

Scotland's Rural College

Technical experts' perspectives of justice-related norms

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# 1 **Technical experts' perspectives of justice-related norms: Lessons from everyday** 2 **environmental practices in Indonesia.**

## 3 **1. Introduction**

4 Development and environmental conflicts have increasingly featured divergences between  
5 representations of justice provided by environmental management policies and demands of  
6 justice claimed by local affected social groups (Martin et al. 2014). If local affected people  
7 perceive environmental policies as not reflecting social objectives, or as 'unjust,' the  
8 effectiveness of management practices can be undermined (Mariki, Svarstad, and Benjaminsen  
9 2015). To align environmental management with local justice demands, it is vital to understand  
10 the governance processes and power relations between policy actors through which any  
11 environmental policies are interpreted and implemented (Jacobi et al. 2017). As international  
12 environmental governance initiatives and national governments have increasingly sought to  
13 influence local environmental practices, linking local social and environmental objectives with  
14 international and national governance practices can potentially reduce any negative impacts  
15 of management practices on forest-dependent communities (Sikor et al. 2014).

16 A multifaceted framing of environmental justice has become influential for identifying,  
17 explaining, and addressing uneven distributions of environmental impacts on forest-  
18 dependent communities and other socially marginalized groups. Historically, environmental  
19 justice has focused on 'distributive justice,' which investigates the fairness of the distribution  
20 *outcomes* (Bullard 1994). While the concept of distributive justice remains essential, a  
21 multidimensional frame of environmental justice has integrated 'recognitional justice,'  
22 addressing the *processes* that result in unjust distribution (Young 1990). Recognitional justice  
23 explores how misrecognition of culturally suppressed identities and worldviews can lead to  
24 distributive injustice. Another dimension of justice, i.e., procedural justice, explores fair public  
25 participation processes and outcomes; key issues include legitimacy, transparency, and  
26 accountability in institutional decision-making (Suiseeya and Caplow 2013).

27 Norms related to environmental justice have become discernible both in local struggle  
28 claims (Temper et al. 2018) and global sustainability objectives (Sikor and Newell 2014).  
29 Critical institutional analysis, mainly its focus on norms (Ostrom 2009), has contributed to  
30 understanding how justice perceptions are shaped in natural resource management (e.g.,  
31 Agarwal 2001; Ribot 2012). Essentially, norms are the customary rules about the way things  
32 should be and ought to be done in particular contexts. Others, including Acharya (2014),  
33 Cleaver (2012), and Paavola (2007), further reconceptualize institutions in environmental  
34 governance central to justice-related norms. Such norms are the socially determined rules of  
35 fairness in travel between people and in the allocation of social goods. Postcolonial feminists  
36 have broadly recorded norms that can shape ideas of justice in a wide range of environmental  
37 governance phenomena. As an example, indigenous studies have investigated discrimination  
38 and marginalization of indigenous worldviews in neoliberal conservation and development  
39 initiatives, resulting in claims of injustices and conflicts (e.g., Li 2014; Doolittle 2010). Gender  
40 studies have portrayed misrepresentation of top-down management tools enshrined in  
41 patriarchal institutions and the socio-environmental struggles asserted by women in land  
42 practices (e.g., Deere and Leal 2001; Nussbaum 2000). Other studies expand the knowledge  
43 sphere of justice-related norms, illustrating the importance of meeting societal standards on  
44 dignity (Su and Mangada 2020), sense of belongings (Eckenwiler 2018), and community  
45 benefits (Cowell, Bristow, and Munday 2011) on improving social acceptability of  
46 environmental management strategies in specific cultural structures. These insights show that  
47 social expectations of justice are unique to local contexts, but they are not solely locally-  
48 constituted. Negotiations at various sites and on different platforms by actors from global to  
49 local scales can affect how justice is delivered to forest-dependent communities.

50 Environmental governance is a multi-scalar and dynamic process, where both formal  
51 governmental regulations and local customs contribute to shaping practical arrangements and  
52 outcomes of environmental and development policies (Acharya 2011). To transform externally-  
53 conceived norms, for example, related to justice, from the international or national level into

54 the sub-national practice, involves the interplay of various intermediary actors from the  
55 government, civil society, and the private sector (Dawson et al. 2018). These intermediary  
56 actors may represent diverse stakeholders and carry out formal and informal roles in  
57 interpreting and implement national policies on forests, land, and other natural resources in a  
58 particular social context (Cleaver 2015).

59 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), as the world's most widespread  
60 environmental policy tool, and its role in bridging local justice concerns and global  
61 sustainability goals is essential in many natural-resource-rich countries where EIAs are the  
62 only environmental policy tools that are publicly acknowledged (Lawrence 2013; Morgan  
63 2012). The UN Environment (2018) also identifies EIA as a crucial platform for achieving the  
64 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other related frameworks such as the  
65 Strategic Plan for Biodiversity. EIA is relevant to distributive justice because its objectives  
66 are fundamentally concerned with the impact of project actions on specific groups or  
67 populations (Walker 2010), while engaging cultural minorities' voices may also promote  
68 recognitional justice in decision-making procedures (Hanna et al. 2014). Procedural justice  
69 concerns the 'effectiveness' of EIA, with literature exploring to what extent the formal  
70 procedure of EIA addresses specific goals (procedural outcomes) and how the practice of  
71 EIA achieves those goals (substantive outcomes) (Cashmore et al. 2010). Numerous studies  
72 have explored the barriers to effective participation in EIA faced by local communities  
73 (Cashmore and Axelsson 2013; Morgan 2012); however, few have examined the barriers  
74 created or faced by those involved in delivering the EIAs, and their potential to influence the  
75 substantive outcomes and the incorporation of justice in project negotiations.

76 Through exploring the perspective of intermediaries involved in everyday EIA  
77 governance practices at the sub-national level, this article addresses three questions: 1) What  
78 are EIA intermediaries' perceptions and prioritizations of justice-related norms? 2) What  
79 structural factors influence the travel of justice-related norms between governance scales? 3)  
80 Through which platforms do those EIA intermediaries negotiate justice-related norms?

81 Using semi-structured interviews, this article explored a case study of EIA in Indonesia to  
82 investigate the perspectives of sub-national intermediaries involved in its technical review  
83 process, from governmental agencies, private consultancies, and academia. Indonesia has  
84 one of the world's highest deforestation rates, and EIA acts as one of the criteria for granting  
85 licenses for development projects (Swangjang 2018), yet critiques of its fairness persist. This  
86 article contributes new empirical evidence and insights to the everyday environmental  
87 arrangements regarding justice, as shaped by sub-national intermediaries.

