

# Conflict and Resistance in Oil Palm Corporation ; An Analysis of Corporate Relations, Labor, and The 'Ninja' Phenomenon at Aceh Tamiang

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## ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the situation of oil palm plantations in Kecamatan Seruway, Aceh Tamiang. In terms of historical trajectory, the plantations in Kecamatan Seruway have undergone various changes in land ownership, starting from the Dutch colonial era with rubber as the primary commodity, transitioning to involvement with DI/TII members, and eventually obtaining rights as Hak Guna Usaha (HGU) under the name of PT Mopoli Raya. Although some land is owned by the local community bordering the company's HGU, conflicts that arise tend to be related to labor rights perceived as commodities within the oil palm plantation. Using a descriptive qualitative research approach, the results of field research indicate that conflicts in Kecamatan Seruway are closely related to the relationship between the corporate plantation and its workers. While there have been some negotiation efforts by former members of the Oil Palm Workers Union regarding wages, production processes, and inhumane management practices, the primary conflicts appear to revolve around labor issues. However, the oil palm companies are deeply integrated into the daily life of the community, given the overlapping locations with their HGU areas. The presence of these companies has raised awareness that they should provide benefits to the community, whether through corporate social responsibility, local labor recruitment, or smallholder plantation schemes. The community recognizes the importance of playing a role in negotiations with the company, and formal village head positions are considered one means to enhance bargaining power in interactions with the company. However, the 'Ninja' phenomenon, which involves the theft of oil palm fruit within HGU areas, has emerged as a form of resistance to the perceived uneven distribution of benefits from the plantation. Overall, conflicts in Kecamatan Seruway are related to the relationship between the oil palm company and its workers, as well as the community's efforts to obtain benefits from the company's presence. The 'Ninja' phenomenon reflects resistance to the unequal distribution of benefits from the plantation.

**Keywords:** *Oil Palm Plantation, Bargaining Power, Conflict and Resistance, Unequal Distribution of Benefits, Ninja*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The oil palm plantation in Kecamatan Seruway, Aceh Tamiang, is an entity that plays a crucial role in the local

economy and community life. Its long history encompasses the Dutch colonial era, the transition of commodities from rubber to oil palm, and ultimately, the conversion of land into the Right to Cultivate (HGU) under the banner of PT Mopoli Raya. However, what

draws attention is not only the historical aspects and land transformations but also the complexity of the relationships between the plantation company, the workforce, and the broader community living alongside this oil palm plantation.

This article explores deeper into the reality of the oil palm plantation in Kecamatan Seruway, focusing on the conflicts and resistance that arise within this framework. Although the conflicts seem closely related to employment issues, with the workforce often perceived as commodities in the oil palm plantation mechanism, the intricate relationship between the plantation corporation and the local community also plays a crucial role in shaping these dynamics.

It is important to understand that the oil palm plantation is not just a business entity but also a part of the daily life of the people in Kecamatan Seruway. The presence of these companies has raised awareness among the community that they should benefit from the company's presence, especially through corporate social responsibility, local labor recruitment, and efforts to empower the local economy.

Furthermore, this article will explore the phenomenon known as "Ninja," which involves the theft of oil palm fruit within the company's HGU areas, reflecting resistance to the uneven distribution of benefits from the plantation. Through in-depth study and literature analysis, this article aims to uncover the complexity of the relationships between the plantation company, the workforce, and the community, as well as their impact on conflicts and resistance that develop amid the oil palm plantation in Kecamatan Seruway. With a deeper understanding of this topic, we can respond more holistically and provide a more comprehensive perspective in planning policies, addressing conflicts, and promoting sustainable development in regions with oil palm plantations.

Palm oil production has become a central and controversial issue in political and public debates about sustainable food and agriculture. A new conceptualization of the complexity and dynamics of the palm oil sector can revitalize the debate on sustainable palm oil and identify sustainable production pathways. It proposes an interdisciplinary framework that conceptualizes the palm oil sector as consisting of systems, flows, and networks (Hospes et al., 2017). Global palm oil sustainability research trends identified gaps and deep trends in the research landscape, highlighting an imbalance in focus on technical topics compared to key sustainability issues related to palm oil production (Hansen et al., 2015).

