

The Functionalization of Forest Police In Combating Illegal Logging Based On The Principles of Swift, Simple, And Low-Cost Justice

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Abstract

This study examines the role of Forest Police in combating illegal logging in Indonesia, emphasizing the principles of swift, simple, and low-cost justice. In the context of increasing forest exploitation that threatens ecosystems, the effectiveness of law enforcement becomes crucial, especially as illegal logging activities have expanded beyond mere illegal cutting. This research employs a normative legal research method, utilizing both legislative and historical approaches. The findings indicate that the limited authority of the Forest Police to conduct independent investigations and their dependence on the regular police force hinder responses to legal violations. Therefore, reforms in the authority structure and capacity enhancement of the Forest Police are necessary to expedite case handling, improve inter-agency coordination, and ensure better protection of forest resources. This study also recommends the implementation of modern technology in forest monitoring and increasing public awareness regarding the importance of environmental protection. With these measures, it is hoped that law enforcement can become more effective and contribute to the sustainability of forest ecosystems in Indonesia.

Keywords: Forest Police, Illegal Logging, Law Enforcement

Introduction

Forests are a natural ecosystem bestowed by God Almighty upon humanity, often referred to as the lungs of the world. The existence of forests is supported by a variety of flora and fauna that inhabit them. According to Article 6 paragraph (1) of Law Number 41 of 1999 concerning Forestry, forests have three main functions, namely conservation function, protective function, and production function. At the international level, the existence of Indonesian forests is recognized as a crucial element in maintaining the balance of the global ecosystem, serving as a sink for gas emissions and harmful pollutants that contribute to global warming (Winarno Budiartomo, 2013:92). However, along with the advancement of the times, technology, and population growth, the demand for forest resources continues to increase, leading to excessive

Sustainable forest management, which previously focused solely on the production of timber and other forest products, now also aims to enhance community welfare, improve environmental quality, prevent damage, and rehabilitate environments that have been degraded due to internal and external factors (Sri Handayani et al, 2021: 5). One of the requirements to achieve good governance is the presence of transparency or openness and accountability in various activities, including social, political, and economic activities, as well as law enforcement (Herikson Paulian Siahaan et al, 2019: 138). In the criminal justice system, investigation plays a crucial role in law enforcement. This process includes a series of actions taken by investigators in accordance with legal provisions to seek and collect relevant evidence in order to identify suspects. The success of the investigation greatly depends on the skills and expertise of the investigator in gathering accurate and reliable information. In addition, transparency in the investigation process is also important to maintain public trust in the legal system. Therefore, there is a need for ongoing training for investigators to enhance their competencies, so that the investigation process can be conducted more effectively and efficiently.

In the forest ecosystem, there exists a special unit known as the Forest Police, which has the primary responsibility of ensuring the security and sustainability of the forest. They are tasked with monitoring activities within the forest, protecting flora and fauna, and preventing various illegal actions, such as deforestation and illegal logging. With the knowledge and skills they possess, the Forest Police serve as the frontline guardians in the efforts to conserve natural resources. Law enforcement is a process aimed at realizing the ideals of law that are the result of the thoughts of lawmakers, where the stage of formulating criminal law policy becomes very important as it lays the legislative policy groundwork for

subsequent steps, thus the drafting of legislation can essentially be understood as law enforcement in an abstract form (Abdul Madjid et al, 2022:3).

Finding the legal basis to address illegal logging is very difficult, so judges must refer to existing legal constructs such as the elements in the Criminal Code, namely theft and destruction, as in cases where law enforcement officials struggle to identify the mastermind behind illegal logging by tracing the distribution and processing routes of wood, so that this criminal network can be uncovered in court, ensuring that the perpetrators do not repeat their actions (Jamiliya Susantin et al, 2020:120). However, even though Forest Police play an important role in protecting and securing forests, they are often limited in the authority they possess. The main task is to ensure the security of forest conditions and to prevent illegal actions, such as illegal logging. This means that when a crime occurs, forest rangers do not have the right to conduct independent investigations. They must wait for the presence of the Indonesian National Police to carry out further investigations, which often results in delays in law enforcement and reduces the effectiveness of case handling. This dependency creates gaps in the law enforcement system, where the swift actions needed to address forest violations cannot be undertaken by forest rangers. For example, when they encounter individuals involved in illegal logging, their duties are limited to securing and apprehending the perpetrators. They then have to wait for Police to take over the investigation process, which can take a long time. This has the potential to eliminate existing evidence, making further investigations more difficult.