## 88 **2. Literature review: Critical institutionalism and travel of justice-related norms**

89 This article uses a critical institutionalism lens and pays attention to the power relationships  
90 underlying people's interactions that shape resource management arrangements and  
91 outcomes (Cleaver 2012). In contrast to the assumption of an optimal institution (Ostrom  
92 2002), which considers the relationship between policy and local practices as direct and linear,  
93 Acharya (2004) proposes a critical approach emphasizing the complexity of institutions  
94 entwined in everyday social life. Both structural factors and individual choices, particularly the  
95 role of local actors, are considered in shaping local governance arrangements (de Koning 2014;  
96 de Sardan 2015). That said, local actors are not passive followers of predetermined, top-down  
97 objectives, but actively negotiate and shape norms through a combination of resources and  
98 capabilities in certain normative beliefs and social contexts (Coggan et al. 2013; Kumar 2014;  
99 Mukhtarov 2014).

100 Conceptually, this approach shows that norm diffusion and development is not solely a  
101 downward process from international to local scales. Instead, national and sub-national actors  
102 can influence global objectives of environmental governance from below (Hargreaves et al.  
103 2013; Schomers, Sattler, and Matzdorf 2015). They may seek to create a transnational justice  
104 network in mobilizing local struggles (Caouette 2007), offer knowledge services to facilitate  
105 interactions among actors (Sternlieb et al. 2013), and collaborate to shape the outcomes of  
106 environmental governance (Schröter et al. 2018). Transforming justice-related norms into

107 local environmental governance practices remains challenging due to barriers of local  
108 implementation capacity and to ideological differences in the conceptualization of justice  
109 amongst various actors (Dawson 2018). To enable the integration of local justice concerns into  
110 environmental practices, they need to be represented and mobilized in policy negotiations  
111 which is often through the representation by intermediary actors.

112 Intermediary actors from governments, private sector, and civil society (e.g., policy  
113 managers, environmental consultancies and NGOs) engage in both formal decision-making  
114 settings and informal processes, such as protest, media, and other lobbying approaches, which  
115 influence norms formation and travel (Funder and Marani 2015). These intermediaries  
116 perform as brokers in development (de Sardan 2005) who seek to or are claimed to represent  
117 objectives held by local people in the environmental governance practices (Sikor et al. 2019).  
118 They may work vertically between governance levels and horizontally across platforms and  
119 issues, attempting to (re)interpret and (re)constitute the objectives of environmental  
120 management, such as those included in policies, to find congruence with local customs and  
121 priorities (Lewis and Mosse 2006; Mosse 2005). It is noted that intermediaries may not act  
122 consistently for local interests. Instead, they may prioritize individual or organizational  
123 agendas or represent contested causes for different stakeholders in different forums (Booth  
124 2012). The perspectives of intermediary actors with regards to justice are influenced by certain  
125 social and cultural context, and the intermediaries' norms related to justice and the  
126 communities who they are speaking for can therefore affect how they interpret and mobilize  
127 local concerns of justice.

128 Young (1990)'s and Fraser (2008)'s arguments on recognitional justice, which  
129 emphasize political domination and oppression underlying the causes of unjust distribution of  
130 social goods, can be used to understand the intermediaries' norms related to justice. Fraser  
131 (2007) argues that misrecognition is constructed in institutional subordination, meaning the  
132 interests and values of culturally privileged groups define peoples' institutional experiences in  
133 society. In contrast, culturally suppressed identities and communities are often not recognized,

134 misrecognized and disrespected by other social members. Such subordination is deeply tied to  
135 economic inequality and this inequality must be examined in a particular cultural and social  
136 context rather than ideal procedures. It is because institutional, social and cultural structures  
137 that construct and mediate social relations are keys for explaining why some social groups have  
138 more privileges in accessing social goods than others (Young 1990, 22). It is therefore crucial  
139 to understand the actors the intermediaries interact, collaborate with and represent, and the  
140 factors underlying the choices made by intermediaries, especially about the justice-related  
141 norms they prioritize and the type of platforms they use to articulate their agendas (Dawson et  
142 al. 2018).

143           Institutionally, physically, and socially derived resources are necessary to access power  
144 by intermediaries in their attempts to influence the process and outcomes of environmental  
145 governance. Rules, either constitutional or regulative, can be institutional resources for those  
146 who have more experience of using those rules in advancing their objectives (Hrabanski et al.  
147 2013). For example, studies have questioned the practices and representations of enforcing the  
148 law through the legal use of violence by state agents (see the volume by Blundo and Glasman  
149 (2013)). Moreover, travel of justice-related norms can be enabled or restricted by the extent to  
150 which minorities' voices are engaged in institutional platforms (Eastwood 2011; Sikor and Câm  
151 2016). For instance, intermediaries may find it challenging to include indigenous worldviews  
152 in decision-making when national policies provide little recognition of customary land rights  
153 (Papillon and Rodon 2017).

154           Effective norms travel may be enabled when intermediaries have access to physical  
155 resources (e.g., proper work facilities) and social resources (e.g., close relationship with other  
156 actors) (Bosselmann and Lund 2013; Pham et al. 2010). In contrast, articulating justice-related  
157 norms may, in turn, constitute a source of power by providing intermediaries with a  
158 justification for resource access, such as external funding and knowledge support (Lindell  
159 2009; Sikor et al. 2019). Studies of the role of intermediaries in facilitating the travel of justice-  
160 related norms are still emerging (Dawson 2018). For an improved understanding of the

161 practices of these intermediaries, this article, therefore, draws attention to the interactions  
162 between different intermediaries within project debates in the EIA process at the sub-national  
163 level.

164           Researchers and practitioners of EIA have increasingly acknowledged that a rationalist  
165 EIA model, which favors the setting up of ‘best practice’ and pays little attention to the power  
166 relations in the implementation processes, is deficient in achieving substantive outcomes of  
167 sustainability and justice (Rozema et al. 2012; Walker 2010). Literature has started to explore  
168 political and social factors affecting the effectiveness of EIA at multiple scales. For example,  
169 Connelly and Richard (2005) revealed the structural barriers to mobilizing environmental  
170 justice values in the commonly expert-driven approach of EIA, which have prioritized  
171 procedural elements of justice, rather than facilitating discussions about the costs and benefits  
172 linked to local culture, i.e., distributional justice. Williams and Dupuy (2017) found that the  
173 rationalist approach of EIA did not always match the local context of environmental decision-  
174 making, which has increased the vulnerability of the EIA procedure to corruption and results  
175 in ineffective participation. Studies related to power and political dynamics remain  
176 underexplored, and technocratic approaches that seek the ‘best practice’ of EIA still dominate  
177 scholarly attention (Cashmore and Axelsson 2013). The role and influence of various actors,  
178 especially the intermediaries, in achieving equitable outcomes from EIA remain limited. This  
179 article, which considers the perspectives and prioritization of intermediary actors around  
180 issues of justice, is thus instrumental in improving the understanding of the formation and  
181 implementation of just local governance arrangements.

### 182 **3. Methodology**

#### 183 **3.1. Case study**

184 EIA, locally referred to as AMDAL (*Analisis Mengenai Dampak Lingkungan*), was  
185 introduced into Indonesia in 1982 during Suharto’s authoritarian regime. The AMDAL  
186 system aims to make management plans to prevent, minimize, mitigate or compensate for



187 adverse impacts identified. The granting of an environmental permit (*Izin Lingkungan*)  
188 through AMDAL is a prerequisite for the operation of large-scale development projects and  
189 therefore a vital, if limited, environmental safeguard mechanism in Indonesia. Following the  
190 country's decentralization in 1999, AMDAL introduced a participatory mechanism. AMDAL  
191 legislation also requires particular attention to the communities and vulnerable groups  
192 potentially affected by any proposed land-use project, and calls for respect for local  
193 knowledge of land-use practices.