In South Asia, current use of palm oil as a biofuel is not climate neutral, with significant carbon-based greenhouse gas emissions associated with its production

and use. Biogenic carbon loss, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from fossil fuel use, and anaerobic conversion of palm oil mill waste contribute to emissions of approximately 2.8e19.7 kg CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent per kg palm oil in South Asia. However, using oil palm and oil palm processing waste for energy generation and establishing new plantations on non-peat-degraded soils can lead to substantial reductions in carbon-based greenhouse gas emissions associated with the life cycle of palm oil [3].

Several studies that have been carried out by researchers specifically discuss the significant impact on changes in the forest landscape and environment. Rojas-Castillo et al., (2023) specifically tested the response of macroinvertebrate abundance to different land uses, specifically between primary forests and oil palm plantations. The results of this study indicate that there are significant differences in water quality, water temperature, and macroinvertebrate composition based on land use. Azhar et al., (2023) also revealed in their research that oil palm replantation has different impacts on biodiversity depending on the scale and type of oil palm farming system. Replanting oil palm on large-scale industrial land tends to have a more detrimental impact on biodiversity than replanting on small land. Replanting small plots of land tends to create more diverse habitats and allows animal movement between disturbed areas at different times.

Research conducted by Nishina et al., (2023) also provides significant environmental challenges due to the presence of oil palm plantations in Malaysian peat swamps. The results of this study indicate that denitrification activity and N<sub>2</sub>O concentrations in water are influenced by oil palm plantations in peat swamp areas in Malaysia. N<sub>2</sub>O isotope ratio analysis also shows that denitrification processes can occur and control N<sub>2</sub>O concentrations even in highly acidic peat environments.

Abazue et al., (2015) investigated smallholder oil palm farmers and their plantation practices in Malaysia. This study focuses on the sustainability practices of oil palm farmers in Malaysia, particularly those under the management of the Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA) in the state of Terengganu. The majority of smallholder farmers (60%) strongly agree that their economic status has improved as FELDA smallholder farmers. Additionally, 50% strongly agree that there has been an increase in revenue and earnings. The FELDA scheme provides employment opportunities, with 40% strongly agreeing and 38% agreeing. Respondents' agronomic skills also improved, with 68% strongly agreeing and 20% agreeing. Financial security and stability were reported by 60% as strongly agree and 40% as agree. This study found that small farmers have a better quality of life through the provision of basic facilities. Children of small farmers are provided with quality education, and they participate in decision-making processes that affect them and their

constituencies. The FELDA scheme has a positive impact on the lives of small farmers, including financial security, job creation, and development of infrastructure such as road networks, medical facilities, and education. However, negative impacts were also noted, including loss of land rights, traditional ways of life for indigenous communities, forest and biodiversity problems, and pollution. The study also highlights the challenges of balancing palm oil expansion to meet demand and increase economic growth while protecting and preserving the environment. The expansion of oil palm plantations in Malaysia has caused loss of natural forests, loss of biodiversity, ecosystem degradation, anthropogenic climate change, and increased land conflicts. Proper management of oil palm plantations has the potential to overcome problems related to high unemployment and poverty, especially in rural areas. However, converting forest and peatlands for plantations poses a risk of greenhouse gas emissions and loss of biodiversity .

Meijaard et al., (2020) looked at the environmental impacts of palm oil in context. The results of their analysis have provided an illustration that oil palm cultivation has caused natural habitat conversion, reduced biodiversity, decreased water quality, and increased greenhouse gas emissions. The expansion of oil palm plantations has been linked to social problems such as land grabbing, labor exploitation, and decreased welfare at the village level. The overall contribution of oil palm expansion to deforestation varies, with studies reporting different levels of impact.

Cazzolla Gatti et al., (2019) highlighted the spatial overlap between areas with high tree cover loss and oil palm concessions, demonstrating the impact of palm oil production on forest loss. From 2001 to 2016, approximately 40% of the areas located in certified concessions in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Papua New Guinea experienced habitat degradation, deforestation, fire, or other tree damage. Certified concessions had more tree removals than non-certified ones. There was significant tree loss both before and after the start of the certification scheme. This challenges the idea that certified palm oil production is sustainable. Analysis shows that RSPO-certified companies, which are required to assess forests for high conservation value (HCV) and avoid high carbon stock (HCS) areas, are still contributing to severe deforestation. The net loss of tree cover in oil palm concessions from 2001 to 2016 was close to 6 million hectares, representing 34.2% of the concession area. The overall tree loss trend in the three countries corresponds to the level of loss in oil palm concessions. The study raises concerns about the effectiveness of palm oil certification, such as RSPO and POIG, in halting forest degradation and loss of biodiversity.