In addition, this situation also creates uncertainty for forest rangers, as they must wait for action from the police. In many cases, they may have gathered sufficient initial information and evidence, but cannot take further action due to existing limitations in authority. This uncertainty can diminish their morale and motivation in carrying out their duties, as they realize that their actions do not always lead to effective law enforcement. The criminal justice system fundamentally requires a functional coordination network among all law enforcement officers in the form of mutual cooperation and oversight, as during the cooperation, oversight also takes place (Ruslan Renggong et al, 2014:120).

On the other hand, the presence of the police in the investigation process does not always guarantee the speed and accuracy of law enforcement. Existing procedures are often convoluted, and it is not uncommon for cases of forest destruction to be neglected or not taken seriously. This further exacerbates the condition of the forests and provides space for criminals to operate without fear. When law enforcement against forestry violations is not carried out consistently, the threat to the sustainability of forests will only increase.

In China, law enforcement in combating illegal logging is carried out to enhance the eradication of increasing illegal logging behavior. This is primarily

manifested in the effectiveness of the police functions of public security organs in the forestry sector, as a higher level of investigation leads to a corresponding increase in the enforcement of criminal law. Thus, it is evident that forest police play a crucial role in halting or weakening illegal logging activities (Chen Ke et al, 2020: 4). Moreover, collaboration between various law enforcement agencies and local communities has proven essential in fostering awareness and preventing illegal activities. This multifaceted approach not only strengthens legal enforcement but also promotes sustainable forestry practices among the populace.

Essentially, the criminal justice system is established as a system aimed at controlling crime in society (Nursyamsudin, 2022: 28). Therefore, it is important to reform the law enforcement system in the context of forestry. One step that can be taken is to grant greater authority to forest rangers to conduct independent preliminary investigations. Thus, they can function more effectively in handling cases of violations occurring in the field. In addition, the enhancement of cooperation between forest rangers and the police needs to be improved so that information can be transferred quickly and accurately, as well as to expedite the investigation process to ensure that justice can be upheld for the sustainability of Indonesia's forest ecosystem.

Method

The research method used in this study is normative juridical, which focuses on the analysis of primary and secondary legal materials. Normative legal research aims to explore legislation, jurisprudence, contracts, and the legal values upheld in society (Peter Mahmud Marzuki, 2015:133). In this study, the primary legal materials used include relevant regulations, particularly the Law Number 18 of 2013 on the Prevention and Eradication of Forest Destruction and historical approach method. In addition, secondary legal materials are also relied upon as primary sources, consisting of the academic manuscript of Law Number 18 Of 2013 On The Prevention And Eradication Of Forest Destruction, journal articles, and related books. The collected data will be organized and categorized systematically to provide a clearer understanding. Furthermore, this research will delve into the Academic Manuscript to explore the ratio legis or the reasons behind the establishment of Law Number 18 Of 2013 On The Prevention And Eradication Of Forest Destruction, particularly regarding the limitations of investigative authority for forest police.

Normative legal research is understood as research that examines written law from various aspects such as theoretical aspects, comparisons, structure or composition, general explanations as well as explanations for each article, formalities and the binding force of a law, and the language used is legal language (Irwansyah,2021:99). Through this approach, it is hoped that a more comprehensive

understanding of the structure and authority of Forest Police in the context of law enforcement related to forest destruction crimes can be achieved, as well as the implications of these limitations on the effectiveness of law enforcement. In addition, the results of this research are expected to provide policy recommendations to strengthen the role of forest police in addressing environmental crimes.