194 AMDAL is arguably the only public policy tool that requires public participation in  
195 environmental decision-making in Indonesia. Critiques of its fairness however have pointed  
196 out the procedural nature of AMDAL which serves as a mere formality instead of a meaningful  
197 participation platform to land-use decision-making (Hasan, Nahiduzzaman, and Aldosary  
198 2018; McCarthy and Zen 2010; Purnama 2003). Studies, investigative reports and news  
199 revealed that public consultations during AMDAL often involve only businesses and political  
200 ruling elites, such as village heads, religious chiefs and landowners. These actors, however, are  
201 usually assumed to represent the voices of various stakeholders (Leitmann and Dore 2005).  
202 Also, local stakeholders often have limited access to project information or a low capacity to  
203 fully engage in the decision-making. For example, local stakeholders do not often understand  
204 the purpose of AMDAL (Qipra 2005) and the implications of attending public consultation  
205 (Gore and Fischer 2014). Issues of corruption also persist as barriers to just AMDAL practice  
206 and forest governance in general in Indonesia (Muslihudin et al. 2018). These conditions  
207 therefore enable the investigation of plural ideas of EJ in this study.

208 The processes of AMDAL consist of public consultation, review of impact analysis,  
209 and environmental permit granting. The review of impact analysis in AMDAL comprises two  
210 stages: technical evaluation and impact management evaluation. This article focuses on the  
211 institutional intermediaries involved in the technical evaluation as they directly engage in the  
212 interpretation and implementation of national environmental policies.

213            Technical evaluation of AMDAL is conducted under each national, provincial, and  
214 district environmental authority. According to the Government Regulation No. 27/2012 on  
215 Environmental Permit, the intermediaries involved in the stage of technical evaluation are  
216 ecological and social experts (usually from local universities and research institutes),  
217 governmental officers who work in various agencies responsible for environmental impacts  
218 control (such as agriculture, forestry, and land-use planning), and environmental consultants  
219 whom companies hire to conduct impact analyses. These technical experts negotiate the  
220 project's compliance with laws and regulations, the scoping of the impact study, the  
221 methodology used for data collection and analysis, and the feasibility of impact management  
222 and monitoring plan. Their inputs are then considered in the second stage of impact review  
223 (see the perspectives and roles of intermediaries in impact management evaluation in Lai  
224 and Hamilton (2020)), which will result in a final decision regards environmental permit  
225 granting.

### 226   **3.2    Study methods**

227   The findings were based on fieldwork conducted in East Kalimantan province between  
228 February and July 2018. Natural resource exploitation has dominated the economy of the  
229 province, which had led to numerous development projects applying for AMDAL review each  
230 year. Simultaneously, land-use conflicts related to environmental degradation have arisen as  
231 the majority of the population still live in rural areas and are dependent on forest resources  
232 (Fünfgeld 2016).

233            A total of 38 intermediaries, i.e., technical experts of AMDAL, participated in this  
234 study. These comprised 26 governmental officers, six academics, three academics who also  
235 worked as consultants, and three consultants; who between them represented a wide range  
236 of disciplines and fields, including forestry, agriculture, hydrology, biodiversity, health, labor  
237 rights, sociology, spatial planning, and transportation. Three environmental agencies in the  
238 province provided lists and contacts of the technical experts. Due to a considerable number

239 of consultants being available, the consultant candidates were selected based on three  
240 criteria: 1) the person was handling at least one AMDAL project during the fieldwork period,  
241 2) the person was based in East Kalimantan (in consideration of research budget and time  
242 constraint), and 3) at least three other technical experts recommended the person.  
243 Conventionally, some consultants may be included in the work team of any AMDAL project  
244 as a nominal head and not involved directly in the analysis of the AMDAL projects. The  
245 environmental agency is also not usually informed if a consultant leaves the position or  
246 changes the contact. Seeking recommendations from other experts is therefore useful for  
247 ensuring that the researcher approached the interviewees who are relevant to the issues  
248 studied.

249         The intermediaries consulted were mostly senior staff in their organizations with an  
250 average age of 46 years old (between 32 and 67 years old, excluding one interviewee whose  
251 age was unknown). Thirty-five of the 38 interviewees were male. This study identified only  
252 three female government officers during sampling, and all three participated in the  
253 interviews. There was no female academic registered in the technical teams visited and no  
254 female consultants were recommended by three other technical experts. Geographical  
255 information and some information sources in Section 4.3 were anonymized to maintain  
256 confidentiality. Participants granted consent to publication based on the confidentiality of  
257 these data. The interviewees' information is in the appendix, where actual jobs are not shown,  
258 but grouped into broad categories.

259         This study included a total of 46 semi-structured interviews. Some individuals were  
260 interviewed more than once for either completing the question sets or answering follow-up  
261 questions. Some of them contributed more inputs than others, which could imply more  
262 influence on our findings. All interviewees were consulted for all questions designed in this  
263 study nevertheless. Interviews were held in either public space (e.g., a coffee shop) or private  
264 office/meeting room in the interviewees' workplace, except one in a shared workplace and  
265 two in the interviewee's house. The conversations lasted on average 1.5 hours, ranging from

266 30 minutes to 3 hours. Language use was based on the preference of the research  
267 participants; most of them communicated in a mixture of Indonesian and English, while  
268 some used either language alone throughout the conversation. The first author of this paper  
269 is fluent in both of these languages and conducted all the fieldwork and interviews for this  
270 research.

271 Interviews consisted of three sets of open-ended questions. The first set of questions  
272 explored the experience of the intermediary - as well as those of other intermediaries they  
273 knew - in participating in the AMDAL review and sought to capture their perspectives of  
274 justice as a technical expert. The intermediaries got to know the other intermediaries through  
275 sitting on the reviewing meetings together; some of them, however, were also colleagues in  
276 the same organization or had collaborated on other projects beyond the technical review of  
277 AMDAL. The second question set investigated the social and cultural contexts underlying the  
278 AMDAL policies and practices, and the barriers to the travel of norms as perceived by the  
279 intermediaries. The final set of questions explored the challenges faced by the intermediaries  
280 in negotiating their agendas and the opportunities identified, or the strategies used in  
281 overcoming those challenges.

282 Interviews were audio-recorded after explaining the research objective and obtaining  
283 informed consent. The respondents' permission for recording was reconfirmed when the  
284 conversation involved sensitive topics. Data were transcribed and analyzed through thematic  
285 coding to identify the intermediaries' perceptions and prioritization of justice-related norms  
286 under the category of justice-related issues, factors to norm travel, governance scales, and  
287 platforms of norm travel. The justice theme explored the prioritization of distributive,  
288 procedural, and recognition justice norms in environmental governance. The factors to  
289 norm travel recorded the factors facilitating or constraining the travel of norms. The  
290 governance scales captured how norms travel between the national, sub-national, and local  
291 levels. Finally, the platforms of norm travel illustrated the type of platforms (formal or  
292 informal) the intermediaries used to pursue their agendas and the actors they interacted with.