Another impact was also revealed by Noirot et al., (2022) who looked at the impact of the application of empty fruit bunches on soil organic carbon in industrial oil palm plantations. Empty fruit bunches (EFB) application had heterogeneous impacts on soil organic carbon (SOC) across oil palm plantations but was found to positively influence total SOC and permanganate oxidized carbon (POX-C) at both shallow and deep depths. POX-C correlated closely with SOC and showed significant increases compared with untreated controls in all EFB treatments, while total SOC only increased in some treatments with small and frequent EFB application rates. Between 12 ( $\pm 16$ ) and 56 ( $\pm 12$ ) t ha<sup>-1</sup> carbon was sequestered under the harvest strip after 21 years. Larger EFB application rates (90t) are inefficient in terms of carbon sequestration, but small, frequent rates (e.g., 30t or 60 years) best utilize the soil carbon sequestration potential of EFB applications. Analysis of commercial plots showed that commercial levels of EFB application only increased POX-C and had no effect on total SOC stocks. This study highlights the need for a shift in perspective to consider EFB recycling as a new management perspective for carbon sequestration and climate change mitigation in oil palm plantations.

Research by Astuti et al., (2022) also looked at the governance dilemma that emerged from the visualization of illegal oil palm plantations in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia. This study found that the majority of illegal palm oil plantations in Central Kalimantan are large plantations, with small independent illegal holdings of only 0.4 % . An estimated 0.85 million hectares (Mha) of palm oil is cultivated illegally in Central Kalimantan, with more than 0.6 Mha (70%) being large plantations that do not have complete permits or forest release certificates. Additionally, 0.18 Mha of illegal oil palm plantations resembling large plantations were identified in remote sensing data without supporting permits, indicating the involvement of large landowners or the extension of illegal plantations beyond concession boundaries. Smaller palm oil areas (3700 ha) in state forests are small independent plantations. This research has highlighted the governance dilemma created by visualizing illegal palm oil plantations and explored stakeholder perspectives on efforts to legalize illegality, including the new Omnibus Law. The study warns against the pro-business option favored by the Indonesian government, which aims to legalize illegal plantations and risks reassigning forests to commercial production.

Apart from environmental impacts, other researchers also focus on the sustainability of palm oil as an effort to solve challenges. Ogahara et al., (2022) have also understood the sustainability of small farmers as palm oil producers, especially in the context of land conversion on smallholder plantations in Indonesia. This study aims to analyze the benefits and challenges associated with current smallholder palm oil production and initiatives, as well as factors influencing smallholder compliance

and implementation of certification standards. Additionally, this research seeks to address the limitations of the existing literature, most of which originates from the Global North, and aims to identify the most significant issues related to sustainable palm oil and smallholder farmers through a systematic review of peer-reviewed international literature. The results of this research identified various challenges and opportunities for smallholder oil palm producers. This includes issues related to environmental and socio-economic impacts, certification readiness, and socio-economic risks of small-scale palm oil production. The study also highlights the challenges small farmers face in accessing certification, increasing crop yields, and negotiating fair prices and contracts with companies. Additionally, the research identified barriers to sustainable smallholder production, such as insecure land tenure, limited access to credit and technical support, and increasing costs and uncertainty of profitability associated with certified sustainable palm oil production. The study also emphasizes the need for better institutional frameworks to support smallholder farmers and the importance of understanding their needs and increasing their influence and benefits in global value chains. Additionally, this research highlights the potential of community forest management to reduce deforestation and the need to evaluate new approaches to sustainability, such as the Independent Smallholder Standard and the RSPO Jurisdictional Approach, to assess the effectiveness of these approaches in promoting sustainability for smallholder farmers. Overall, this study provides insight into the complexities and challenges of involving smallholders in environmentally friendly palm oil certification schemes and the potential for sustainable palm oil production.

