

## Adat, Authority, and Agribusiness: The Struggle for Customary Land in Salareh Aia Agam Regency

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### ABSTRACT

This article examines the intricate relationship between the expansion of oil palm plantations and the preservation of customary (adat) systems in the villages of Salareh Aia Utara and Salareh Aia Barat, Agam Regency, West Sumatra. Employing a critical ethnographic approach, the study investigates how customary land, traditionally managed by Ninik Mamak (traditional leaders), has been transferred to private companies—particularly PT AMP Plantation—through adat-based agreements and compensation mechanisms. The research highlights the emergence of internal conflicts among traditional leaders, disputes over authority and compensation, and broader tensions between indigenous communities and corporate interests. Findings reveal that the process of land transfer, while formally adhering to customary and legal procedures, often leads to contestation, fragmentation of community leadership, and persistent disputes over land rights and plasma distribution. The article highlights the intricate interplay of economic, social, and political factors that influence these dynamics, underscoring the need for companies and policymakers to acknowledge the evolving nature of customary authority and the importance of culturally sensitive engagement. Ultimately, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of how modernisation and agribusiness intersect with indigenous rights and social structures in contemporary Minangkabau society.

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### INTRODUCTION

It is estimated that since the 1980s, the expansion of oil palm plantations in Indonesia began due to high demand for palm oil in Europe (Murphy). The development of oil palm plantations took place on the islands of Sumatra and Kalimantan, covering an area of 15 million hectares. As a result, there has been significant land conversion in Indonesia (Gaveau et al., 2022; HRW, 2021). Land conversion occurs in rural communities through a mechanism whereby land is handed over to the local government, which then grants land use rights to palm oil companies. Land that was originally controlled by indigenous communities is transferred to the palm oil industry. One example is in the province of West Sumatra, where palm oil plantations cover an area of approximately 253,898 hectares (BPS, 2024b), which are concentrated in several districts, one of which is Agam District.

The development of oil palm plantations in Agam Regency is located in the western part of the region, close to the sea. This is because part of the region consists of long hills and mountains. Therefore, oil palm plantations are developed in flat areas. Agam Regency is the fourth largest producer of palm oil in West Sumatra Province, with a total plantation area of 19,874 hectares (BPS, 2024a). The expansion of oil palm plantations in Agam Regency began in the 1990s, utilising community customary land in several sub-districts.

The management of oil palm plantations consists of private, community and government ownership. However, nearly 80% of the oil palm plantations in Agam Regency are managed by private companies such as PT KAMU, PT Mutiara Agam, PT AMP Plantation, PT BSS, and PT PPR. Meanwhile, very few communities utilise their land for oil palm

plantations. Most of them manage plasma plantations through the KUD (Village Unit Cooperative) mechanism, which involves transferring land to companies.

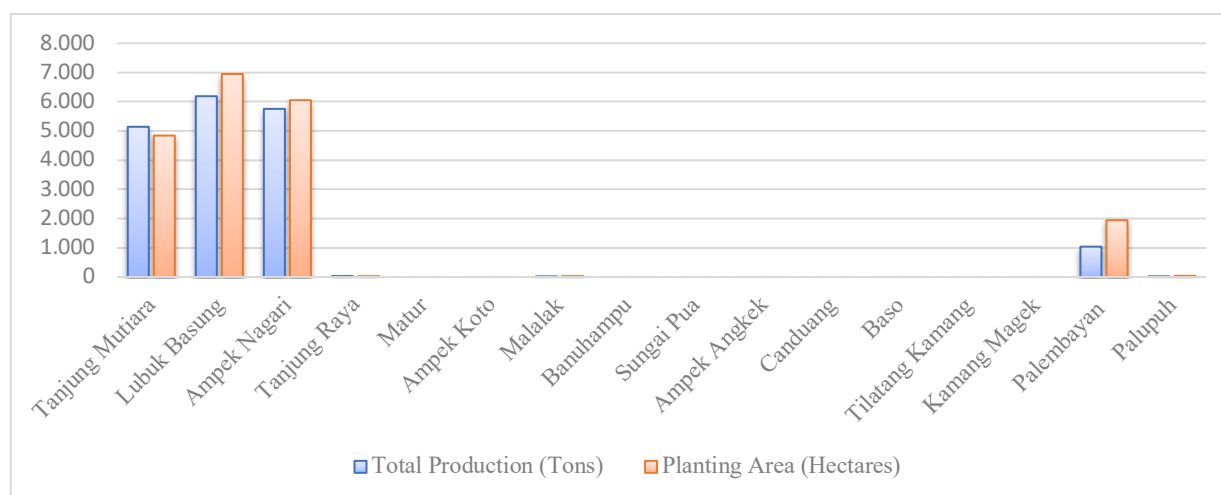


Chart 1: Palm Oil Production Volume and Planting Area by Subdistrict.  
Biro Pusat Statistik (Central Bureau of Statistics) [source]

From the image above, it can be seen that only four subdistricts have oil palm plantations in Agam Regency. Most of the oil palm plantations are managed by companies, one of which is PT AMP Plantation, which operates in Tanjung Mutiara District, Ampek Nagari District, Palembayan District, and Lubuk Basung District. PT AMP Plantation acquired land through transfers from Ninik Mamak (traditional leaders) to the Agam Regency government (see Table 1).

One of PT AMP Plantation's plantation locations is in Nagari Salareh Aia Utara and Salareh Aia Barat, Palembayan District. The land was transferred by Ninik Mamak in 1993 and is located in Tompek and Tapian Kandih.