293 **4. Results**

294 **4.1. Intermediaries' perspective of justice-related norms in the AMDAL**  
295 **process**

296 This section discusses intermediaries' perception and prioritization of justice-related norms.  
297 Norms related to distributive justice and procedural justice dominated the interviews, while  
298 the intermediaries discussed little issues about the recognition of minorities' values.  
299 Distribution of the responsibility of impact management was the primary concern of the  
300 intermediaries, as demonstrated in the following quotes:

301 "Companies should fulfill their commitments on compensation, employment, and impact management  
302 [...] it is their responsibility." (Senior government manager)

303 "Some local NGOs and people are passionate about conservation but have limited abilities [...] Who  
304 should bear the cost of empowerment? Is it the company, the government, or the people?" (Former  
305 senior government manager)

306 The intermediaries consulted highlighted concerns about the disparity in recipients of  
307 the costs and benefits associated with the developments addressed by the AMDAL, including  
308 between 1) national and sub-national government; 2) companies and local communities, and  
309 3) current and future generations:

310 "Those companies take our coal, but we do not get money in return. Profit goes to the central  
311 government." (Academic and consultant)

312 "Companies leave with resource and profit. Local people stay and bear the consequences." (Government  
313 officer)

314 "AMDAL covers only the [responsibility of] impact [management] within a project period. But many  
315 impacts are irreversible and will be inherited by future generations." (Former senior government  
316 manager)

317           The discussion also related to procedural justice, focused on *how* to empower existing  
318 participants, namely the opinion leaders of local communities and NGOs, rather than  
319 questioning *who* should participate. The technical experts commonly expected AMDAL to  
320 open up political space for negotiating land-use decisions:

321           “AMDAL allows a space where companies, communities, and NGOs can negotiate. I hope local  
322 communities use this chance to understand the impacts and make sure their concerns are answered.”  
323 (Senior government manager)

324           AMDAL has also provided a legislative ground for supporting the objectives of  
325 sustainable development, as perceived by the technical experts:

326           “Which company does not pursue profit? Which community does not want a comfortable life [...] But  
327 whether a project is [environmentally] feasible, there are laws to follow.” (Former senior government  
328 manager)

329           Finally, the intermediaries considered AMDAL as a tool for empowering local  
330 communities by offering a platform for knowledge building:

331           “Public consultation should inform local communities on the project impacts [...] Not just tell them how  
332 much they will be compensated.” (Academic)

333           “People often discuss their concern about diseases in the meeting. I use this opportunity to explain to  
334 them” (Government officer)

335           While the interviewees commonly perceived that, as AMDAL technical experts, they are  
336 neutral to project interests, they were skeptical of their influence on decision-making:

337           “The technical team just gives suggestions [on the impact analysis]. The company decides whether to  
338 accept it.” (Senior government manager)

339           As a result, several intermediaries were discouraged from contributing to meaningful  
340 AMDAL debates, instead approaching it as a routine task to fulfill:

341 “I give comments based on my knowledge. However, the companies and the people might not like it [...]  
342 Just let them do whatever they want.” (Government officer)

343 A lack of influence on decisions coupled with low motivation leads to the question of  
344 whether the intermediaries have adequately safeguarded the quality of impact analysis. Some  
345 interviewees were concerned about the accountability of intermediaries:

346 “People who are involved in AMDAL should be accountable for their opinions [...] They could not just  
347 speak whatever comes to their mind.” (Government officer)

348 “We are just brokers – neither do I have influence on nor liability to decisions.” (Government officer)

349 Related to *who* participates, the intermediaries had little engagement in the discussion  
350 or promotion of recognitional justice. The interviewees were asked to talk about issues of  
351 indigenous land rights and participants’ identities (usually male, landowners, and opinion  
352 leaders) and most were satisfied with the existing arrangement of public participation:

353 “It is fair enough to involve local opinion leaders [...] More people, more chaos.” (Former senior  
354 government manager)

355 “Landowners and local opinion leaders [*tokoh-tokoh masyarakat*] are invited to public consultations.  
356 Landless people are, of course, welcomed to join, but it does not really concern their interests.”  
357 (Environmental consultant)

358 While the interviewees were not particularly concerned about gender issues in the  
359 technical team and public participation, some had voiced their opinions:

360 “No one deliberately excludes women from participating [in the technical team]. Sometimes there is no  
361 suitable candidate.” (Academic)

362 “Women usually do not attend public consultations because they need to take care of housework [...]  
363 Husbands represent the family, so it is all right.” (Academic)

364 Notably, most of the interviewees were male, and only three female technical experts  
365 were identified and interviewed in this study. All interviewees, including the three female  
366 intermediaries, reported that they did not know of any other female technical experts. Besides,  
367 the technical experts consulted were mostly senior staff based in an administrative center (e.g.,  
368 a capital city) and are not originating from rural communities that are affected by the AMDAL  
369 processes. Their seniority at work may affect their social status, social capital, and their  
370 perspectives to justice. The technical experts of AMDAL paid more attention to the issues  
371 related to distributive justice (i.e., cost and benefit) and procedural justice (influence and  
372 transparency of decision-making), rather than recognitional justice, including the participants'  
373 gender and social status, which raises the question of whether the technical teams have  
374 adequately represented various stakeholders' interests.

#### 375 **4.2. Structural factors to norms travel between governance scales**

376 Social and cultural contexts underlying environmental policies and practices, particularly  
377 those perceived by the intermediaries, can affect the formation and mobilization of justice-  
378 related norms in multi-scalar environmental governance. The prioritization of distributive and  
379 procedural justice is reflected in the intermediaries' perspectives of how a 'fair' AMDAL  
380 practice ought to be. The interviewees pointed out some emerging concerns on distributive and  
381 procedural justice raised by the stakeholders. Regarding distributive justice, the interviewees  
382 identified the changing global perceptions of social impacts and sustainable development,  
383 which AMDAL should follow.

384 "Minimizing social impacts become important [...] Foreign investors are concerned about their  
385 reputation and hesitated to invest in conflicted areas [...] The government needs to listen to this call."  
386 (Academic and consultant)

387 "Some investors want us to use international guidelines, such as RSPO [Responsible Sustainable Palm  
388 Oil] and FPIC [Free, prior, and informed consent] to conduct impact analysis. AMDAL needs to keep up  
389 to those new ideas of sustainability." (Environmental consultant)



390           Increasing calls on public participation and pressure from expanded media reach  
391 have led to more emphasis on equitable distribution of benefit and cost and decision-making  
392 procedures, as observed by the intermediaries.