Result And Discussion

The History of the Existence of Forest Police in Indonesia

The history of forest police in Indonesia began long before independence, when communities had traditionally secured forests. However, after the arrival of the Dutch, the term "Forest Police" began to emerge formally. In 1962, Presidential Decree No. 372 ratified the establishment of a special police force to manage and protect forests. The formation of the Special Forest Police was carried out through education and training, the first of which was held in Pati. The inauguration of the first batch of Forest Police on December 21, 1966, was designated as the Anniversary of the Forest Police (Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022:28).

The Japanese era (1942-1945) brought significant changes despite the lack of profound reorganization. However, post-independence, the forest security situation became increasingly complex, and the need for forest protection became urgent. In this context, in 1967, the Forest Police was established to address issues of timber theft and maintain the security of forest areas, with support from the police force. Over time, the Forest Police underwent various name and structural changes, including becoming "Jagawana" in 1988, before reverting to the name "Forest Police" in 1999. Law No. 41 of 1999 granted special police authority to forestry officials, further strengthening the position of the Forest Police in preserving forest sustainability.

During the reform period (1998-present), the Forest Police have faced greater challenges, including the rise of forestry crimes such as illegal logging. In response, the Quick Reaction Forest Police Unit was established following the presidential directive to accelerate the eradication of forestry crimes. Quick Reaction Forest Police Unit has a more professional structure and high mobility in addressing violations and crimes in the forestry sector. To date, the Forest Police play a crucial role in preserving Indonesia's forest wealth. Through various training programs and the development of functional positions, the Forest Police continue to strive to enhance their professionalism and effectiveness in protecting forests for the sustainability of natural resources and the welfare of the community.

Legal Basis of Forest Police Authority in Indonesia

The subsystem of the Criminal Justice System in the criminal justice system in Indonesia consists of the Police, the Prosecutor's Office, the Courts, Correctional Institutions, and Advocates. This subsystem is inseparable from the criminal justice system in Indonesia. In the context of forestry crimes, there is the Indonesian Forest Police. The definition of Forest Police is mentioned in Article 1 number 15 Law Number 18 Of 2013 On The Prevention And Eradication Of Forest Destruction, which regulates as follows:

“The Forest Police are specific officials within the scope of central and/or regional forestry agencies who, in accordance with their nature and duties, organize and/or implement forest protection efforts that are granted special authority in the field of forestry and conservation of biological natural resources and their ecosystems by the power of law, which operates under a unified command. The Forest Police are not part of the Indonesian National Police. The Forest Police operate under the auspices of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, thus their roles and functions differ from those of the police who are part of the Indonesian National Police. Nevertheless, both have significant responsibilities in law enforcement related to environmental protection and the handling of criminal acts”.

Article 102 paragraph (1) of Law Number 8 of 1981 concerning Criminal Procedure stipulates that any individual or institution that knows, receives reports, or complaints regarding an event that is reasonably suspected to be a criminal act is obliged to immediately take the necessary investigative actions.

This indicates that although the Code of Criminal Procedure states that investigators are members of the Indonesian National Police, there are also specific regulations that grant authority to Civil Servants to serve as Forest Police in the forestry sector. Thus, in carrying out police duties, the National Police do not exercise their authority exclusively. Based on legal provisions, the Special Forest Police also have the right to perform police functions and actions, although this authority is limited to violations related to forestry (Hermanus Ridolf, 2016:200).

This provision emphasizes that each party, including forest rangers and the police, has the responsibility to actively investigate, trace, and determine the existence of alleged legal violations. This creates a framework that should encourage collaboration between the two institutions in carrying out their duties. However, in practice, differences in procedures and authorities often create confusion and uncertainty in the implementation of investigations. Fragmentation and ineffectiveness can simply be measured through the crime rates that do not decrease and also through indicators that offenders commit repeat offenses. A

function and subsystem, if experiencing fragmentation from other subsystems, can lead to fragmentation that reduces the effectiveness of the system (Michael Barama, 2016:10).