Pye (2019) has analyzed the palm oil industry and its sustainability in Southeast Asia, especially in Malaysia and Indonesia. It examines the concept of sustainability offered by certification schemes such as the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) and argues that these schemes praise the palm oil commodity to appease consumer initiatives in the North, rather than addressing natural social relations in its production. This research highlights that certification schemes such as the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) can praise palm oil commodities and prioritize technical-managerial solutions, obscuring the need to address socio-natural relations in palm oil production. This paper argues that despite certification, social and political struggles over land rights, workers' rights, and environmental justice in Southeast Asia are politicizing the debate over palm oil and opening the possibility for alternative sustainability futures. The study shows that the palm oil industry, RSPO, and government claim to source "100% sustainable palm oil," but there is a contradiction between these claims and the wide-scale forest destruction and conversion to monoculture plantations, with prominent RSPO members involved. This research emphasizes the

role of nation states, particularly Indonesia and Malaysia, in providing cheap land and labor as key dynamics in palm oil production. The state's intimate relationship with the palm oil industry shapes the social nature of palm oil production. This paper also discusses the dynamics of capital accumulation in the palm oil industry, the financialization of global production networks, and capital concentration and regional production networks consisting of refineries, factories and plantations.

In particular, de Vos et al., (2023) also discussed the pre-certification conditions of independent oil palm farmers in Indonesia and assessed the prospects for RSPO certification. They highlight that the majority (77%) of RSPO-certified independent smallholders in Indonesia are "ex-scheme" smallholders who had clear land legality and were organized in groups prior to certification. This increases their eligibility for RSPO certification. Access to certification for independent smallholder farmers is highly dependent on external facilitators due to the initial and recurring costs of certification and the complexity of meeting RSPO standards. Smallholder organization was identified as a key challenge during the certification process, requiring time and resources to build trust, organize farmers into groups, and build organizational structures in line with RSPO standards. To improve certification for independent palm oil farmers, the study suggests involving more local actors, including local governments and certified smallholder groups, and focusing on core social and environmental issues while being flexible with legality requirements.

Ruml et al., (2022) also investigated smallholder farmers in agro-industrial production. Lessons for rural development from a comparative analysis of the oil palm sector in Ghana and Indonesia. This study found major differences in the structural conditions and policy focus of the Ghanaian and Indonesian palm oil sectors, leading to two very different outcomes. The inclusion of smallholder farmers in agro-industrial production has contributed to development opportunities in Indonesia, but the transferability of this model to the West African context is limited due to regional specificities. The specificities of the West African region, including land tenure arrangements, land scarcity, and the existence of important artisanal palm oil supply chains, need to be considered for the palm oil sector to contribute to rural development in West Africa. This study highlights the productivity gap in the palm oil sector of the two countries. In Indonesia, the productivity gap refers to the difference between smallholder farmers and large-scale plantations, while in Ghana, it refers to modest overall performance compared to international competitors. This research provides descriptive micro-evidence on the production of different types of smallholder farmers in Ghana and Indonesia, explaining the reasons behind substantial productivity gaps.

Apart from the two aspects above, several researchers also highlight the oil palm plantation business downstream. Rum et al., (2022) have looked at assessing the impact of the EU import ban on Indonesian palm oil using extended environmental multi-scale MRIO. The results of his research show that the European Union's ban on direct imports of Indonesian palm oil will result in a decline in Indonesia's GDP of -0.2 % and employment of -0.12% from the baseline. The combined import ban would have a slightly higher impact, reducing GDP by -0.26 % and employment by -0.54%. The provinces of Riau, North Sumatra, Lampung, Central Kalimantan and South Kalimantan will experience the highest impact on their domestic product, with reductions of more than -0.5%. Job losses will mainly occur outside Java (96.26 % ) and in the vegetable oil sector (75.21%). Low- and middle-skilled jobs will be more affected, accounting for 95% of total losses. The direct import ban will reduce national GHG emissions by -0.19 % and total land use by -0.48%. This also has the potential to produce carbon sequestration of 34.55 million tonnes C equivalent to 149.74 million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e through rewilding. This study shows that the implications of the European Union's import ban on Indonesian palm oil are limited, both in terms of economic and environmental impacts. These findings can be used to support the European Union's argument that the ban will not significantly affect the Indonesian economy and may not be relevant for environmental protection.

Tan et al., (2009) have seen how oil palm overcomes problems and moves towards sustainable development. This study focuses on palm oil as a potential source of renewable energy, especially biodiesel, due to rising crude oil prices. The results of this study on palm oil and biodiesel production are able to represent palm oil as a suitable candidate for biodiesel production because of its high yield and low production costs, making it economically and environmentally attractive. Palm oil costs much less than rapeseed oil, making it a more suitable and attractive source of biodiesel. This study highlights and clarifies negative issues reported in the literature surrounding palm oil production, aiming to address and correct misleading information.