393           “Local people are increasingly concerned about their rights in decision-making. Now the AMDAL  
394 authority has to deal with it carefully.” (Government officer)

395           “The government can close its eyes to project impacts when the public did not know what happened.  
396 They cannot do that anymore. As soon as there is protest, the whole country is informed by various  
397 media.” (Academic and consultant)

398           The interviewees also highlighted the political dynamic around environmental  
399 governance as some discussed the impacts of decentralization on local governance  
400 arrangement:

401           “Autonomy is good. Districts have stronger power in deciding for activities like forestry and mining. We  
402 work more efficiently.” (Former senior government manager)

403           “In the past, anyone can conduct impact analysis. Now [after decentralization], the consultants need to  
404 attend official training and get certified.” (Academic and consultant)

405           Several structural barriers have constrained the mobilization of justice-related norms  
406 within the AMDAL debates. Many intermediaries pointed out the contested principles of  
407 market-based environmental management, which hindered them from advancing  
408 sustainability goals. One interviewee, for example, discussed the rising price of coal and  
409 increasing mining activities at the time of fieldwork:

410           “International market decides supply, demand, and the price. We do not have much say on people’s  
411 decisions on their land.” (Senior government manager)

412           Some found it challenging to implement top-down policies that were constituted on the  
413 international or national level at the sub-national level due to lack of applicability to the local  
414 physical and social context:

415           “International donors do not understand the situation here. They can travel from one country to another  
416 in a few hours, while it may take us a day to move between two villages. Now, they complain about our  
417 efficiency.” (Senior government manager)

418           “Developed countries are those who can focus on environmental impacts. We [local officers] need to  
419 take care of many problems at the same time, and every single one of them is urgent.” (Government  
420 officer)

421           “This country consists of thousands of island and ethnicities [...] The central government should not  
422 apply a single set of regulation to all regions” (Government officer)

423           Patriarchal norms held by the intermediaries have also restricted the mobilization of  
424 norms related to recognitional justice:

425           “Some multinational companies wanted to involve women in public consultations [...] Those women  
426 found it stressful to speak publicly. This is disrespectful. Now I do not allow companies to force women  
427 to participate.” (Senior government manager)

428           Hierarchical bureaucracy cultures have also limited open conversation and the  
429 mobilization of justice-related norms in general. Several interviewees perceived that it could  
430 affect their organizational or personal interests if they openly object to the authority of their  
431 superiors:

432           “Better not to say ‘no’ to the [AMDAL] reviewers. I do not want to annoy them, in case it affects [the  
433 result of] the application.” (Environment consultant)

434           “I was promoted [as the senior government manager of the anonymized environmental division] from  
435 another agency. I had known nothing about the environment [...] I was not obliged to accept that offer.

436 However, if I disobeyed my superior, I might never get promoted again.” (Former senior government  
437 manager)

438 Intermediaries such as the technical experts of AMDAL were observant of the emerging  
439 norms related to environmental justice in local governance due to their close interaction with  
440 various stakeholders and policies and have provided meaningful insights to understanding  
441 existing and emerging values in the implementation of environmental policies. The political  
442 and economic objectives embedded in the international and national policy frameworks have  
443 also significantly changed the processes and outcomes of the intermediaries’ everyday  
444 practices at the sub-national level. Enabling the mobilization of justice-related norms between  
445 governance levels thus requires the understanding of the role of culture and capacity to find  
446 congruence with global sustainability objectives.

#### 447 **4.3. Platforms through which norms travel in the AMDAL process**

448 This section demonstrates some institutional, physical, and social resources and platforms,  
449 through which justice norms travel in the practice of AMDAL. As the criteria for verifying  
450 project feasibility, many intermediaries considered the spatial plans (*Rencana Tata Ruang*  
451 *Wilayah*) made by provincial, district, and in rare cases, village governments to be particularly  
452 useful and supported them in negotiating the outcomes of development projects. Ambiguous  
453 or lack of land use planning, in contrast, has caused social conflicts and increased their  
454 workload as they must mediate those conflicts:

455 “If a project does not fit the land-use plan, I can reject it immediately. It is straightforward - there is no  
456 space for negotiation.” (Government officer)

457 “The regional land-use plan is ambiguous [...] We [the technical team] are forced to make critical  
458 decisions on land-use, which is not under AMDAL’s authority.” (Senior government manager)

459 To mobilize justice-related norms effectively, the intermediaries had discussed the  
460 need for setting up institutional strategies for two-way communication between the technical

461 team and the licensing authority. Some interviewees, for instance, shared their concerns about  
462 the transparency of decisions made on license granting because they could not follow up on the  
463 process of decision-making:

464 “I do not know if the consultants understand my feedback or if they revise the analysis based on my  
465 recommendation [...] We [the technical team] do not get to see the final report. There is no follow-up.”  
466 (Academic and consultant)

467 “I send the [commission’s] decision to the licensing agency. However, I do not know if the applications  
468 are approved or rejected at their end. There is no means to monitor the process of permit issuance.”  
469 (Senior government manager)

470           The intermediaries also found it hard to promote the value of sustainability and public  
471 welfare within the existing legislative framework that has prioritized economic growth, as  
472 shown in the following quotes:

473 “Economic growth is prioritized over social welfare. AMDAL aims to reduce the impact, not to remove  
474 them. What a committee can do is limited.” (Government officer)

475 “Provincial profit comes mainly from natural resource [exploitation]. If we were too strict with these  
476 activities, the profit decreased. The budget for environmental management would also decrease. This is  
477 the dilemma.” (Senior government manager)

478           Interviews revealed that institutional resources were inadequate to support the  
479 technical experts in advancing justice and sustainability values in the AMDAL negotiations.  
480 Addressing these structural constraints thus requires attention on not only the norms included  
481 in environmental policies but also the national policies of decentralization in a broader context.

482           Turning to physical resources that have affected everyday governance arrangement and  
483 provided platforms for the travel of justice-related norms, the intermediaries identified  
484 opportunities that both enabled or restricted their pursuit of organizational and personal  
485 agendas, including those related to environmental management. Although the interviewees

486 struggled to navigate their organizational and personal goals within the growth-oriented  
487 governance setting, they recognized that an improved financial condition of local governments  
488 has also improved their working conditions. Proper physical facilities and resources are  
489 perceived as essential to support the intermediaries in negotiating and mobilizing their  
490 prioritized values in local environmental practice. Infrastructure, such as road, airport, and  
491 mobile phone coverage, have enabled information exchange and access of knowledge service  
492 beyond an administrative territory, which has been particularly useful for areas that have  
493 limited institutional, physical, or social resources:

494 “It lacks environmental experts in this area, so we need to invite technical reviewers externally [...] A  
495 good review is only made possible by fairly-built roads or airports.” (Former senior government  
496 manager)

497 “There is an online forum of AMDAL where people exchange information and experience. Anyone may  
498 ask questions about a certain location or [analysis] method or update any regional laws and regulations.”  
499 (Academic and consultant)

500 The interviewees also demonstrated that the use of remote sensing and other  
501 technologies has provided supportive tools to achieve their work goals in an improved work  
502 environment:

503 “It is more efficient to monitor forest fire by satellite – the cost is lower, and it is safer for our staff.”  
504 (Government officer)

505 “Now, we use mobile devices to conduct the survey. It improves work conditions in the field [...] You  
506 can also check if the person-in-charge fulfill their tasks” (Government officer)

507 “We should use digitalized reports in AMDAL; the data archive will work better [...] The public can  
508 access the data online.” (Former senior government manager)

509 In contrast, the intermediaries perceived that access to high-quality data, including  
510 data scale, consistency, and access, have been significant barriers to a fair evaluation of

511 AMDAL. High-quality data therefore will be required for providing concrete scientific ground  
512 to support intermediaries in project negotiation.

