropriate analogue to this system. In the Javanese desa system the unit of local administration is universally translated as a village. However nagaris, which are divided into jorongs, are larger than desas and are more appropriately thought of as clan territories.

\textsuperscript{154} While most scholars assume that West Sumatra was forced to adopt the desa system, von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann, two leading scholars on Minang culture and history, argue that elite in West Sumatra made a calculated decision to embrace the desa system because it would increase the number of administrative units, thereby increasing the amount of money from the central government. This is analogous to the tendency to create new administrative units in the Reformasi era in order to increase DAU funds from the central government.
the central government over land and forests. Laws were also passed in Jambi and Bengkulu to recognize traditional *adat* systems as well, including the *suku* and *marga* systems of territorial administration.

Nationally groups from all over the archipelago rallied under the banner of renewed *adat* rights, and the umbrella organization AMAN (*Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara*, the Alliance of Adat Societies of the Archipelago) was formed in 2001. AMAN rapidly became extremely influential as an advocate for *adat* recognition on the national stage and has succeeded in pressuring various levels and agencies of government to pass regulations recognizing *adat* systems. This has the potential to be incredibly empowering for local people, since AMAN claims that there are between 50-70 million members of *adat* groups in Indonesia. Like the aforementioned human rights discourse, *adat* has become a very powerful discursive tool in Reformasi Indonesia, and many groups have been successful in harnessing an *adat* identity to influence district and provincial political processes (Li 2001, 2007). However, there are concerns that *adat* has been as subject to elite capture as many other aspects of regional and local government. Davidson and Henley (2007:4-5) note that...

In the past, the social order in Indonesia was seldom egalitarian. Even among stateless peoples, individual interests were often subordinated to those of collectivities dominated by traditional elites. The informal, uncodified character of most *adat* law, moreover, makes it vulnerable to political manipulation, as does the idealization of order and stability with which *adat* is associated. Not surprisingly, then, *adat*-based movements often threaten to become bandwagons for the pursuit or defense of private wealth and power. The role of *adat* in political ideology at the national level can readily be interpreted in the same way.
But although these systems were recognized by district and provincial laws, national law still governed state forests and protected areas, including Kerinci Seblat National Park. In the Reformasi era it has become quite common for local actors to articulate their claims with the use of adat discourse. The people of Serampas have probably made the most sophisticated use of their adat identity, which they have used to draw attention to their plight. The five villages of Serampas have reinvigorated their intervillage adat council, and this unified voice has proven quite effective at exerting influence in district politics. One of the most interesting things about the adat claims though is that the people of the Serampas villages, all of which were subjects of the ICDP project, have learned the language of conservation, and therefore the intervillage council has liberally alluded to conservation principles as being linked to the Serampas adat system. Other villages around the park have asserted adat claims and in some cases have even begun mapping their adat territories with GPS units. In Bengkulu these efforts have been added by a provincial NGO that seeks to support adat rights.

Among the most noteworthy changes that have come about since the end of the New Order occurred in 2013 after I had completed my fieldwork, but this development is so important for the future of park-people relations at KSNP that is deserves special mention here. In April of 2013 the Constitutional Court\textsuperscript{155} handed down the landmark decision that Act 41/1999's assertion of state domain over adat forests is unconstitutional, with the upshot being that adat forests were determined not to be state forests, but rather the sole property of the adat groups in question to be

\textsuperscript{155} The Constitutional Court (Mahkamah Konstitusi) was established in 2003 and has several special powers, including reviewing the constitutionality of laws.
administered in whatever way deemed fit by the *adat* group. The decision was in response to a challenge to the law brought by AMAN on behalf of two groups. It is a big deal because there have been numerous disputes between *adat* groups and the Ministry of Forestry but so far the Ministry of Forestry has had the law on its side (Bakker and Moniaga 2010). But now recognized *adat* groups can file *adat* claims on forested areas previously controlled by the Ministry of Forestry. The MoF has publicly indicated that it will comply with the Court's decision. The decision does not technically apply to national parks, because they are considered to be "strategic lands", but nonetheless there is no doubt that the park has and will continue to hear louder calls from the villages on its periphery for a greater role in management, and it is likely that some villages will assert their rights to park lands claimed as *adat* territory through direct action.

There is another important dimension to this unfolding drama that serves to further politicize *adat* and *adat* forests. The authority to officially recognize *adat* systems is vested in the district governments, and recognition of *adat* systems are completely at the discretion of the district head and assembly. This gives the district government a significant amount of power over the villages, as there are no independent special rights of self-determination or self-government for the villages (Bedner and van Huis 2008). Given the high level of corruption and backroom dealing that characterizes district politics in Indonesia, this raises great potential for abuse. The Constitutional Court decision creates an easy pathway for district elites to manufacture *adat* systems and subsequently make claims on state resources. Currently there is no mechanism above the district level for examining the veracity of
adat claims and thus there are major concerns that the decision will unleash a flood of new, illegitimate adat systems. At the same time, as noted in previous chapters the decentralization laws encourage district governments to generate revenue through natural resource extraction. This can work against the best interests of adat people because it could lead to a situation where their adat system is not recognized because unscrupulous district elites do not want to lose control over potentially lucrative natural resources. So as it stands, the Constitutional Court decision along with the current laws governing adat claims further concentrates power in the district governments without providing adequate checks to prevent abuses, which could ultimately lead to the furthering weakening of genuine adat systems.

7.5 Bangun Rejo Village: A Posterchild for Park-Village Cooperation?

Both Gunung Tujuh and Lembah Masurai are situations in which the park's management has been unable to take decisive action against encroachers due to a lack of resources and support from outside agencies. These situations continue to fester and are dramatic examples of the park's relationship with most of the people living on its periphery. However, during my fieldwork I did encounter one most interesting example of informal negotiation and compromise between the park's management and a bordering village. The village is Bangun Rejo, which is located in Solok Selatan district approximately seven kilometers from the sleepy district seat of Padang Aro. There are approximately 700 households with a total population of around 3000, and 70% of the population derives its livelihood from agriculture. At approximately 1300 meters the village is at a fairly high altitude, and the main crops
are cacao, coffee, rubber, ground nuts and dry rice. The vast majority of the villagers are Javanese, as Bangun Rejo was founded in the early twentieth century by Javanese that had been brought to the area by the Dutch to work in a nearby tea plantation.

I first travelled to Bangun Rejo because the village has received a great deal of attention from the media for its cooperative stance towards the park, and is heralded as a success story in village conservation. The village has been featured in numerous newspaper articles and even received national recognition in the form of a Kalpataru award from the Environment Ministry for their greenness. One newspaper account describes the village thusly: "dense forests blanket the village. One is immersed in the songs of animals from the direction of the forest; visitors begin to feel a sense of peace. The whine of the chainsaw is not to be heard as in other areas that border the forest." The media depiction is of a people possessed of an indigenous conservation ethic; they don't cut down trees, they don't poach, they don't encroach, and they even patrol the park's borders voluntarily. The village head told me of a case in which the citizens of Bangun Rejo evicted 16 families from Kerinci district that had moved into the park to clear land for farming. The village was one of the participants in the World Bank's ICDP program. One of the projects was a microloan program which the villagers were able to maintain after the conclusion of the ICDP. The loan fund provides start-up capital for small-scale businesses so people don't have to be as reliant on agriculture. The village has even begun "constructing" a "green fence" (pagar hijau), which consists of a border of fast growing surian trees (Toona sp) which form the boundary between village and park territory. The park has embraced
and publicized the Bangun Rejo story, and managers frequently point to the village as a case of what could be in other places.

However, the reality of the situation is a bit more complicated, as I learned over the course of several visits to the area during my year of fieldwork. On one of my visits I was accompanied by members of a pro-conservation NGO based in Padang Aro. We visited a sawmill in the village characteristic of the types of small-scale operations that exist in numerous locations around the park and that process illegally-felled timber. Although the sawmill was not currently functioning, there were signs that it has been in operation in the not too distant past, and the village head later confirmed to me that the sawmill is used to process trees that have fallen naturally within the park. We also visited the site of the "green fence," which is impressive but is actually located well within the park's territory rather than at the border. In front of the green fence there exists scores of hectares of coffee, which is geographically located within the park. I also noted some oil palm saplings, which at the time surprised me because of the altitude. Each sapling was fortified by a specially constructed box which protected it from the wind. The village head told me that all of the cultivation was indeed within the park, but he said that the village has a special arrangement with the park's headquarters. He also said that the oil palms were an experiment which if successful would be expanded to the nearby dry rice plots (also located in the park).