From the various studies above, the research model that examines oil palm plantations and downstream has contributed its own dynamics. Several conflict issues are also present when these oil palm plantations are present, such as the legitimacy struggle surrounding palm oil, which is widely used in the food, energy and cosmetics industries (Corciolani et al., 2019) . Investment in the palm oil industry still fluctuates, causing an unstable investment climate. Social conflicts arise between local communities and the private sector regarding land use in areas designated for the palm oil industry, disrupting urban forest areas [19]. Mapping and resolution of palm oil social conflicts and mediation have also been

investigated by researchers (Abram et al., 2017; Rokhim et al., 2020) .

In Switzerland, palm oil is commonly used in many products but is associated with ecological, social and health problems. The RSPO label is intended to guide consumers towards purchasing more sustainable palm oil products. The public does not accept palm oil in various products, especially regarding the sustainability aspect of the fat. Only 9% of participants were aware of the Roundtable of Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) label, indicating low awareness of sustainable palm oil options [22].

In Cameroon, palm oil production is positively related to household income and per capita income, indicating that it can be a profitable and profitable enterprise for independent palm oil producers in Cameroon. Palm oil production has the potential to benefit non-producers if they are involved in palm oil production, demonstrating inclusivity and development potential in rural areas. Palm oil production is associated with income gains for all producers, suggesting that it can contribute to increasing smallholder incomes and improving livelihoods (Tabe-Ojong et al., 2023; Yap et al., 1989) .

Several other cases also place palm oil as renewable energy. Palm oil production and consumption chain for energy production, especially in Colombia as a producing country and the Netherlands as a country where palm oil is used as a renewable energy source. The use of biofuels, including palm oil, has become important as a renewable energy source, encouraged by national governments in developed countries such as the US and European countries to meet climate targets and improve energy security. Palm oil production has experienced significant growth, driven by buyer demand, and is considered a highly exclusive commodity due to its high productive yield and lower production costs compared to other oils [25].

The study of the dynamics of the relationship between the community and oil palm plantation corporations is not a new study. There is currently a plethora of studies examining the relationship between communities and the presence of oil palm (Ayu,2021; Zunariyah,2020; Yulian, et.al, 2017; Ardhian, et.al, 2016; Tang & Al Qahtani, 2020) and Suryadi, et.al (2020), often seeking an equitable perspective. This leads to a perception that various activities, such as the ninja phenomenon, are considered deviant. In this research, the researcher adopts a different approach, starting with fundamental assumptions about reality. The researcher positions elements and components of the social system on an equal footing to observe how intricacies unfold. Consequently, the researcher can provide a profound explanation of the roots of conflict and the emergence of the ninja phenomenon in relation to the dominance of oil palm plantations in the Seruway District.

## 2. METHOD

This research was conducted in the Seruway District, Aceh Tamiang, from August to November 2023. The approach used was a descriptive qualitative approach ((Geertz, 1973; Koentjaraningrat, 1991: 87; Faisal, 1990: 18). Data collection techniques involved participant observation and in-depth interviews with informants specifically selected using purposive sampling (Bungin, 2010; Cresswell, 2010). There were 10 informants with diverse criteria meeting the required data categories. The data analysis process was conducted in a systematic, iterative, and multi-level manner throughout the data collection process (Cresswell, 2010).

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Plantations in Aceh Tamiang are among the locations with a considerable number of land rights under the Right to Cultivate (HGU) in Aceh. In the business process of oil palm in Seruway District, the acquisition of HGU does not face opposition from the local community, considering the historical trajectory of plantation land use, starting from the Dutch colonial era with rubber as the primary commodity, transitioning to involvement with DI/TII members, and finally becoming HGU under the name PT Mopoli Raya.

Although some land is owned by the local community within the company's HGU areas, a literature review, observations, and in-depth interviews reveal no widespread escalation of conflicts between the local community and oil palm plantation corporations. Consequently, conflicts seem consistently related to labor rights, which have become commodities within the mechanism of oil palm plantations.