The authority held by the Forest Police in conducting investigations into criminal acts in the forestry sector is detailed in Article 4 of the Minister of Forestry Regulation No. P. 75/Menhut-II/2014 concerning Forest Police. In this regulation, Forest Police is given a clear responsibility to conduct investigations, gather information, and supervise activities that have the potential to harm the forest environment. The duties and functions of Forest Police include law enforcement against violations related to forest management, such as illegal logging, timber theft, and ecosystem destruction.

Responsive law is result-oriented, focusing on objectives to be achieved beyond the law. In responsive law, the legal order is negotiated, not won through subordination. Although the Forest Police have the authority to carry out special police actions in the forestry sector, their authority remains limited within the context of law and operations. The Forest Police do not possess the full authority held by the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia. They operate under the supervision and guidance of forestry agencies, which restricts their maneuverability in carrying out law enforcement functions. The authority of the Forest Police is focused on the protection and security of forests, including the prevention of timber theft and other violations related to forest resources.

However, in conducting investigations and prosecutions, they must coordinate with other law enforcement agencies. This creates significant limitations regarding the repressive actions they can take, as the final decision often rests with the general police. Furthermore, although the Forest Police have the capability to conduct patrols and surveillance, they do not have direct access to more powerful law enforcement tools, such as firearms and investigative tools commonly used by the police. This makes them reliant on cooperation with the national police to handle more complex and dangerous cases. In fact, the criminal justice system consists of various components, including structure, substance, and culture. This structure includes elements that actively participate in the mechanism, which in this case is the law enforcement agencies themselves. The system of the arrangement of the two is not allowed to overlap between the two (M. Bakri, 2011:20).

In carrying out their duties, Forestry Police are also bound by strict regulations and procedures. They must comply with the laws governing forest protection and cannot act arbitrarily. For instance, they can only make arrests under certain conditions, such as when there is a clear violation caught in the act. This distinguishes them from general police who have broader authority in law enforcement. These limitations pose unique challenges for the Forestry Police in

performing their duties. With the increasing complexity of forestry crimes, they often feel hindered by existing regulations.

In the effort to combat illegal logging, a comprehensive approach is necessary. This approach may involve welfare and security efforts to protect the sustainability of forest resources (Rahmi Hidayati, 2006:16). Therefore, support and policy renewal are required to strengthen the role of Forest Police in maintaining forest sustainability, without neglecting existing authority limitations. Thus, the presence of Forest Police remains vital, but must be balanced with good cooperation with other agencies to achieve more effective forest protection goals.

Functionalization of the Role of Forest Police in Addressing Illegal Logging Crimes

The principle of legality (*legaliteitsbeinsel*) must be in line with the main pillar of the state of law (Ridwan H.R, 2016:101). So this principle implies that the authority of the government comes from the law. This also applies to law enforcement officials whose authority is derived from laws and regulations. Authority is defined as the ability juridically to carry out a public legal action derived from the law to conduct legal relationships. Furthermore, authority is also defined as "institutionalized power" or "institutionalized power" so that authority is a tangible form of power, which then Miriam Budiarjo takes the definition of power as the ability to influence the behavior of other actors in such a way that the behavior of the affected actor becomes the behavior desired by the actor who has power (Miriam Budiharjo, 2000:7).

The authority essentially constitutes an action that contains power, which is then utilized by its owner to influence other parties to act according to the desires within the corridor of the authority holder as the one who possesses power. Based on the theory of authority, both the Police and the Forest Police should theoretically possess attribution authority, as the authority to conduct investigations is directly granted by legislation. However, in practice, the authority held by the Forest Police is not entirely of an attribution nature as stipulated by the regulations.

The authority of the Forest Police, which is limited to forest security, causes the enforcement of illegal logging cases to be not optimal. Although they have the ability to conduct patrols and surveillance, whenever they find any indication of violation, they must report it to the general police agency for further investigation. This creates obstacles in the law enforcement process, where actions that should be taken immediately are hampered by lengthy and bureaucratic procedures. It is still necessary to understand that cooperation between the government, law enforcement, and the community is essential to ensure effective law enforcement, with a good understanding of the law, strict supervision, and

consistent enforcement to control illegal logging and protect forest sustainability (Wayah Aji Kurniawan, 2023:1850).