On my way back to Sungai Penuh I stopped at the local ranger station, located approximately 15 kilometers from Bangun Rejo to ask about the encroachment. Though I had interviewed personnel at this ranger post previously, and despite the
fact that all of my papers and permits were in order, one ranger was visibly upset that I had visited Bangun Rejo and threatened to arrest me if I went back to the village. I learned later that he also threatened to arrest the members of the NGO that had accompanied me to the village as well. After admonishing me he told me that the park was aware of the encroachment and was currently formulating a plan to evict the farmers that had cleared land in the park. Based on follow up inquiries I learned that this was not the case, and to my knowledge the situation today in Bangun Rejo remains as it was when I was in the field.

This case is extremely interesting because it illustrates a different dimension of the informal politics of access to natural resources in the Reformasi era. The residents of Bangun Rego have mastered the art of public relations when it comes to the park. The "green fence" is an ingenious way to take control of the border; it is a visible symbol of the villagers' commitment to conservation and protecting the park, but the villagers have also used it as a tool of territoriality, since it actually lies several hundreds meters within the park's boundaries. Thus the green fence has allowed villagers to appropriate resources officially claimed by the state while creating a way for the park's managers to overlook the encroachment, so there is a balance between the official duties and mission of the park and the political and material realities on the ground. This could be considered a win for the park, since it has been shown that in most cases it doesn't have the material resources or support to do anything about medium to large scale cases of encroachment. The eviction of the 16 interloping families indicates that the villagers have been able to exclude outsiders, and their tacit understanding with the park probably helps facilitate this outcome. At
the same time, it is the villagers, rather than district elites, that benefit from this
gentleman's agreement.

7.6 Conclusions

This penultimate chapter has described several village level case studies that
illustrate a number of the key themes of my dissertation and shed light on the overall
effects of decentralization and democratization on the relationship between village
level actors and Kerinci Seblat National Park. The cases I have described make it
clear that conflict (and cooperation) between village people and the park is
emblematic of larger struggles between the center and periphery and thus is
illustrative of the broader theme of statemaking and reverse statemaking as well as
that of marginalization and relegitimizing local claims to natural resources. The New
Order's centralization project was characterized by the marginalization of locally
rooted adat systems, but now Reformasi has created space for the expression of
renewed adat claims. However, the structure and form of Reformasi has influenced
how these claims are formulated and articulated. District governments now play the
role of gatekeeper and arbiter since they have been given the authority to grant
official recognition to adat systems.

The reemergence of adat claims as a source of legitimacy is important for a
number of reasons. From the park's perspective it complicates management because
it creates hundreds of potential sites for negotiation of access rights, since each of the
more than 300 villages around the park could potentially raise adat claims to land
within the park. And while there is a narrow technical distinction between national
parks and other forms of state forest which for the time being exempts the park from these claims, it is not unreasonable to expect that this exemption might in the future be challenged as well. However, practically speaking, at the village scale the legal provision that technically exempts national park land as a strategic resource makes no difference to villagers voicing adat claims to those resources. In other words, to villagers forests are forests, and so if a community in a neighboring district is able to secure a claim to what was formerly state forest (production forest, industrial forest, etc), then they should have the same right. Moreover, the emergence of hundreds of adat groups would greatly exacerbate the problem of administrative fragmentation discussed in chapter 2.

When seen from a different angle, though, recognition of adat rights could create a useful ally for the park and the MoF. In the case of the Constitutional Court decision, the MoF has been a passive observer. However, if the Ministry of Forestry were to create its own procedure for recognizing adat claims to park land, then it would be able to guide the unfolding of the process whereby local communities access state resources. It could then negotiate with local communities, establishing accepted rules of use and access that might be revoked if abused. In this way the MoF would become an enabling institution rather than a limiting one. Villagers would benefit from greater access to the park. They would also be somewhat insulated from the caprices of the district government, which currently serves as the arbiter of the legitimacy of adat claims. Moreover, it has been shown that making tenure more secure reduces uncertainty and generates incentives to improve forest resource management and is conducive to the alleviation of rural poverty (Contreras-
Hermosilla and Fay, 2005, Deinenger 2003, de Soto 2000). With some innovative thinking the MoF could empower village level actors that have a greater interest in sustainable management of forest resources. At the same time this would discourage the kind of temporary village-district confluences of interests described in this chapter (and chapter 5) that can ultimately lead to the further marginalization of villagers. The Bangun Rejo case provides an example of this potential outcome, though ironically since the people of this village are not indigenous to central Sumatra, they have not utilized the adat discourse.

In addition, this chapter has illustrated how decentralization has led to remapping and reterritorialization at the village level, reversing and nullifying corresponding territorialization projects of the Suharto regime. A major element of these processes is the discourse that is use in various circumstances. The emergence of these counter-discourses (including adat claims to land as well as framing contestation in terms of human rights issues) would have been far less feasible during the Suharto years and thus represent a significant new development for the post-authoritarian era. The human rights and adat discourse have become powerful tools to question the legitimacy of state-led conservation efforts, as they have a powerful effect on the public imagination. This process is still unfolding and would be an interesting topic for future research efforts.
Chapter 8: Conclusion: Conservation, Decentralization, and the Political Edge

8.1 Introduction

* A key question is "how is the relationship between society and nature defined and conceptualized, how is access to land and resources controlled, and how are environmental costs and benefits distributed". Neumann 2005:120.

This dissertation has demonstrated that Kerinci Seblat National Park is in trouble. Over the past ten years tens of thousands of farmers have moved into the park to cultivate coffee and other cash crops. In addition the districts around the park have proposed more than 30 road development projects which would cut through the park, increasing edge effects, habitat fragmentation, and providing new avenues of access for illegal loggers, poachers, and squatters. But in addition to these challenges to its spatial integrity, the park also faces a legitimacy crisis as local elected leaders increasingly question the park's contributions to local livelihoods. Though critiques of the park are not new, since the onset of decentralization and democratization reforms in Indonesia these dissenting voices have gained an official platform as local leaders are now directly elected and hence downwardly accountable, which contrasts starkly with the top-down nature of the authoritarian Suharto regime.

The quotation that begins this section comes from an introductory textbook on political ecology and summarizes many of the concerns of that discipline. With this question in mind, Indonesia in general and KSNP specifically present a fascinating case study because virtually all of the issues addressed are currently changing due to Reformasi reforms. The park sits at the intersection of a number of processes, including the ongoing political and administrative decentralization project. This
process has not only empowered village, district, and provincial elites, but it has reawakened the popular political imagination at each of these levels and has led to a flowering of civic activity in the form of non-governmental organizations. A second process is regional economic development, as I have also shown that the island's reliance on primary sector and extractive activities, which has been shaped by both recent and more long term historical processes, has created a sort of path dependency that limits the options of decision makers from the provincial and district government all the way down to the household level. In the midst of these unfolding dynamics the park is charged with safeguarding resources deemed valuable at the national and global scales: biodiversity and global ecosystem services. However, I have shown that this depends on defining forests as conservation resources, a definition that thus far has been incompatible with the way that the processes of decentralization and economic development have converged on Sumatra. Because of this the park has become an arena for the renegotiation of the scope and limits of formal and informal power between the central, district, and village governments.

I began this dissertation by describing seven key themes that run through the entire dissertation. These themes include the following:

1. Statemaking and reverse statemaking. This dissertation has shown how the Indonesian state came to be through a gradual (and at times not so gradual) process of centralization. I have also shown how decentralization and democratization have reversed this process and initiated a new epoch in terms of the identity and form of the state.
2. Marginalization and relegitimizing local claims to natural resources. I have described how, over time, villagers have been increasingly marginalized from the management of local forest resources as well as how local systems of resource management have been undermined. The weakened role of local adat systems has reduced the power of these systems to check externally-driven extractive pressures on resources. I have also shown how decentralization and democratization have created space for the reemergence of local claims on natural resources and the forms these claims have taken.

3. Contestation of the concept of conservation. The structure of decentralization has created a major dilemma for conservationists in Indonesia. This is because the responsibility and authority for parks (and other aspects of environmental governance) remains with the central government, but in many cases the real power to implement programs and policies is lacking because the priorities of sub-national governments are at odds with the national government's goals. Moreover, I have shown how local people and district governments have challenged KSNP's mission of conservation, implicitly declaring it invalid and illegitimate through their "rule breaking" activities (Robbins et al 2009).
4. Path dependent reliance on primary sector activity. Sumatra's historical reliance on commodity extraction along with the political-economic factors that have contributed to this dependence are of paramount importance in understanding how and why conservation and development are at loggerheads on the island today, and why this situation will likely persist into the future. I have shown how the tensions between the park and its neighbors are a manifestation of the incompatibility between natural-resource led growth and biodiversity conservation.

5. Protected areas as an obstacle to effective decentralization. This dissertation has addressed some of the problems associated with decentralization and environmental degradation from an unconventional angle: I have held the Ministry of Forestry partially responsible for these difficulties and have shown how the MoF has resisted decentralization to the point that now it is in a much weaker position both in terms of power vis-à-vis other agencies and scales of government as well in terms of being able to manage Indonesia's forest resources.