513 “It does not make sense to assess the impact on a village when the analysis is done at the district level.  
514 [...] We compromise because that is the only official data available.” (Government officer)

515 “If I wanted to be perfect, I would need to collect data from several agencies and crosscheck them.  
516 However, you do not know whether and when they will reply. Furthermore, no one knows which set of  
517 data is the updated one for sure.” (Environmental consultant)

518           Socially-derived resources and platforms that can affect the mobilization of norms  
519 largely concerned the social relationship and interaction between the official and unofficial  
520 actors involved in and affected by the AMDAL process. While many claimed that they did not  
521 have a personal interaction with the unofficial actors who worked beyond the institutional  
522 debates of AMDAL (i.e. military actors, police, and politicians), the interviewees generally  
523 perceived the strong influence of those actors on the outcomes of their everyday practices and  
524 involvement in AMDAL as shown in the following quotes.

525 “There was this time when I could not proceed with an [AMDAL] application because it had lacked a  
526 document from [an anonymized governmental agency], which I had followed up for three months. One  
527 day I received a call from a general, asking about the process of this application [...] The document I  
528 wanted was put on my desk the next morning.” (Anonymized technical expert)

529 “It is hard to challenge a project, especially during an election year [...] Politicians need company  
530 sponsorship, they may take the money and intervene [the license granting process].” (Academic)

531           How ‘closely’ the technical experts interact with each other has also affected the  
532 processes and outcomes of project negotiations in AMDAL. The governmental representatives  
533 were often chosen for different project reviews depending on their superiors’ arrangement.  
534 Several interviewees commented that they hesitated to engage in the discussion when they  
535 were unfamiliar with the other technical experts. In contrast, some found it harder to work  
536 with colleagues who collaborated with them in other programs:

537 “The heads of the [governmental] agencies may assign different staff to participate in different projects  
538 [...] I know who represents which agency, but I do not know if I can count on their expertise.” (Senior  
539 government manager)

540 “I wanted to speak my mind frankly, but I do not want to be harsh [...] It would be easier if I could work  
541 with the people who know my personality.” [Senior government manager]

542 “It is harder to give critical comments to a project if I know my colleague in the university conducts its  
543 analysis.” (Academic)

544           While corruption persisted as a significant concern of promoting equitable decision-  
545 making at the sub-national level, interviews revealed that issues of corruption should be  
546 considered alongside the power relationships that have encouraged or eliminated the behavior  
547 of corruption. The results presented until now show that several social and cultural factors have  
548 contributed to maintaining the status quo of the management system and associated power  
549 inequalities. Namely, patriarchal norms that have suppressed the voices of less powerful ones,  
550 including landless people, indigenous people and women, prior to decision-making;  
551 hierarchical bureaucracy norms that has encouraged individuals’ agendas on dominance and  
552 promotion for securing greater power in the organizations; complex organizational structure,  
553 clear cut assignment of functions, and lack of communication between divisions that have led  
554 to lower commitment to accountability; and finally, top-down and market-based management  
555 principles that allow little space for negotiations of norms to sub-national players.

556           People’s interactions, which are formed through these societal norms and the favoring  
557 of those high in social dominance, promote corruption by enforcing power and status  
558 inequalities in the organizational structure. For instance, two anonymized governmental  
559 intermediaries perceived that they had been relocated to other departments due to their  
560 rejection of bribery. Unequal power relationships also contribute to preserving the role of  
561 corruption by rationalizing or legitimatizing the unethical doings as ‘culturally-fit.’ Being  
562 involved in corrupted practice was not only for the monetary gain but also seen as a social norm

563 in the sense that the intermediaries perceived they might also, in turn, need to bribe if they  
564 wanted to fulfill their tasks. In contrast, they would be socially penalized when they did not  
565 accept bribery, as illustrated in the following quotes:

566 “There was pressure from the top and bottom [to receive bribery]. The colleagues teased me. You make  
567 yourself unpopular if you do not corrupt [...] My wife might blame me if she knew I had rejected the  
568 bribery.” (Anonymized technical expert)

569 “You would never get things done if you do not give money. The officers might say ‘you lack of this or  
570 that document’ or ‘the person-in-charge is not here’ [...] If you give money, half-day.” (Anonymized  
571 technical expert)

572 “We have a budget for bribery. You would know how to include this in the budget if you worked here [...]  
573 You need this to get things done.” (Anonymized technical expert)

574 Issues of corruption can be coupled with low monetary and psychological incentives of  
575 carrying on equitable practices for the intermediaries. The technical experts were often  
576 overburdened by their workloads and worked part-time to make ends meet due to a low salary:

577 “I do not feel appreciated [...] I work as a lecturer, consultant, in AMDAL, and for other commissioned  
578 works [...] I work so hard just to make ends meet.” (Academic and consultant)

579 “It is hard to nurture good technical staff in this civil servant system. Not only have you needed to  
580 master the skill, but also to learn many regulations. It is hard to compete with the private sector by  
581 lower pay and higher commitment.” (Senior government manager)

582 Interviews also revealed psychological rewards that were important for motivating the  
583 intermediaries, notably the recognition of skills and in compliance with personal goals:

584 “I am not trying to win acclaim but to make good use of my knowledge. However, it is hard when you  
585 work in the government.” (Government officer)



586 “I quit consultancy to join the technical team [...] I earned more as a consultant. But I hope my  
587 knowledge can contribute to something bigger.” (Academic)

588           The intermediaries perceived that common understandings of justice and sustainability  
589 goals were important for enabling such norms to travel vertically and horizontally. Not only  
590 should the intermediaries improve their knowledge of global environmental agendas, but also  
591 those whom the intermediaries seek to influence:

592 “There is no training in reviewing AMDAL. We review the reports as we perceived as fair [...] If the  
593 authority does not prioritize the same thing as I, the project which I rejected might be approved anyway.”  
594 (Government officer)

595 “I only know about the importance of sustainability after I got trained. However, the district/provincial  
596 heads never get trained [...] How do I persuade them to prioritize sustainability despite other agendas?”  
597 (Former senior government manager)

598           The intermediaries also provided useful insight into the potential of the private sector  
599 in advancing justice-related objectives in environmental management. Any empowerment  
600 initiatives should thus engage the private sector and identify the support needed by various  
601 private sector actors in achieving justice-related agendas. While the private sector actors were  
602 often perceived to create constraints to mobilize justice-related norms in local environmental  
603 practice, all interviewees had some experience of positive collaboration with private sector  
604 actors:

605 “I suggested some companies to include free health service, which the government cannot afford, as part  
606 of their impact management. They agreed and implemented those programs with district health agencies.  
607 Sometimes companies simply do not know what they can do.” (Government officer)

608           As the primary actor in environmental management, the private sector, especially local  
609 companies on a smaller scale, has not been fully engaged with local environmental  
610 management agendas, as perceived by the intermediaries. Identifying the barriers to executing

611 management responsibilities faced by the private sector thus may enhance the mobilization of  
612 justice-related norms:

613 “Smaller companies cannot afford a good consultancy service. They do not know how to judge the quality  
614 of the analysis, or whether their consultants did their job.” (Academic and consultant)

615 “Companies often do not understand what they had committed [...] They only realize they did not have  
616 enough budget or ability when they started to implement the management plan as they had promised.”  
617 (Academic)

618 Interviews with these intermediaries have contributed to understandings of the  
619 institutional, physical, and social resources and platforms affecting the (re)production,  
620 consolidation, and mobilization of norms, including those related to justice, in the sub-national  
621 environmental management platforms. Unequal power relationships and social status have  
622 initiated and enforced patriarchal and hierarchical norms and have promoted the role of  
623 corruption in the EIA process. Most intermediaries therefore perceived EIA as constrained  
624 forums for debating the principles of environmental policies and negotiating justice-related  
625 norms compared to international and national arenas, and actively opted out of such debates.  
626 The resources identified have focused on those platforms which facilitate the travel of norms  
627 across the actors at the sub-national level. The interviews also portrayed the intermediaries’  
628 perspectives on the influence of unofficial actors and informal relationships on their practices.  
629 Further focus on identifying who the unofficial actors are, how they are involved in the  
630 decision-making arena, and the extent to which they influence the formation and mobilization  
631 of justice-related norms in local environmental management will be useful to support  
632 intermediaries in the environmental practices.

## 633 **5. Discussion**

634 This section highlights our findings on the dynamics of justice brokerage through EIA  
635 intermediaries in Indonesia, and discusses its implications on the three key fields of inquiry,

636 i.e., environmental justice, critical institutionalism, and effectiveness of environmental impact  
637 assessment.

638         Firstly, we argue that traditional social norms underpin the ideological differences on  
639 environmental justice. Environmental justice is conceptualized as being achieved through  
640 three interlinked dimensions, which are distributive, procedural, and recognitional justice  
641 (Schlosberg 2013; Sikor 2013). Our findings revealed that these justice elements were  
642 prioritized unevenly by the intermediaries spoken to. Distributive and procedural justice-  
643 related norms were their primary concerns, while the objectives of recognitional justice were  
644 largely neglected. Power inequalities underlying the EIA process are found to promote  
645 recognitional injustice, as consistent with the works by Young (1990) and Fraser (2007; 2008).  
646 Traditional patriarchal norm persisted in the technical team also raises questions as to  
647 recognition to and equitable participation of culturally marginalized ones in the EIA practices,  
648 given inadequate attention paid by the intermediaries to unequal power relationships around  
649 gender, indigeneity, and class. Although the intermediaries did not bring up or discuss  
650 ethnicity as a factor, this paper acknowledges that ethnicity may play an underlying if minor  
651 role. While it is beyond the scope of this study to provide an in-depth perspective of the  
652 implication of ethnicity on justice brokerage, this may be an area that should be included in  
653 further research.

654         The interviewees' lack of awareness of recognitional justice has also created barrier to  
655 justice in the EIA process. Some consultants, government officers and academics interviewed  
656 positioned themselves as more 'objective' in the EIA process, emphasizing their technical and  
657 legal knowledge in evaluating project impacts in the way they deem to be 'fair.' Our findings,  
658 however, show that those intermediaries often fail to recognize and challenge the governance  
659 system that has excluded alternative voices in the first place. Such a pattern of prioritization to  
660 norms related to distributive justice was also reflected in the intermediaries' interpretation of  
661 stakeholders' interests underlying the EIA policies and practices. Namely, the market-oriented

662 principles and top-down policies imposed on local environmental practices have affected how  
663 they approached the emerging concerns of global sustainability agendas.

664         Additionally, hierarchical work cultures endorsing power and status inequality help  
665 preserve the roles of unofficial actors (i.e., military actors, police, and politicians) and  
666 corruption in the EIA process, which further constrain the production and mobilization of  
667 norms related to recognitional justice. The EIA practices at the sub-national level therefore fall  
668 short of producing justice for the communities affected, as argued by Hasan, Nahiduzzaman,  
669 and Aldosary (2018), and yet the EIA intermediaries continue to adopt these practices. It thus  
670 allows for the involvement of the intermediaries in local EIA practices into empty mechanisms,  
671 whereby both the state and other powerful actors can maintain the rhetoric of justice and  
672 portray an image of fulfilling their justice obligations. Taking into account that a technical  
673 review process is commonly one of the initial stages in defining the scope of impact  
674 management in an EIA process, institutional participation of diverse cultural groups in the  
675 technical team will be required for promoting more equitable and sustainable outcomes of local  
676 environmental decision-making.

677         Turning to our second field of inquiry, i.e., critical institutionalism, we argue that a  
678 complex organizational structure and lack of collaboration between divisions, in this case,  
679 have affected the intermediaries' prioritizations and strategies of mobilizing justice-related  
680 norms. The decision-making process of EIA in Indonesia is divided into several stages (public  
681 consultation, technical evaluation, impact management evaluation, and license granting) in  
682 the decentralized governance system. The technical experts involved in this bureaucratic  
683 process have been constrained to other stages beyond their set roles in the technical  
684 evaluation of EIA. These institutional barriers embedded in the policies have hindered the  
685 technical experts from assessing the outcomes of their efforts and discouraged these  
686 intermediaries from investing efforts in the EIA practices and processes.

687           Also partly because of their set role as a technical reviewer, the intermediaries have  
688 emphasized the use of scientific knowledge and data to enable the mobilization of their agendas,  
689 instead of local justice concerns, contrasting to other findings (see Lindell 2009; Sternlieb et  
690 al. 2013). The intermediaries in this case study had attempted to mobilize their interpretations  
691 of justice horizontally within the sub-national level among their superiors and cohorts, aligning  
692 with previous studies (see Coggan et al. 2013; Hargreaves et al. 2013). However, these  
693 intermediaries tended to accept the existing policy framework of EIA and the institutional roles  
694 assigned without seeking to influence or intervene in policy-making upwards, in contrast to  
695 the theoretical expectation of promoting bottom-up policy formation through intermediaries  
696 (see Caouette 2007; Schomers, Sattler, and Matzdorf 2015; Schröter et al. 2018; Sternlieb et al.  
697 2013).

698           In seeking collaboration to influence environmental outcomes as suggested by Schröter  
699 et al. (2018), the technical experts spoken to tended to work with other sub-national and  
700 technical actors, instead of connecting with civil society organizations and local communities  
701 as having been identified by Funder and Marani (2015). More importantly, the government  
702 officials consulted were moved from post to post and there was no culture of developing a deep  
703 professional profile in the EIA practice. Continued loss of experience by intermediaries can  
704 stem the travel of justice-related norms in local environmental practice as the same justice  
705 claims may be repeatedly encountered with no procedural learning.