In reality, this situation is often exploited by forestry crime perpetrators. Illegal loggers who are aware of the limitations of the Forest Police's authority tend to operate more freely, as they know that law enforcement cannot be carried out directly by the Forest Police. As a result, preventive actions that should be taken swiftly are often overlooked, giving violators the opportunity to cover their tracks or even continue their illegal activities.

This condition indicates the need for evaluation and reform in the authority structure of the Forest Police. By granting clearer and more direct authority to the Forest Police to conduct investigations and enforcement actions, it is hoped that a faster and more effective response to forestry crimes will be achieved. This will not only enhance the effectiveness of law enforcement but also send a strong signal that violations of forestry laws will not be tolerated.

The following are the reasons for the Academic Position on Illegal Logging that places the police as the authority to conduct Investigations and Inquiries:

The authority for investigation and inquiry assigned to the police is an important step in the law enforcement system, especially in addressing cases of illegal logging. Although the Forest Police have the duty to maintain forest security, they do not have the authority to conduct investigations directly. This necessitates that they hand over the investigation process to the general police, which often results in delays in handling cases. This dependency creates uncertainty in law enforcement, where the swift action required to apprehend offenders is often hindered by complicated procedures and bureaucracy.

This limitation is further exacerbated by the lack of coordination among various law enforcement agencies, such as the police, prosecutors, and judges. In practice, there are often misinterpretations of the laws governing illegal logging cases. This results in sentences imposed on offenders that are disproportionate and not commensurate with the severity of their crimes, sending a misleading signal to other offenders that such illegal actions can be carried out without serious consequences. Consequently, violations continue to increase, and offenders feel emboldened to commit forestry crimes.

The Criminal Law Policy Regarding the Model for Combating Illegal Logging Based on the Principles of Simple, Fast, and Low-Cost Justice.

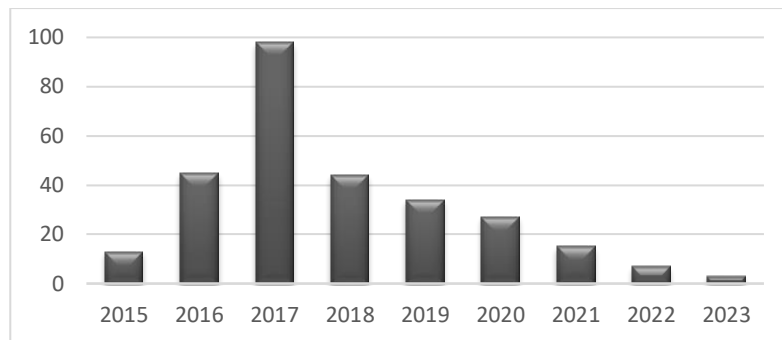


Diagram: Judgment of the Court Regarding the Illegal Logging Case
Source: Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia

The diagram above indicates a decrease in cases of illegal logging that have been handled up to the final verdict stage of the court. This suggests that law enforcement in combating illegal logging has been weakening each year from the stage before the court. In fact, the principle of simple, swift, and low-cost justice emphasizes that case handling should be conducted through prompt judicial processes. The simplicity referred to means an uncomplicated judicial process that incurs low costs. Essentially, the urgency of this principle relates to the management of defendants to ensure they are not subjected to prolonged investigations and that they receive procedural certainty along with minimal costs for the cases, while the principle of impartiality (fair trial) must be applied as a consequence of the rule of law, to nurture, protect, and deliver justice to all members of society.