6. Remapping and reterritorialization. This theme will be expounded upon below, but this dissertation has illustrated several ways in which decentralization and democratization have unleashed new processes
that are leading to the redrawing of the political-administrative map of Sumatra (and Indonesia in general). This remapping is reflected in the creation of new districts and provinces, the dozens of road proposals that have been forwarded by the districts around the park, as well as by the actions of the thousands of farmers that have moved into the park since the fall of the New Order.

7. Rescaling. Lastly this dissertation has shown how power has been redistributed in post-authoritarian Indonesia. I have discussed how the relationships between the different scales of government have changed since the fall of the New Order. I have also placed these changes in a historical perspective in order to shed light on the problems currently facing KSNP.

In this final chapter I will revisit these themes in the form of several concluding observations concerning the status of decentralization and national park-based conservation in Indonesia. These observations will elaborate on how my research and analysis contributes to the general knowledge base on political ecology, state formation, and decentralization. Throughout this dissertation I have paid attention to the formal structure of decentralization and democratization, by which I mean the actual laws and formal institutions, as well as the form of the reforms, by which I mean the way Reformasi has been manifested in practice. These aspects of Reformasi
will be described in this chapter as well as I conclude my examination of the geographical transformations taking place in and around Kerinci Seblat National Park.

### 8.2 The Unfolding Processes of Dysfunctional Decentralization

#### 8.2.1 Rescaling and the creation of new nodes of stateness

Political ecologists over the past two decades have lamented and railed against an unsophisticated understanding of scale as merely a nested set of politically and geographically bounded units (Bryant and Bailey 1997; Daniels and Basset 2002; Paulson and Gezon 2005, Neumann 2008). Rather than seeing scale as nested political-economic Matryoshka dolls they argue that it is rather socially constructed and is the product of political contestation (Brown and Purcell 2005) and hence the study of how scales emerge and how actors and processes operating at different scales bump up against one another is a central focus of political ecology (Tsing 2004). A more sophisticated notion of scale focuses on control over natural resources in the context of the shifting calculus of influence and power of actors and institutions operating at different levels. Political ecologists are also interested in how scales change over time in terms or relative power and influence, especially as these changes relate to control over resources. As Gezon (2005:148) notes, "in a study of conflict, the subject of analysis is not merely contestation among individuals but the situated negotiation of connections, commitments, and subjectivities". Swyngedouw (2004:33) advises thusly:

A process-based approach to scale focuses attention on the mechanisms of scale transformation through social conflict and
political-economic struggle. These socio-spatial processes change the importance and role of certain geographical scales, reassert the importance of others and on occasion create entirely new scales. These scale redefinitions in turn alter the geometry of social power by strengthening the power and the control of some while disempowering others.

Scale is a central concern of this dissertation, and I have explained the historical roots of the various scales that are in play in and around KSNP as well as how these scales have changed, waxing and waning in their relative power and influence. This waxing and waning in turn affects how the various scales interact and influence one another. Moreover, the norms, pressures, and influences to which actors and institutions at a particular scale are susceptible is also extremely important. Forces affected by and acting upon various scales change over time, and so by making careful note of these additional relations and dynamics we can understand changes through time. I have made the argument in this dissertation that the New Order era scalar configuration allowed for the establishment of Kerinci Seblat National Park. I have also shown that Reformasi has changed the scalar configuration and the relationships of power between actors and institutions at different scales, an outcome that is worthy of broader examination. The number of scales in Indonesia has changed over time, as has the role and influence of actors and institutions within each scale (see table 8.1). Describing these changes and how they relate to real pressures on natural resources and contribute to environmental change is a major contribution of this research.
The most geographically expansive scale is the global\textsuperscript{156}. The global scale includes institutions and actors that exist outside the borders of Indonesia. This includes identifiable actors such as the World Bank and the World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF) but also more ambiguous players such as "global markets" and international norms and currents of thought such as "neoliberalism" and "conservation." The global scale should not be thought of as homogenous, harboring one agenda or guided by a singular philosophy. The relative power and leverage of the various international actors has changed over time, as has the role they play in the national political-economy. During the colonial era, international actors wielded significant influence in the archipelago; for example, it was international norms and concerns about declining wildlife populations that provided the initial impetus for the Dutch colonial authorities to create several of the nature preserves and wildlife sanctuaries that would eventually become part of KSNP (Jepson and Whittaker 2002). During Sukarno's attempted forays into autarky during the Guided Democracy period, the direct influence of international actors decreased significantly (Bunnell 1966). Then during the Suharto years the international scale regained some influence and served an advisory role through development grants and loans as well as a source of incentives for certain economic policies (e.g. large scale logging and mining) through market mechanisms (Barr 1998; Resosudarmo 2004). And it was international concerns over tropical deforestation that provided part of the impetus for the establishment of Indonesia's national parks.

\textsuperscript{156} Here I use terminology that conjures up images of a nested hierarchy. While writing this chapter I tried to come up with different terms but was unsuccessful. I hope the reader will distinguish between "nestedness" which is not the meaning I intend, and spatial remoteness.
Table 8.1: The role of various scales through different historical eras in Indonesia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Colonial era</th>
<th>Guided Democracy era</th>
<th>New Order era</th>
<th>Reformasi era</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International Scale</td>
<td>Governing, Exploiting High power relative to other scales</td>
<td>Adversarial Low power relative to other scales</td>
<td>Advising, providing incentives Increasing power but checked by strong central government</td>
<td>Providing incentives (markets) Advising, funding (conservation) Moderate power with respect to other scales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National scale</td>
<td>Emerges only during the late colonial era. Resisting Low but increasing power relative to other scales</td>
<td>Organizing, administering &quot;keeping it together&quot; Increasing but still limited power</td>
<td>Steering, directing, exploiting, disciplining Increasing to dominance</td>
<td>Steering, organizing, checking power of regions Fluctuating with respect to regions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District scale</td>
<td>Relatively unimportant, serving as agents of indirect rule</td>
<td>Organizing, administering Regional poles with significant power sometimes in opposition to national scale.</td>
<td>Implementing, controlling. Districts and provinces become appendages of national scale. Little independent power.</td>
<td>Administering, organizing. &quot;Staking a claim&quot; and challenging national scale. Increasing power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Scale</td>
<td>Subsisting. Little power vis-à-vis other scales.</td>
<td>Subsisting. Little power vis-à-vis other scales.</td>
<td>Implementing (connected elites); resisting (everyone else). Little real power relative to other scales.</td>
<td>&quot;Finding a voice&quot;. Increasing power but precarious.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand, the national scale grew out of the nearly three and a half century expansion of colonial control on the part of the Dutch, which established the spatial extent for the national scale and in turn gave rise to a fledging nationalist
movement in the early part of the twentieth century (Reid 2004), which would lead to a direct divorce of national actors from global actors. The national scale only truly emerged in the 20th century, and then only really gaining significant power after the departure of the Japanese at the end of the Second World War. As I explained earlier in the dissertation, the national scale became dominant during the Suharto period, and all of the other subnational scales were basically appendages of a vertically-articulated network of command and control. This hierarchy was a crucial part of the regime's power as virtually all executive officials at all levels down to the heads of villages owned their positions either directly or indirectly to the Ministry of Home Affairs in Jakarta, and by extension the Suharto regime. The regional poles that had existed during the Sukarno years were pacified and emasculated, replaced with provinces and districts that were firmly embedded in Suharto's network. The powers of this expanded national scale during the Suharto administration included envisioning priorities and making and implementing policy as noted in table 8.1 ("steering, directing, and implementing"). Thus during the Suharto years the national scale was by far the most powerful, and there were no serious challenges to its dominance from either the village or global scales. This configuration is illustrated in figure 8.1.; note the conspicuous absence of the district scale but the presence of the village scale. In this dissertation I have described the village scale as independent of other scales. The village scale in Indonesia has emerged from the histories, cultures, and actions of local groups in places like central Sumatra, where since time immemorial the village has been the fundamental unit of production and social organization. Prior to the Suharto period I have characterized the role of the villages
mainly as "subsisting". I do not mean here to trivialize the role of villages nor to treat villages as homogenous entities, nor do I imply that all the thousands of villages across the archipelago are or ever were the same. Rather my point is that during the colonial and Sukarno periods, the ability of villagers to articulate their priorities and influence over events transpiring at higher levels was limited. Historically villages developed systems of adat to govern life within the village, and the details and nuances of adat varied from village to village.