706           Our findings further covered institutional, physical, and social resources and platforms  
707 that are instrumental in enabling the mobilization of justice-related norms horizontally within  
708 the sub-national level. Social relationships among various official and unofficial actors (Pham  
709 et al. 2010) is a significant consideration of the interviewees in their EIA-related decision-  
710 making. Not only may intermediaries prioritize different agendas in different social settings or  
711 forums, as others have found (Booth 2012; Hrabanski et al. 2013; Papillon and Rodon 2017),  
712 but our findings also suggest that a poor work environment and low incentives can influence  
713 the agendas they prioritize. Therefore, proper working conditions (Bosselmann and Lund,

714 2013), including workload, incentives, and safety, are critical for motivating intermediaries to  
715 engage in the environmental negotiations actively. Even though it is beyond the scope of this  
716 study, the literature in interactional justice which emphasizing the connections between the  
717 perceptions of justice and organizational behavior (see Bies 2015; Zapata, Olsen, and Martins  
718 2013) may be beneficial to further studies on the production and mobilization of justice-related  
719 norms through intermediary actors in environmental institutions.

720 Finally, we argue for the significance of justice brokerage in affecting the effectiveness  
721 of environmental impact assessment. The issue of effectiveness in achieving sustainable  
722 development has been a key concern of EIA scholars and has been reviewed by others (e.g.,  
723 Cashmore et al. 2010; Morgan 2012). Studies have started to explore the potential of EIA as a  
724 tool to promote environmental justice goals in policy implementation, for example, Cashmore  
725 and Axelsson (2013) and Connelly and Richardson (2005). While the literature on  
726 environmental intermediaries has focused mainly on those engaged in international initiatives,  
727 as have been found by others (Bosselmann and Lund, 2013; Coggan et al., 2013; Hrabanski et  
728 al., 2013), our case study presents the barriers for local justice norms to travel upwards in the  
729 existing local management tools with regards to the intermediaries' involvement.

730 The technical experts in the EIA commission were informed as to some global  
731 sustainability and justice objectives, and actively sought to mobilize these norms into local  
732 practical arrangements. Our findings demonstrated the intermediaries' constant attempts of  
733 seeking feasible solutions between the stakeholders' needs, abilities, and budgets within the  
734 local capacity of technology and facilities. Identifying the resources needed by these  
735 institutional intermediaries, therefore, may be significant to improving local environmental  
736 practices and delivering environmental justice from a cost-effectiveness perspective. This  
737 empowerment strategy can be useful especially because many countries that possess rich forest  
738 and natural resources often suffer from limited resources available for environmental  
739 management.

## 740 **6. Conclusion**

741 This article explored and exposed the justice-related norms prioritized by intermediaries;  
742 namely consultants, academics, and governmental officers, in the technical review process of  
743 EIA in Indonesia. It also examined the platforms and resources through which justice-related  
744 norms traveled, and the factors which facilitated or constrained the negotiation in the project  
745 debates of EIA at the sub-national level. Recognitional justice is the least attentive aspect of  
746 justice to the intermediaries, and our findings suggest that the EIA governance system  
747 underlying patriarchal and hierarchical structure has contributed to the low engagement of  
748 recognitional justice concerns. The intermediaries consulted nevertheless have actively sought  
749 to negotiate and mobilize distributive and procedural concerns within the sub-national level.  
750 Social relationships and working conditions are two key considerations in affecting  
751 intermediaries' willingness to communicate for justice in this case study. Governance  
752 mechanisms that comply with national environmental laws, such as EIA, have facilitated  
753 necessary resource networks to be established and developed; such access to resources is  
754 essential to support intermediaries' works. If integrating justice-related norms into the practice  
755 of local governance is the goal of global sustainable initiatives, more attention will be required  
756 to explore potentially useful national policies and platforms to influence environmental  
757 decision-making at the sub-national level.

### 758 **Appendix Interviewees' information based on self-description**

759 All participants classified into one of these categories for anonymity:

- 760 1. Senior Government Manager (including current and former Heads, secretariats, and  
761 other senior managers of Division of AMDAL, Disaster and risk management,  
762 Environmental monitoring, Forestry, Health, Labor and transmigration, and License  
763 issuance)
- 764 2. Government Officer (including officers of Division of Environmental monitoring,  
765 Health, License issuance, Plantation, Spatial planning, and Transportation)

- 766 3. Academic (including specialists in biodiversity, hydrology, and spatial planning)
- 767 4. Academic and consultant (including specialists in biodiversity and sociology)
- 768 5. Environmental Consultant (including specialists in AMDAL, land-use licensing, and
- 769 project management)

770

No.	Field of work	Age	Sex	Years of experience in EIA	Number of interviews
1.	Academic	42	M	16-20	1
2.	Academic	44	M	6-10	2
3.	Academic	50	M	16-20	1
4.	Academic	50	M	Less than 1	2
5.	Academic	51	M	11-15	1
6.	Academic	58	M	6-10	2
7.	Academic and consultant	45	M	-	2
8.	Academic and consultant	60	M	21-25	2
9.	Academic and consultant	63	M	21-25	1
10.	Environmental consultant	34	M	6-10	1
11.	Environmental consultant	51	M	16-20	3
12.	Environmental consultant	56	M	16-20	1
13.	Former senior government manager	49	F	6-10	2
14.	Former senior government manager	67	M	1-5	2
15.	Senior government manager	38	M	1-5	1
16.	Senior government manager	43	M	1-5	3
17.	Senior government manager	43	M	6-10	0
18.	Senior government manager	43	M	6-10	1



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19.	Senior government manager	46	M	11-15	1
20.	Senior government manager	47	M	16-20	1
21.	Senior government manager	49	F	16-20	1
22.	Senior government manager	50	M	6-10	2
23.	Senior government manager	51	M	Less than 1	2
24.	Senior government manager	51	M	1-5	0
25.	Senior government manager	53	M	11-15	0
26.	Senior government manager	56	M	1-5	1
27.	Government officer	32	M	1-5	0
28.	Government officer	37	M	1-5	1
29.	Government officer	40	M	6-10	1
30.	Government officer	42	M	Less than 1	0
31.	Government officer	42	M	1-5	2
32.	Government officer	42	M	11-15	1
33.	Government officer	43	M	1-5	0
34.	Government officer	43	M	1-5	0
35.	Government officer	43	M	1-5	1
36.	Government officer	46	M	6-10	2
37.	Government officer	49	F	1-5	2
38.	Government officer	-	M	Less than 1	1

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## **Author Statement**

**Jia Yen Lai:** Conceptualization; Data curation; Formal analysis; Funding acquisition; Investigation; Methodology; Project administration; Resources; Software; Validation; Visualization; Roles/Writing – original draft. **Sam Staddon:** Supervision; Validation; Writing – review & editing. **Alistair Hamilton:** Supervision; Validation; Writing – review & editing.



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