The correlation with the functionalization of forest police within the principles of simple, swift, and low-cost justice is due to the straightforward nature of these principles, which emphasizes the importance of uncomplicated procedures. The principle of swiftness aims not only to expedite the process but also to ensure that case handling remains in accordance with the principles of justice. Meanwhile, the aspect of low cost seeks to minimize expenses that may serve as an obstacle for underprivileged communities (Mohammad. T. M. et al, 2010:3). According to the principle of simple, swift, and low-cost justice, it is an important and fundamental principle within the judicial system as it encompasses essential components, namely simplicity, speed, and low cost in its implementation. As stated by Sudikno Mertokusumo, simplicity refers to a process that is clear, easy to understand, and straightforward, thus the fewer and simpler formalities required in court proceedings, the better it will be. Excessive formalities that are difficult to

comprehend do not guarantee legal certainty. The term swift here refers to the progress of justice. Excessive formalities serve as obstacles to the administration of justice

The condition of the Forest Police, which only has the authority to maintain forest security without the capability to conduct investigations, poses a significant obstacle in the efforts to combat illegal logging. When the Forest Police find indications of violations, they must hand over the case to the general police, which has investigative authority. This process not only takes time but often faces complicated bureaucracy, resulting in delays in case handling. Consequently, illegal loggers feel more at ease to operate, as they know that legal actions cannot be taken immediately.

Furthermore, the slow investigation process caused by the Forest Police's dependence on the general police has the potential to eliminate important evidence that can be used in legal proceedings. Every second that passes provides an opportunity for the perpetrator to erase traces or even continue their illegal activities. In this context, the principle of swift justice becomes almost impossible to achieve. Actions that should be taken immediately are instead hindered by lengthy procedures, resulting in legal uncertainty for the community. The urgency of the principle of swift justice is related to the handling of defendants to prevent prolonged examinations and to ensure procedural certainty as well as low litigation costs, while the principle of impartiality (fair trial) needs to be applied as a consequence of the rule of law to protect, safeguard, and provide justice for all members of society (Lucky Endrawati et al, 2015: 78).

To address this issue, it is necessary to reform the authority of the Forest Police, so that they can be empowered to conduct investigations and take more decisive action against violators. By granting broader authority to the Forest Police, it is hoped that the law enforcement process will become more efficient and responsive. Swift and effective law enforcement will not only enhance public trust in law enforcement institutions but will also send a clear signal that violations of forestry laws will have serious consequences. Criminal law policy is essentially a way for a country to regulate and handle crime to create justice and order within society. Efforts to combat crime using criminal law are fundamentally an inseparable part of law enforcement efforts, thus criminal law policy is part of the law enforcement policy itself (Widiada. Gunakaya et al, 2021:122).

The criminal law policy essentially represents an effort to realize criminal legislation that aligns with the conditions and situations of the future. Here, "align" refers to the implementation of criminal law policies used to achieve the best legislative outcomes in meeting the criteria of justice and utility (John Kenedi, 2017:60). It can be observed that law enforcement itself fundamentally has the

objective of examining the issues arising in the law enforcement process, as it is in the realm of law enforcement that the meaning of the state based on law is at stake.

Then, to address the lengthy mechanism of combating illegal logging, reforms in the legal system are necessary to grant greater authority to the Forest Police, including the ability to conduct investigations. Thus, the law enforcement process can operate more effectively and responsively. The provision of greater authority to the Forest Police is expected to expedite the handling of illegal logging cases, achieve the principle of swift justice, and ultimately enhance the protection of Indonesia's forests and natural resources.

The current conditions indicate that the limited authority of Forest Police has significant implications for the effectiveness of combating illegal logging. Without the ability to conduct investigations, they are constrained in their capacity to address increasingly sophisticated and complex crimes. This creates a gap in the justice system, where legal processes become slow and unresponsive to urgent needs. To ensure success in law enforcement, clarity in the authority structure is necessary, allowing the Forest Police to operate more independently and effectively.

Reform in the authority of Forest Police will not only improve the law enforcement process but will also have a positive impact on overall forest management. By granting greater authority, including access to conduct investigations, the Forest Police can play a more active role in preventing and addressing crimes in the field, as well as preserving natural resources. This aligns with the objectives of criminal law policy that seeks to create justice, order, and security, while providing legal certainty for the community. The character of criminal case decisions is the material truth believed by the judge based on valid evidence, and therefore the minimum threshold of evidence that can be presented is regulated without a maximum limit, allowing judges to consider other evidence until that conviction is reached. In line with this, the Criminal Procedure Code aims to protect human rights, especially fundamental rights to life and freedom, as stipulated in the 1945 Constitution (Hamidi Masykur, 2014:89).