During the Suharto years however villages became sites of "everyday resistance" (Scott 1985), especially in terms of the management of natural resources (Peluso 1992, McCarthy 2006). Part of the Suharto regime's standardization triumph was the institution of the Javanese village system to every corner of the archipelago. This
enabled the regime to extend its control to the village level and village heads and allied officials became the primary implementers of the central government's developmentalism (Kato 1989, Charras 2005), which was a key element in the establishment of the Indonesian state. Thus I characterize the roles of the village scale during the Suharto years as implementation and resistance; though life at the village level was subject to significant influences imposed from above, village-level actors were able to exert some control over their day-to-day situation. I have shown in this dissertation that the end of the Suharto regime brought an end to the New Order scalar configuration, which has been replaced by new relationships and power balances.

However, the reconfiguration of scale in Indonesia began prior to decentralization with the onset of the Asian Financial Crisis, which had two very important impacts. First, it helped hasten the fall of the teetering New Order, which ushered in the Reformasi era. Secondly, because of the havoc wrought on the Indonesian economy, the leverage of multi-lateral neoliberal institutions operating at the international scale, such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, increased such that they were able to wield more influence over the national government and hence the process of decentralization. International norms of democratization working through neoliberal understandings of the form and function of democracy helped to guide the remaking of the Indonesian political system and the process of statemaking in reverse (Hadiz 2003; Firman 2009).

After the fall of Suharto the establishment of the districts as a scale of great influence and power (figure 8.2) was completed through several key pieces of
legislation. Act 22/1999 divided sovereignty by transferring responsibility to subnational scales of government. This was the first step in creating new nodes of stateness. Act 25/1999 created legitimate and official pathways of access to state resources at the sub-national level. These two acts reconfigured the identity of the state, but it was democratization, which was truly completed with the passage of Act 32/2004 that achieved the division of sovereignty by making sub-national executives (governors and district heads) directly elected by their constituents, thus completely severing the links of upward accountability that had made them beholden to national officials during the New Order. These legislative instruments empowered new actors and provided them with a halo of "stateness", a kind of aura of officialdom that gives certain actors or interests special access to quite specific and exclusive tools and means to accomplish their objectives. Thus sovereignty has been divided, the state fragmented, and a whole new constellation of relations and interactions between the various scales has emerged. New political space has been opened up at the district level, and perhaps most importantly the type of politicking required of ambitious elites desirous of access to "stateness" and all of the associated spoils of office has changed dramatically; whereas during the New Order the path to power ran through Jakarta, now it meanders down the windy and rocky roads connecting the villages and subdistricts. In addition to these sweeping acts, Government Regulation 129/2000 created a procedural mechanism whereby additional subnational nodes of stateness could be created through the establishment of new districts and provinces. This process was described in chapter 4, along with the incentives that have lead to this process spiraling out of control.
This new scalar configuration is accompanied by new and altered linkages, particularly between the international and national scales. Not only can actors at the newly empowered district level confound arrangements made between national and international actors (notably in the arena of conservation), but also because of the devolution of control over non-protected natural resources, the districts have a more direct connection with actors at the international level, most applicable here in the area of extractive activities. Though this point will be more fully developed in a following section, it is important to note here that this creates an area of difficulty for the dominant approach to conservation activities in that international scale conservation interests are typically accustomed to working through national scale
institutions, and they have thus far not adjusted to the new scalar configuration. Many factors contribute to this bias towards working with the national scale, but Bryant and Bailey (1997) suggest that it is rooted deep within western political thought, beginning with Hobbes's Leviathan and the assertion that an authoritarian state is required to regulate and mediate conflicts over scarce resources. This is particularly interesting and relevant when juxtaposed against the reemergence of *adat* systems of social organization and resource management. Another key point relates to the scale at which incentives and markets operate. Because of the decentralization laws districts have more say in how natural resources are managed, and so this also creates incentives for outside investors to work through districts rather than the national government. In many cases it is only outside investors that have access to the types of startup capital and expertise needed to exploit natural resources on a medium to large scale. Moreover, although Sumatra's economy is heavily reliant on primary sector activity, there are few markets for these resources on the island, and so products such as palm oil, coal, rubber, and cinnamon have to be exported, either to Java or to an international destination. This new linkage is potentially problematic because the districts don't have the same capacity in terms of planning and oversight as the national government, and even though the districts stand to gain from these new connections, in most cases they likely don't have the technical know-how or institutional capacity to ensure the sustainable development of natural resources, nor do they have the regulatory capacity to ensure that outside companies are adhering to applicable regulations.
Also worth noting is the altered relationship between the national and village scales. During the Suharto years the relationship between the villages and the national government was one of coercion, resistance, and compromise, but now under the Reformasi scalar configuration there are new coalitions forming between actors at the district and village scale. As I have shown in several instances there is a convergence of interests (chapters 5, 6, and 7) between district and village elites. Though there are major limitations (see below), village scale actors at least have some input in the formal political arena, whereas during the Suharto era they had virtually none. A major change resulting from this lies in the official perception of forest "crimes" on the part of village scale actors. Under the Suharto regime, many livelihood activities that had been going on for decades and even centuries were made illegal. Though in many cases these activities continued, they had to be executed on the sly due to the New Order's enforcement mechanisms. However, in the post-authoritarian era the big change that has come with the emergence of the district as a node of stateness and sovereignty is that these rule breakers now have a degree of official legitimacy and support from newly empowered district officials, who are in many cases seeking to control the rule breaking themselves. Rule breaking in the form of encroachment is now much more widespread and out in the open, and as we have seen villagers in some instances have even physically challenged park rangers. In this way there is a two-way flow of benefits and support between actors at the village and district levels. First of all, candidates for district office visit villages to curry favor and distribute gifts and bribes in exchange for support. Village heads thought to have the power to mobilize blocks of voters in some instances may be
promised a position in the district government in exchange for helping a district headman get elected. The district patronizes the villages and in exchange the village supports the district elite. The district elites, due to the powers devolved through decentralization, have a great deal of influence in channeling benefits to villagers, which can be used as both a carrot and stick.

In several of the preceding chapters I have described the form this takes around KSNP in terms of political processes. Longstanding complaints against the park harbored by villages on its periphery have been taken up by district politicians, especially when there is synergy between the aims of district elites and the aspirations of the villagers. This is most conspicuous in the case of proposed roads where relatively remote villages have long petitioned for infrastructural upgrades that would allow them greater access to markets. Local elites appropriate these aspirations and fold them into proposals for larger road projects that would bring greater benefits to the district elites. Another form of scalar interaction between the districts and the villages relates to access to resources: in exchange for support district politicians tolerate, encourage, or promise to protect villagers who encroach into the national park and convert forests. In some more egregious cases village heads that have close ties to the district leadership are granted a sort of franchise to sell land within the park. This is found in some areas where encroachment is most marked.

In summary then this rescaling is altering both formal and informal political processes at the district level and below. Formal elements are those that are codified in laws and include aspects such as choosing leaders and decision makers. District and village heads are now directly elected by their constituents, making them at least
nominally downwardly accountable. Another formal process that has changed is district level spatial planning. Now district planning offices (BAPPEDA) have been largely decoupled from the national hierarchy and are responsible for formulating medium and long range development and spatial plans the their districts. Though these offices are generally staffed by trained professional bureaucrats, leadership decisions are left up to the district head, and so the general direction of planning has been politicized. Lastly, related to these two aspects, the formation of policy priorities and district imperatives is controlled by district level actors, whereas previously under the New Order there was a high degree of standardization in terms of development planning. There are also changes to informal aspects of politicking, including networks of collusion, cronyism, and nepotism. Informal decision making power as to who has access to natural resources, including who benefits and how those spoils are divided are made at the district level as well. These outcomes are the subject of the next section.

8.2.2 The Legacies of Dysfunctional Decentralization

In the introductory chapter I described the general characteristics of the decentralization laws, and in subsequent chapters I discussed the processes of decentralization and democratization in Indonesia. These processes are still unfolding, and there is no real indication that the numerous disputes between the different levels of government in Indonesia regarding decentralization and how it will be implemented. Therefore it is probably best at this point to think of decentralization as a permanent fixture of Indonesian politics rather than as a phase or
transition through which the new democracy must pass on its way to stability. This is because the reforms have divided sovereignty, creating sub-national nodes of stateness. As an analogue, one might think of the distribution of power between the states and the federal government in the United States. Over time the balance of power has shifted back and forth. Moreover, this balance isn't uniform across all sectors of government; on occasion the states are able to challenge the federal government on certain issues (for example, the recent legalization of recreational marijuana in Colorado), and sometimes the federal government asserts its will (as in the case of the Civil Rights Act of 1964). However, whereas this divided sovereignty is seen to be a strength of governance in the United States, there are some aspects of decentralization in Indonesia that have so far constrained the anticipated salutary effects of reforms there. I refer to these aspects as legacies of unfinished (or dysfunctional) decentralization.