Based on the accounts of workers with more than 15 years of experience, they often express confusion regarding the company's reasons for relocating them from one plantation location to another without considering them as a cohesive family that requires social relationship reproduction and the fulfillment of both domestic and public needs. The transfer process they undergo is treated as a commodity that can be shifted within capital circulation elsewhere.

Thus, conflicts in Seruway District are primarily a relation between corporations and workers. Former members of the Oil Palm Workers Union in one village narrate their efforts to garner support and trust from workers as a negotiation condition with the company regarding delayed salary payments, production processes that deviate from the mechanism, and inhumane managerial relations.

However, friction does not solely occur within the workforce. Since the company's HGU locations overlap

with the community's life, the community is increasingly aware that the company's presence should bring benefits, whether through corporate social responsibility, local labor recruitment, or empowerment efforts like smallholder plantation schemes.

The company's presence raises awareness among Seruway District's residents that the oil palm plantation company should be a source of better employment opportunities. For instance, becoming a liaison between the community and the company or securing a permanent position through the General Workers Union (SKU) scheme. Some individuals strive to gain influence within the community formally, such as becoming local elites through the village head election process to enhance the bargaining position of the community residing near oil palm plantations. Therefore, some residents mention that there are individuals who run for village head positions in neighboring provinces administratively included within the HGU location of a specific company.

Awareness of the relationship between local elites and gaining the opportunity to be trusted by the company, directly proportional to the bargaining position in negotiations with the company, arises due to the unfair relations between the company and the community in general. Hence, some residents compete to obtain such legitimacy. But what about other members of the community?

This question unveils the emergence of the 'Ninja' phenomenon. The massive theft of oil palm fruit within the HGU areas of several companies in Seruway District has become widespread news among the community. Both print and online media often report on this phenomenon, with some individuals becoming repeat offenders and considered commonplace by the surrounding community.

The emergence of the ninja phenomenon in the oil palm production process can be interpreted as a resistance effort against the existence of plantations that massively generate surplus and continuous capital accumulation but are perceived not to distribute benefits to the surrounding community. Therefore, the ninja becomes one of the hidden resistance efforts against the existence of individually owned oil palm plantations.

### 3.1. Discussion

Indonesia, the plantation sector is believed to contribute significantly to the country's economic development. Cash crops such as oil palm, rubber, and tea are major export commodities, creating employment opportunities for millions of people. Despite its crucial role, the involvement of labor in this sector is often viewed as a commodity, where workers are seen more as production factors than partners in the operationalization of business processes.

Especially with the pattern of large-capital oil palm plantation companies, workers have little bargaining power over working conditions and wages. Companies can unilaterally determine working conditions and wages for employees. This is evident in several cases in Seruway and other areas in Indonesia, where production relations create an unequal position between employers and workers. Field observations reveal that workers often endure harsh working conditions, lack bargaining power over wages, long working hours, and uncertain protection and retirement compensation.

With such unequal production relations, workers can be transferred from one unit to another without considering job analysis or production needs. Some workers share bitter experiences of being moved from one section to another, sacrificing their children's education. A paradoxical situation arises, where the oil palm plantation sector, which should bring prosperity, turns workers into freely transportable production factors.

Nevertheless, becoming a laborer in an oil palm plantation is an aspiration for many youths in Seruway. Negotiation becomes a typical condition through labor recruitment, serving as the primary channel connecting the community with oil palm companies. If this negotiation is not successful, some labor unions resort to demonstrations.

For those who lack negotiation channels like most other communities, they resort to alternative means to assert their existence amid the onslaught of oil palm plantation HGU (Right to Cultivate) areas. If other sources of livelihood are not feasible, oil palm becomes a solution to meet their living needs. The phenomenon of "ninja" becomes a prevalent reality in Seruway, evident in discussions and online news searches. The ninja phenomenon is undefined by the community because formal negotiation channels are not established, and they are not fully incorporated into the benefits circle of the presence of oil palm corporations.

Beyond economic motives, the ninja phenomenon is also defined as a form of creating panic for the corporations themselves. The panic induced by ninja activities is intended to shock the company and demonstrate that there are communities not fully incorporated into the production cycle of oil palm corporations.

language.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The At present, the relationship between the community and the company can be summarized as unbalanced, making conflicts between them highly vulnerable. Some conflict events, such as the ninja phenomenon, can be categorized as manifest conflicts. This is typically how

individuals who feel marginalized act to assert their existence.

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