In this context, it is important to formulate a clear and comprehensive legal framework that supports the empowerment of Forest Police. With a more integrated approach, it is hoped that synergy will be created among the various existing law enforcement agencies. This reform is expected to create a system that is not only responsive to violations but also proactive in preserving forests and natural resources, thereby minimizing violations and realizing justice for the community.

The following are the ideal authorities of the forest police to expedite law enforcement in combating illegal logging:

1. Granting authority to forest police to conduct investigations into illegal logging crimes immediately after the perpetrators are apprehended. After conducting the investigation, the Forest Police shall refer the case

to the Forestry and Police Investigative Officers to jointly carry out the investigation stage.

2. Involving the Forest Police up to the trial stage to serve as witnesses to strengthen the evidence.
3. Granting the Forest Police the authority to provide input and considerations regarding the extent of forest damage caused by illegal logging.
4. Granting authority to the Forest Police to collaborate with research institutions and non-governmental organizations in conducting environmental audits. This authority will enable the Forest Police to obtain more accurate data on the environmental impact of illegal logging, as well as strengthen the legal basis for prosecution. By involving third parties with expertise in environmental analysis, the Forest Police can provide more comprehensive information regarding the damage caused, thereby supporting more effective law enforcement measures.
5. Granting authority to the Forest Police to prepare reports and policy recommendations related to sustainable forest management. With this authority, the Forest Police can play an active role in providing input to the government and other stakeholders regarding best practices in forest resource management. The report may include an analysis of trends in illegal logging, preventive measures that have been taken, as well as recommendations for more effective policies in preserving forest sustainability.

Conclusion

To enhance the effectiveness of combating illegal logging in Indonesia, a comprehensive reform in the authority and operational structure of the Forest Police is necessary. Broader authority to conduct independent investigations following the arrest of perpetrators, as well as the ability to collaborate with research institutions and non-governmental organizations, will strengthen the position of the Forest Police in addressing increasingly complex forestry crimes. Furthermore, it is important to grant them the right to provide analyses and recommendations regarding the impact of forest damage due to illegal logging, so that the results of investigations can be more comprehensive and based on accurate data.

The improvement of coordination between forest police and other law enforcement agencies, such as general police and the prosecutor's office, is also key to creating a more efficient law enforcement system. By reducing overlapping authorities and enhancing communication flows, the investigation process can be conducted more quickly and accurately, avoiding the loss of crucial evidence. This reform will not only enhance responsiveness in law enforcement but also send a strong signal to the community that violations of forestry laws will not be tolerated. With these measures, it is hoped that efforts to protect forests and natural resources in Indonesia can be more effective, ensuring legal certainty for the community, and supporting the sustainability of forest ecosystems that are vital for environmental balance and community welfare.

Recommendation

There are several recommendations that the author suggests in this study regarding the future functionalization of forest police in enforcing laws against illegal logging cases, which are as follows:

1. **Optimization of the Authority and Capacity of Forest Police:** It is recommended that the government grant broader authority to the Forest Police to conduct preliminary investigations, including evidence collection and interrogation. Furthermore, ongoing training should be organized to enhance their competence in investigative techniques and the use of modern technology.
2. **Strengthening Coordination and Transparency in Law Enforcement:** It is essential to establish an effective coordination system among Forest Police, general police, and other relevant agencies, as well as to ensure that law enforcement is carried out transparently. The community must be involved in oversight, including in reporting the results of investigations and case handling.
3. **Utilization of Technology and Enhancement of Public Awareness:** Recommendations to utilize modern technology, such as drones and satellite monitoring systems, in forest surveillance. In addition, there needs to be an effective educational campaign to raise public awareness about forest protection and the negative impacts of illegal logging, so that they can play an active role in conservation efforts.***

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