One of the main legacies is that it is often in the best interest of political leaders at the district level to disobey the central government, or at least to advocate policies that are opposed to or undermine the directives and policies of the central government. Examples of this include proposed road projects (chapter 5) and the way district headman have handled large scale agricultural encroachment (chapter 7). In these cases district leaders don't suffer any consequences from the central government, and they only stand to lose if they comply with the central government, in which case they stand to lose money and political support. The unfinished legacy of dysfunctional decentralization indicated here is the lack of an effective legal mechanism or
institutional checks and balances which would compel district governments to enforce the national law. In short there is a general lack of upward accountability and review.

A second legacy is the uncoordinated nature of district policies resulting from administrative fragmentation. Due to the structure and form of decentralization, districts are for the most part on their own in terms of policy formation and setting an agenda for economic development. In the lead up to decentralization there was virtually no capacity building, and so the districts have been the recipients of new responsibilities that in many cases they do not have the capacity to fulfill. Moreover, due to the vertically articulated nature of the different scales of government in the Suharto years, there is very little coordination between the districts, and so there are cases of inefficiencies and redundancies in terms of infrastructure and other projects. The lack of horizontal coordination also leads to intentional and inadvertent cases of "beggar they neighbor" policies, as in the case of deforestation in upstream districts leading to ecological and economic problems in downstream districts. Related to this is the emerging reality that districts often compete with one another for investment and in some cases have initiated infrastructural projects in order to poach commerce from a neighboring district\textsuperscript{157}. The result of this is that individual districts may benefit, but in the aggregate the broader region, and the country in general, is worse off.

A third legacy is evident from my examination of administrative proliferation (chapter 4). Safeguards to prevent abuses of the decentralization laws have been

\textsuperscript{157} One example from my study area that has emerged in just the past few weeks is that the government of Kerinci district wants to build a new road to the coast so that traffic between the coast and the interior will bypass the administrative municipality of Sungai Penuh, which currently serves as a regional distribution hub.
written into regulations, and the central government has made an effort to reign in excesses on the part of the district governments. But in many cases these safeguards and rules have not been applied, or can easily be circumvented by elite coalitions. Because of this administrative proliferation has spun out of control because all of the in-practice incentives support the creation of more and more districts. The result is that administrative proliferation has become a tool to advance elite interests, and the original intent of the law, which was to improve the efficiency of government and citizen access to government services, has been subverted. I have shown that administrative proliferation in some cases has even lead to a decrease in efficiency and service provision. There has been a general lack of oversight and enforcement.

Decentralization also needs to be considered in the context of the vacuum of local accountability and resource management institutions that was created by the Suharto regime. It is tempting to say that decentralization has been responsible for increased pressure on natural resources, because in a sense it has, but it is crucial to understand the importance of the historical drivers that set the stage for this dynamic as well. There has been a major change in terms of the structure of resource management on Sumatra over the past century. As noted in the introductory chapter, this began with the Dutch as they improved transportation networks in the region of central Sumatra and opened up places like Kerinci Valley, which brought along with it deeper integration with the global economy. And although this began a general move away from subsistence agricultural patterns to market-oriented production (Polanyi 1944), it was not until the emergence of the New Order that local people really began to lose control over their resources as the Suharto regime passed laws that not only usurped
claims over land and resources, but simultaneously dismantled and marginalized indigenous systems for managing these resources. While it must be emphasized that these *adat* systems were for the most part not strictly conservationist, they emerged from a socio-economic context in which the benefits from extractive activities had to be balanced against the environmental bads, which were internalized locally, and in which access to local resources for outsiders was tightly controlled and regulated. In other words, the positives and negatives of extractive activities were linked and experienced at the same spatial and sociopolitical scale. The changes to the system, which included the Basic Forestry Act of 1967 and the Village Act of 1979 meant that local leadership, both in the villages and the districts, was rooted not in local sociopolitical context but instead was imposed from above with local leaders being agents of and subservient to priorities emanating from the national scale.

The aforementioned vacuum was created when the New Order ended, and it became a space into which self-interested elites, who to a large degree had been constrained by their positions as lower-order functionaries in the Suharto hierarchy, could expand their access to state resources given the structure and form of the decentralization laws without having to worry about local political structures such as *adat* which might have limited their ability to pursue their own interests without regards to other stakeholders in the community. Many of the excesses, especially with respect to KSNP, should be considered inevitable effects of this historical process, which systematically eliminated capacity and *metis* (Scott 1998) at the local level. Now there are virtually no checks on those that are able to gain control of district governments, as they are now free to reach agreements with investors to
exploit the natural resource riches of Sumatra. The results can be seen in the boom in coal mining, exploration, and oil palm cultivation that has swept across central Sumatra. The penetration of capital into the mountains and forests of Sumatra also coincides with and is facilitated by rapid industrial development in China, which is a ready market for coal and raw materials extracted from the Bukit Barisan mountains. In short there now exists a wide range of incentives and drivers for increased natural resource extraction, but for the most part there are no structures or incentives for sustainable or responsible extractive activities that might serve to balance these pressures.

8.2.3 Positive outcomes from Decentralization?

Most of my dissertation (and probably 95% of all of the literature on decentralization in Indonesia) has focused on the negative aspects of decentralization and democratization with respect to conservation, forest resources, and national parks. It is the stock and trade of scholars to focus on problems, especially for dissertations and research papers. However, I feel that I would be remiss if I did not point out some positive aspects of decentralization. In the preceding chapters I put significant effort into describing the contentious politics in the districts around KSNP. Democracy has certainly flourished at the sub-national level in Indonesia as evidenced by the number of candidates standing for election. This indicates that a certain amount of downward accountability has indeed emerged since the fall of Suharto, and so it can be discerned in the actions of district governments that they are indeed responding, at least nominally, to the will of the people, which is a very
hopeful development for decentralization\textsuperscript{158}. District governments are trying to figure out ways to make people more prosperous, or to improve services (even if it is just lower level services like transportation networks). When all is said and done, it really is difficult to make the argument that roads, or more land for cultivation are not in the best interests of the people of central Sumatra, at least in the short term, and so the actions of district governments, regardless of how corrupt they are, are in response to perceived needs, which is a major change from the Suharto years. And in keeping with the optimistic mood of this section, an argument can be made that the issues with corruption will be sorted out over time, as the central government increases its monitoring and enforcement capabilities, and perhaps more importantly as voters become more sophisticated and begin to demand higher levels of performance from their elected officials. Moreover, it has been noted (Ufen 2009) that political parties have thus far failed to serve as aggregators of interests, but emerging civil society is having an effect in many places and thus we might expect to see the parties mature somewhat in the coming years. It must be remembered that the centralization project in Indonesia took the better part of four centuries, thus we should admonish ourselves to have patience with decentralization.

District governments have been responsive in providing roads, but unfortunately for KSNP these are in conflict with the conservation mission of the park. Roads encourage encroachment, and so in this way what is good for decentralization and improved service delivery is bad for the park. One district headman that is routinely vilified by park staff made the point clear to me during an interview. He told me that

\textsuperscript{158} I would add to this that a new breed of politician is emerging, one that seems to genuinely feel a commitment to public service. The mayors of Jakarta and Surabaya are the embodiment of this new type of political figure and they have been embraced enthusiastically by voters.
he started as a farmer, and so the most important priorities for him have been to make things easier for farmers and to build roads for them. He recalled that when he was younger, farmers had to carry their produce to market on their backs, but then came smaller roads and so they could start using motorcycles. He said he looked forward to the day when farmers were able to use their own trucks to haul their produce, because this would be a symbol not only of infrastructural improvement and modernization, but also of socioeconomic improvement because it would mean that the farmers were producing more and making more money. This is the crux of the fundamental incompatibility between development and conservation as it is manifested in the Reformasi era at Kerinci Seblat National Park.

8.2.4 Will decentralization continue to benefit villagers in the long term?

These points have to be judged against actual outcomes though. As it currently stands, one important result of decentralization is that it has provided to people that previously had no access to power opportunities to form and join coalitions that enable them to access and redefine state resources. The decentralization of power as well as the associated laws that enabled administrative proliferation have created new, more local bases of power and influence independent from the national government. However, there are limits to this new power, especially for people living in villages because decentralization has not empowered them directly, but has given them more indirect influence in certain issues in which they can be used as levers by newly empowered districts interests. I have shown several cases that support the point that villagers benefit so long as their interests converge with those of district elites, but
there is great potential for these interests to diverge, in which case the district interests will trump the village interests. In other words, I have shown how villagers have become proxies in the ongoing power struggle between the central government and the districts. As noted by Agrawal and Ribot (1999), as important to the success of decentralization as adequate financing and the types of powers devolved is the question of to whom powers are decentralized. Thus far from a practical perspective, formal powers have been decentralized to district elites who have leveraged them to increase their informal powers through networks of patronage and corruption. Thus the goal of creating the conditions necessary for successful decentralization of management authority to stakeholders that would in theory have incentives to sustainably manage those resources has been thwarted, as it is still the case that the costs and benefits of extractive activities are delinked. One could make the case that it would be more promising to decentralize power to adat institutions, and the recent Constitutional Court decision discussed in chapter 7 opens the door for this, but the fact remains that the official fate of adat institutions remains in the hands of district elites. From this perspective decentralization can't yet really be considered a success, because instead of empowering local people, it has provided opportunities for local elites.

8.2.5 A Final Legacy: KSNP as an Impediment to Decentralization

A major theme of this dissertation has been that the Ministry of Forestry and Kerinci Seblat National Park have served as barriers to effective decentralization by exacerbating the overall weakness of Indonesia's decentralization efforts. There are
many reasons for this, some intentional and some structural, but probably the most important factor is that the Ministry of Forestry, which has long been resistant to decentralization, is attempting to protect its turf. The 1967 Basic Forestry Act was in effect the largest land grab in the history of the archipelago, and the establishment of the MoF in the 1980s made it one of the most powerful organs of the New Order apparatus. The control of trees and land was central to the Suharto regime, and so the MoF occupied a privileged position. With the emergence of the carbon economy, forests are taking on new value, and so control of this resource allows the MoF to solicit funding from international donors for carbon sequestration activities, which could potentially be extremely lucrative. Protected areas are one of the last bastions of complete control for the MoF, and thus the ministry is reluctant to cede any power. Because of this intransigence the park is at odds with the decentralization movement. It prevents district governments from developing natural resources to increase their locally generated revenue.

Along with the theme of the park serving to inhibit decentralization is the corollary that the MoF and the park have not participated in guiding the process. This is a key consideration that has been overlooked in most analyses of decentralization and forest resources. These institutions for the past fifteen years have for the most part been sitting on the sidelines while Reformasi unfolds, sporadically and often unsuccessfully reacting to transgressions here and there. An example of this is the way that the MoF handles the road proposals. It is not politically tenable for the Ministry to completely reject the proposals out of hand because of the caveat in Act 5 of 1990 that governs protected areas that projects initiated in national parks need the
approval of the Minister. This creates the potential for exceptionality, and the districts argue that their various circumstances constitute grounds for exception. However, the MoF has no standardized procedure and no guidelines for scrutinizing road proposals, so the districts argue that the process is unfair and capricious because they don't know what they are supposed to do to secure approval for roads. The process is less-than-transparent and potentially highly susceptible to corruption because roads are treated on an ad-hoc, case-by-case basis. The Ministry could rectify this problem by establishing a formal, codified mechanism to review road proposals, including a list of studies and documents such as feasibility and environmental impact studies that have to be done prior to application for a road through the park. These guidelines would include descriptions of how these studies should be conducted, along with a list of approved bureaus or institutions to conduct the studies. This could reduce the possibilities of collusion between the local government applying for the road exception and the instituted conducting the study while at the same time serving to indirectly improve capacity at the district level.

However, at the time of writing this chapter the Ministry was lagging in developing procedures and policies for dealing with district governments around protected areas, instead falling back in most cases on Act 5 1990, an approach that seems not to grasp the new realities of decentralization. As a result, most of the interactions between the park and the districts are adversarial, at least in part due to the fact that the MoF's intransigence in the face of the current of decentralization does not allow for constructive interactions between the districts and the park. The manifestation of this on the ground is that the districts are essentially testing the park
at every opportunity, informally looking for weaknesses and ways to undermine the park, so the park's managers are constantly fighting a rearguard action against the districts. An important overall point here is that conservationists and park managers can passively choose to have the terms under which they work to conserve nature dictated to them as the processes of decentralization and democratization unfold, or they can take steps to anticipate changes and thus to make the park more relevant to local and district powers. So far they have chosen the former course of action while new political-administrative practices, norms, and traditions are established at the district level. The longer the Ministry of Forestry waits to engage with the districts in a more constructive manner, the more difficult it will be for it to counteract some of the practices that directly and indirectly affect the park. In fact, the cases of Gunung Tujuh and Lembah Masurai (chapter 7) indicate that in some cases it is already too late. In practical terms this may have the longer term effect of limiting future options for the park, especially in terms of community-based or co-management strategies.

The reason for this is simple to grasp; as noted in Chapter 6, the MoF and the park have taken very small steps to increase the role of local people in certain aspects of the park's management. As I pointed out, these efforts so far focus on implementation types of activities, and so no substantive management responsibilities have been devolved to local communities or the districts. But if in the future it transpires that the MoF, working through the park, decides to involve local people more substantially, this will likely involve some form of negotiation with local communities (possibly resembling the village development component of the ICDP) whereby greater access and control for local people is contingent upon following
certain rules of acceptable use. In the ideal situation this would be a give-and-take for both sides, with both benefitting from the collaboration. However, if current village-level trends around the park continue into the future, these types of negotiations would involve local people giving up their unofficial but very real "rights" of access and thus would in reality represent new restrictions rather than access privileges. If, on the other hand, the park were actively engaged with local communities in formulating co-management strategies that allowed for truly enhanced access for villagers, the outcomes might be more acceptable. The case of Bangun Rejo is a useful example; though through the informal "truce" between the park and the villagers the park has lost some control over a swath of territory, the villagers have created a "green fence" that seems to represent an acceptable outcome as well as a limit to their expansion into the park.

8.3 Decentralization, Reterritorialization, and Kerinci Seblat National Park

As noted in the previous sections, the rescaling of politics and administration in Indonesia is significant for conservation in general because international conservation organizations often have a preference for operating through the national scale administratively. The national scale is often taken for granted as the home of the state and so it is distinguished from the other scales based on the presence of sovereignty, which corresponds to an abstract but internationally recognized and respected basket of rights and powers. This has all changed now, but there are some important legacies. For example, developmentalism was an important characteristic of the Suharto years, and modernization was an obsession of the regime. Modernization and
development took very specific forms during the Suharto years, and this has had important implications for the trajectory of economic development on Sumatra. This enamorment with developmentalism has carried over to the post-authoritarian era and forms the foundation of the primary aspirations of the populace, at least as voiced through the filter of political campaigns. I have shown that this can be seen in the slogans of the candidates in political contests in the districts around the park. However, planning processes are more driven by district level priorities now; in other words the object of development is the district, rather than the national state.

During the Suharto years there was a general flow of benefits from natural resources from the villagers to the central government (McCarthy 2006) in the service of developmentalism. Although the New Order regime built schools and clinics in most of the villages of the archipelago and so it could be argued that the villages benefitted from Suharto's developmentalism, the negative net balance in favor of Jakarta and Java is evidenced by the significant asymmetries in development between Java and the outer islands. In the post-authoritarian era this transfer of wealth has been challenged, and along with this comes a reordering of the landscape to be more in line with district level preferences and aspirations. For KSNP this means that there have been attempts on the part of district governments to redefine the resources within the park, which have hitherto been officially designated as conservation resources.

The on-ground-manifestation of rescaling then is reterritorialization. In other words, villagers and districts have sought to overwrite the territoriality or spatial ordering imposed by the Suharto regime. Sack (1986:19) defines territoriality as "the
attempt by an individual or group to affect, influence, or control people, phenomena, and relationships by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area."

Numerous scholars have in the past argued that national parks and other protected areas are mechanisms of territorial control (Peluso 1992, Bryant 1997, Neumann 1998, Peluso and Vandergeest 2001), but Sack's conceptualization of the "tendencies" of territoriality is useful for understanding the relationships between state power and the particular form of conservation practiced in a national park because it provides a very specific framework for conceptualizing the particular aspects of strong central government that support the park as a tool of governance and coercion. By using this framework we can understand how changing the regime of government will necessarily bring about changes in the role of the park in the political-administrative ordering. Very briefly, Sack describes ten different tendencies\textsuperscript{159} of territoriality and 14 combinations of these tendencies, which he used to describe different forms of territoriality. Beginning with the assertion that national parks are indeed tools of territoriality, there are at least seven of these tendencies that come together in the unique and particular combination that is a national park. These are described below, along with the role that strong centralized authority plays in the functioning of each.

\textbf{a. Classification.} This refers to the assigning of roles or functions to spatially-delineated units. Parks classify territory with systems of zonation (e.g. core zone, special use zone, forest zones). Moreover, parks themselves are often classified as biodiversity hotspots or are

\textsuperscript{159} The three tendencies not discussed below are "Neutrality", "Emptiability", and "Engendering more territoriality".

given roles and meanings within larger global or national scale frameworks. In the case of parks central authority is important for coordinating the classification function because it provides the broader framework in which to situate the park as well as the coercive power and coordination required to do so.

b. Communication. Parks communicate their mission as well as rules of use and access through the use of uniforms, signs, and border markers. Since KSNP is so large and overlaps so many district and provincial jurisdictions, central authority is essential in creating a "super-jurisdiction" that transcends more local scale territorial units.

c. Enforcement. Enforcement of park rules relies on laws, codes and on-the-ground actions of forest policemen. Throughout this dissertation I have shown the importance of central authority for enforcement at the park. Even the smallest villages have forms of territorial enforcement, but in the case of KSNP central authority is essential for carrying out the enforcement function and imposing the central government's conservation agenda on more local patterns of land use, both formally and informally.

d. Reifying. Parks are a symbol of state power and the state's claim on resources, and in some cases they are a symbol of national
identity. The designation of a conservation area as a "national" park explicitly signals that the territory is the property of the entire nation. The role of central authority in this case is obvious: the park is a national possession and thus part of the state's conservation identity. As such the central government has the backing of actors and institutions operating at the international scale in establishing the park.

e. Displacing. Displacement refers to the ability of a territory to distract the attention of the subject of the exercise of authority away from the agent that is exercising power. Thus in the case of national parks and other protected areas, the displacement function means that subjects' behavior within the territory is conditioned by the territory itself rather than the authority behind the territory. This idea has been popularized by Agrawal (2005) as environmentality. For example, if the subject thinks the "we do not hunt in this area because it is a national park" rather than "we do not hunt in this area because the central government has forbidden hunting", then the displacement function is effective and people become self-regulators. It should be noted that this function is generally much more effective in first world parks than in developing countries. But in Indonesia the case can be made that another, slightly more convoluted (but equally valid) form of displacement is as work. Here state forests have attempted to "displace" by conditioning subjects that forests have ecological
benefits. This serves to distract attention away from the fact that forest resources have in the past been territorialized to reserve the extractive benefits for those with privileged ties to the ruling regime. In the case of protected forests like parks there are benefits not from logging but rather from conserving, but these accrue to the state as well. In other words, the benefits of protection forests have been set aside for actors and interests at the national or global scale, but the designation of the forest as a conservation area is a subterfuge to distract locals from the reality that they are being excluded from the benefits. The role of the central government in displacing is also fairly obvious.

f. Impersonal. Parks exhibit the "impersonal" tendency because the forest police and park administrators are tasked with controlling a particular territory, rather than a group of people, but the ultimate outcome is the same. Thus the relationship between the controller and the controlled is impersonal and technical. Central control has been quite important for this function in Indonesia since in most cases park administrators have been assigned from Java, and they are periodically transferred to other parks. It could be argued that impersonal administration of a national park is essential because the park by definition is removed from local patterns of land use and is incorporated into national and global networks of conservation.
g. Container/Mold. Parks embody the container/mode tendency because they are specific spatial units set aside for conservation. Moreover, parks can become a target for international aid or recognition. The park becomes the place where conservation is "done"; it is an internationally recognized space for a certain set of activities. Central authority is essential for facilitating and coordinating this container/mold function as international donors and aid agencies typically operate through the central government.

Sack (1986:28) goes on to argue that "certain historical contexts will draw upon specific potential effects and in a very general sense match historical contexts with territorial effects." A strong argument can be made that this is indeed the case with the national parks of Indonesia. Each of the aforementioned tendencies is predicated on a strong central authority to legitimize, or at least compel local people to obey, the rules of use and the definition of forest as conservation resources. Thus when seen from this perspective, it is clear that parks are a territorial product of a particular historical epoch: the New Order, and the creation of the park in the 1980s and 1990s can be seen as a form of reterritorialization itself whereby the central government used its coercive power to set aside the park as a conservation resource, whereas previously the area was classified by locals in different ways. As noted in chapter 6, Neidel (2006) describes this as the "erasure of memory" in which the park, or more accurately the power behind the park attempts to overwrite local conceptions of the
landscape. The central government's definition of the territory has national and international legitimacy, whereas the local narrative has no voice and no legitimacy.

Now that the authoritarian foundations of national parks as a strategy of territoriality have weakened, elite interests in the districts and provinces around the park have been engaged in efforts to "reterritorialize" the park. This includes at least two ongoing processes. The first of these is the redefinition of resources within the park. This is a largely informal process that works through various forms of subtly undermining the park, including direct action as well as through discourse. This can be observed in the way that district officials talk about the park. There is a very clear framing of the park as an obstacle and a burden that exists primarily for the benefit of outsiders, a framing that is echoed by district headmen, assembly members, and bureaucrats. Statements and sentiments trickle down from charismatic political leaders through village heads and finally down to individual farmers themselves, forming a current of resentment and resistance. On the other hand, the most obvious visual manifestation is the increase in encroachment, which is fundamentally different from illegal logging, which, prior to the fall of Suharto, was the primary problem facing the park. Whereas illegal logging (which in the case of KSNP is and always has been non-mechanized and involves the select cutting of trees) is a "cut and run" enterprise that leaves the forest, for the most part, intact, encroachment is a claim on the land that involves the clear-cutting and burning of forest over a certain parcel of land, and subsequent maintenance of whatever is grown there. Encroachment changes the function of the land as a resource. At first glance, encroachment seems to be the work of thousands of independent farmers moving into the park, but upon
closer inspection, as I have noted in chapters 6 and 7, new waves of encroachment are motivated by and are inseparable from forces and processes unleashed and empowered by decentralization. The encroachment that is besieging the park can only be properly understood in the context of these political processes.

The second process is to integrate the reterritorialized space and the resources held within it into larger existing networks and the establishment of new connectivities, which district governments are attempting to effect through formal and informal channels. The creation of parks and subsequent laws and implementing regulations also created no-go zones in terms of roads, and thus created what I here will describe as "negative connectivity"; this refers to legally impassible areas which in some cases overwrote traditional trading routes. Though at the time the implications of this were not as severe as they are now since people were still getting around by hiking, these no go areas would become spaces off-limits to development, and so as the rest of the territory was "modernizing" these areas were not. The villages of Renah Kemumu and Tanjung Kasri are examples of this process. In the logic of centrally-guided development planning and implementation, these inequalities can be understood as part of a larger plan. In other words, from the bird's-eye view of the Jakarta-based elite, underdeveloped areas fulfill the expectation that certain spaces will be set aside for conservation. However, in the context of decentralization and democratized Indonesia they become fodder for populist politics, as well as political spoils because the resources are still largely unexploited. New roads promise to open up new trading opportunities and to link up communities that had been separated by the park. As discussed in chapter 5, roads are visible symbols
of economic development and opportunity, but according to conservationists and the Ministry of Forestry they are incompatible with the mission of the park. District governments however remain undeterred and the roads remain central elements in political contestation at the district level.

8.4 Rethinking protected areas

Daniels and Basset (2002:483) asserted that the standard design of "conservation territories [e.g. national parks] needs to be rethought in light of the land and resource use patterns of local people and the ecological and social dynamics influencing resource management that commonly transcend these rigid boundaries." This statement is part of a general current of political-ecology critique of protected areas, part of which I alluded to in the preceding chapters. Much of this critique is rooted in the perspective of social justice and advocacy; many political ecologists have identified the myriad ways in which protected areas have disadvantaged and marginalized local scale actors. In some instances protected areas have been used as a tool of domination, in other cases this marginalization has resulted from the structural characteristics of conservation that is driven primarily by priorities originating at the national and international scales. My analysis has demonstrated similar findings for the case of Kerinci Seblat National Park and the people living in and around it. However the "rethinking" that political ecologists have called for is a moral call, hence the appeal is to actors at national and international scales to adjust their practices and approaches towards the helpless subaltern masses that are figuratively swept under the carpet by conservation interests. In real terms this would
require powerful stakeholders to relinquish some of their power over natural resources. One of the major conclusions of this dissertation, though, is that Reformasi in Indonesia is forcing this rethinking from a practical perspective rather than a moral one. In explaining this conclusion I will tie together a number of the themes from the dissertation.

Protected areas are a particular and peculiar type of policy tool, one that has generally relied on a high degree of central government control and coordination. McCarthy and Zen (2008) point out that policy tools take their meaning from the specific legal, social, and cultural context in which they operate. Authority tools involve statements backed by the authority of governments that grant permission, prohibit, or require action under designated circumstances. Thus a policy tool that might be useful in certain political milieus might not be appropriate for others. I have shown that Indonesia's national parks were established during the authoritarian New Order regime, and their establishment and management bear the characteristics of the authoritarian regime. Decentralization has altered the kinds of policy instruments that can effectively be used by the various levels of government, and so if an agency chooses the wrong type of policy tool, one that is inappropriate for the specific social and cultural context in which it is applied, there is an increased risk of failure and backlash.

If one considers KSNP from this perspective, several key observations can be made. One of the most important is that the park, as it has been implemented, has created a gulf between local people and the resources that sustain them. It has contributed to the undermining of important social capital institutions such as adat,
which served the purpose of excluding outsiders and controlling extractive pressures on forests and other natural resources, which has been widely recognized as a key prerequisite for sustainable community natural resource management. The result is that there are currently few incentives for local people to sustainably manage the forest, as their informal access and tenure is, from their perspective, precarious since it is subject to the caprices of the district government. And even in cases where there have been efforts to encourage sustainable management (e.g. programs run by local NGOs), these efforts have encountered resistance from the park and are contrary to the political realities of decentralization. Consequently there is a high discount rate for investment in sustainable use of land, making it impractical and really against the best interests of local people.

The concept of the national park should also be considered in the context of the general theme of *rescaling*. Scale is important because in many cases it encourages decision makers to think about problems and their solutions as bounded by a particular spatial resolution (Mitchell 1995). For example, the existence and widespread use of national parks encourages us to think about the solution to issues like environmental destruction, the loss of biological diversity, and the increase in greenhouse gases as being contained within the protected area. As noted in my introductory chapter, this is a form of bounding or *bracketing* (Scott 1998). This is limiting because it prevents us from thinking about the broader socio-economic context and backcloth from which the problem emerges and in which it is situated. National parks tend to encourage a certain epistemological approach whereby conservation has to transpire on a large scale in a demarcated territory and be
governed by the State; it has to be a big, centrally-directed endeavor rather than something more local and decentralized. And even when conservation works through local actors and decentralized networks, it is still driven and directed by priorities originating from higher scales (see chapter 6). Along these lines the national park creates an *artificial scale* such that any given environmental problem becomes territorialized; in other words the problem is obscured and the solution becomes one of protected the integrity of the national park rather than addressing the actual environmental issue. The conservation territory becomes the *site* of the solution to a global problem that has its roots in independent and uncoordinated actions of billions. For states it is much easier to regulate a territory from this perspective rather than attempt to alter patterns of consumption and livelihood that could have potentially significant economic and political ramifications. In this way it is easy to get caught up in encroachment and other border transgressions, but in this way we are thinking of the integrity and form of a *territory* rather than the structural drivers of deforestation, biodiversity loss, global warming, and so forth. Encroachment then goes from being a local transgression to being a crime against global resources. In other words, the magnitude of the transgression is magnified by the characteristics of the territorial unit in which the transgression occurs. This compartmentalization benefits entrenched interests and those that are in power because it distracts attention away from the way that ecological problems are produced by the everyday structure and function of society, which simultaneously produces the entrenched interests. And it distracts us from other solutions which might be more compatible with decentralization and might be more effective.
A more fundamental problem is that Kerinci Seblat National Park is currently at odds with the development trajectory of rural Sumatra, both in terms of historical development as well as the future strategic national plan for the economic development of the country as a whole. Because of historical factors and the structure of decentralization, the districts are always going to seek to exploit natural resources because the structure of decentralization incentivizes extractive activities. However, this requires investment from outside capital, which seeks a reliable return on investment, which in turn is partially dependent upon considerations of economies of scale and transportation costs. Therefore districts that are not burdened with a national park, that have more formal control over their territory, will most likely be more competitive in attracting capital. Mining operations, exploration, and many other activities are likely going to prefer to locate themselves in places without strict restrictions on land use. Not only is this bad for district development, but it also means that less money is available to local elites for kickbacks and corruption. As noted in chapter 6, a more optimistic future might emerge for the park if Sumatra experienced a high level of economic development and underwent at least a partial transformation from the primary sector to a stronger mix of secondary and tertiary sector activities, but the institutional and structural characteristics of the political economy of Sumatra are working against this brighter future.

8.5 Conclusion

This dissertation has described a number of issues from general questions regarding decentralization to more specific ones focusing on the appropriateness of
current management practices at Kerinci Seblat National Park. I have provided an overview of the status of decentralization fifteen years after the passage of the initial acts which initiated the process, including an examination of some unfinished legacies of decentralization as well as unintended outcomes stemming from the reforms. As far as KSNP is concerned, decentralization has empowered predatory elites who have two main goals vis-a-vis the park. The first of these stems from the exercise of these elites' informal powers and influence: controlling the structure of rule breaking in and around the park (Robbins et al 2009) in order to maximize benefits to themselves and their political networks from access to natural resources. The second goal is a more long term project and involves controlling the terms whereby outside capital in the form of investment money penetrates the districts. From the perspective of district elites as well as most everyday citizens, the park is an impediment to regional development that has functioned to frustrate the progress of decentralization.

The issues that have emerged in Indonesia are examples of a more general tension between conservation and democratization that stems from an interesting double movement. As conservation gets scales up via networks of protected areas and hotspots, government and democracy is scaled down through a general trend of decentralization. This downward movement associated with decentralization is in direct contrast with the context in which national parks are conceived. In general trends in conservation tend to scale up; that is, the priorities and benchmarks involved in conservation seem to go from smaller to large scale. Authors such as Terborgh (1999) make the argument that the conservation of nature is a global priority and
frame the issue in terms of global responsibilities. Other examples of this include the notion that forests, oceans, national parks, etc represent a "global commons," as was voiced at the Rio Summit in 1992. Neumann (2005) describes how the IUCN is a manifestation of this discourse. Norman Myers's concept of the "hotspot" (1988, 1990) has entered the popular lexicon and has been taken up by international non-governmental organizations: WWF's "Earth's Most Special Places," Birdlife International's "endemic bird areas" and other similar classification schemes are all representations of the hotspot concept, and they all operate on the assumption that conservation is a global priority or responsibility. The contradictions inherent in this double movement are manifested at KSNP and should serve as a cautionary tale for governments contemplating massive decentralization projects, as no easy solutions have yet to emerge. Encroachment and road projects continue to threaten the park.

These issues are challenging because of the rescaling of politics. The scope of decentralization in Indonesia calls into question a monolithic understanding of the state, and even what the term "state" refers to. Even an understanding of the state as a collection of often competing and antagonistic interests with their own agendas (Baker 2005, Bryant 2007, Kull 2004) is not sufficient in the context of post-authoritarian Indonesia, because it doesn't explain some of the processes that are currently taking place in and around Kerinci Seblat National Park. Instead we should understand the "state" as a mantle of legitimacy, an attribute that is held in different concentration by actors who operate at different scales, and therefore influence and in turn are influenced by processes operating at different scales. This means then that the mission and official legitimacy of conservation is opened up to be questioned; this
was certainly the case before the fall of Suharto and can be seen in numerous other developing countries as well. The fundamental difference here is that these challenges come from within the state from state actors and institutions that are able to create alternative official narratives and development trajectories that are contradictory to the mission of national park based conservation.

The overall utility of this analysis is that it provides a framework for understanding conservation challenges for the future as well as the failings of past management strategies. It shows that politics and configurations of power and scale are key variables that must be taken into consideration when doing the work of conservation. It also shows that political-economic factors must be taken into consideration when designing conservation policies and strategies; merely relying on national parks as a proxy through which international NGOs operate is most likely not going to yield satisfactory results into the future in Indonesia. Moreover, this dissertation indicates how the structure and form of decentralization have served to isolate conservation and environmental concerns from other aspects of government by leaving this responsibility with the national government. The result, at least around KSNP, is that districts have largely ignored environmental impacts, or in more extreme cases have actively endeavored to undermine the central government's agent of environmental protection (KSNP), thereby exacerbating negative environmental outcomes.

This is significant for a number of reasons. First of all, Indonesia is staring down the barrel of abrupt and irreversible climate departure (Mora et al 2013). As one of the largest emitters of carbon dioxide on the planet, Indonesia continues to make a
significant contribution to anthropogenic global warming. However, Indonesia, as a tropical country, will feel the effects sooner and more severely than most developed countries, and therefore must take steps to address both the causes and effects of climate change. This involves incorporating environmental considerations into sub-national development planning, especially now that so much power has been decentralized. This is particularly true of islands like Sumatra, which are heavily reliant on the primary sector, as it is likely that agriculture, agroforestry, and other related sectors will disproportionately be affected by climate change. And as political ecologists have shown in the past, the consequences of environmental degradation are generally distributed unequally, with those least able to cope with climate change being the most vulnerable. In many of the districts around the park people are dependent on agriculture, and there are significant populations earning far below the national average. These people are likely to experience hardships in the coming years. Thus climate change will have far reaching economic and social impacts throughout the archipelago, which could very possibly trigger a political crisis or outbreaks of social unrest. Kerinci Seblat National Park has an important role in a larger strategy to address these issues, as the park does indeed provide important ecosystem services at the regional level that will be key in determining resilience to climate change. But as it stands now dysfunctional decentralization, along with the intransigence of the Ministry of Forestry have conspired to bring about what could be the worst of all possible outcomes: continued degradation of the park's forests with no end in sight.
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