No	Description	Year	Area (hectare)	Names of Traditional Leaders who signed
1	Surat Penyerahan Tanah Ulayat Ninik Mamak Tompek Desa Tapian Kandis Kenagariaan Selaras Air Kec. Palembayan Kab. Agam Untuk Keperluan Perkebunan Kelapa Sawit Yang Akan dilaksanakan oleh PT AMP	Tapian Kandis, 7 April 1993	2.000	1. Marjohan Dt. Bandaro Radjo (Pucuk Adat Tompek) 2. Juri Dt. Bandaro (Rajo Nan Balimo Tapian Kandih) 3. Damir Dt. Maradjo (Ninik Mamak Tompek)
2	Surat Penyerahan Tanah Ulayat Ninik Mamak Tapian Kandis Desa Tapian Kandis Kenagariaan Selaras Air Kec. Palembayan Kab. Agam Untuk Keperluan Perkebunan Kelapa Sawit Yang Akan dilaksanakan oleh PT AMP	Tapian Kandis, 7 April 1993	600	1. Juri Dt. Bandaro (Rajo Nan Balimo Tapian Kandih) 2. Meumar Dt. Kayo (Rajo Nan Balimo Tapian Kandis) 3. Sidik Dt. Jelo Anso (Ninik Mamak Tapian Kandis) 4. Husin Dt. Tan Palawan (Ninik Mamak Tapian Kandis)

Table 1: Land Transfer Letter  
KAN Office, 2025 [source]

The transfer of land by Ninik Mamak to the Agam Regency local government and its conversion into an HGU by PT AMP Plantation is customary land controlled by the indigenous community. Ninik Mamak, as the ruler and manager of customary land, is responsible for the transfer of this land for oil palm plantations. The transfer of land is based on customary regulations in accordance with the rules applicable in the Nagari or adat salingka nagari. The transfer mechanism is based on *adat diisi limbago dituang* (customary terms and conditions) and *silih jahiah/tali asih* (customary compensation money) (Rahmadhani, 2024; Ramadhan et al., 2023).

The land transfer took place during the New Order era, which was strongly influenced by political and socio-economic interests. As a result, there are currently many internal conflicts within the Ninik Mamak community regarding the

transfer. Some Ninik Mamak were not involved in the transfer process, and the agreements made in the transfer letter were not fulfilled by the company. As an example, the conflict among the Tanjung tribe in Manggopoh has been ongoing for three decades between Ninik Mamak and Ninik Mamak, Ninik Mamak and the company, as well as the Manggopoh community, due to the management of the oil palm plantation plasma by PT AMP Plantation and PT Mutiara Agam (Sandi, 2018). Similarly, in Tiku Limo Jorong, conflict arose between Ninik Mamak, who had different understandings of the customary land rights that had been handed over to PT AMP Plantation (Indrizal, Ermayanti, et al., 2025; Syatri et al., 2019).

The construction of the Manggopoh-Simpang Empat highway in 1982 opened the eyes of investors to invest their capital. PT AMP established plantations in several Nagari in Agam and West Pasaman Regencies. This process began in the early 1980s, relying on land transfers from traditional community leaders (Ninik Mamak) and/or the Customary Council (KAN) as well as local governments (Agam and Pasaman Barat). In this context, the system of land transfers from communities to the government or to companies follows the customary practices of each Nagari (village).

After the local community transferred their land to PT AMP Plantation through a mechanism deemed compliant with customary laws and applicable regulations, conflicts still arose. Ninik Mamak were provoked into internal conflicts over who had the most authority in land transfers, and some Ninik Mamak exploited customary laws for economic or political gain. Similarly, the community has been embroiled in conflicts over plasma land management and maintaining the status quo as the sole owners of the land. In addition, the community has experienced conflicts among themselves, with Ninik Mamak claiming to have the most authority over the control of plasma yields and the right to personal gains.

Conflicts occur not only internally, but also externally with companies. In the case of conflicts with companies, the situation can be even more complex, involving community groups, Ninik Mamak clans/tribes, Kerapatan Adat Nagari (KAN), Raja/Tuanku and companies due to differing interests or a lack of transparency in the distribution of plasma and so on. The basic structure of the conflict is that customary land is viewed as an object by agents who build power relations, particularly Ninik Mamak, as traditional leaders who play an important role in making decisions and enforcing customary rules (Aprianto, 2021). Thus, in the transfer of customary land, there emerged the perception of adat being *adat diisi limbago dituang*, *siliah jariah* and *bapak angkat-anak angkat*. Ninik Mamak, as agents capable of interpreting these concepts, play on the social structure to gain personal and economic benefits. This has led to the formation of an exclusive hierarchy of Ninik Mamak, some of whom are most authoritative and others less so, in the transfer of customary land. As a result, conflicts arise between those involved and the strengthening of interest groups.

According to Indrizal et al (2025), the pattern of transferring customary land to the government to be used as HGU by companies uses the customary system adopted by each Nagari, such as the adat diisi lumbago dituang. The concept of adat diisi lumbago dituang is the authority of the customary land owners, namely the Ninik Mamak (customary leaders) (Aprianto, 2021). Therefore, the legitimate Ninik Mamak will sign a letter of transfer to the local government. In addition, the company must fulfil its obligations in the form of compensation through a system of tali asih or siliah jariah (Rahmadhani, 2024). This allows for negotiation of the compensation value and agreement on plasma distribution between Ninik Mamak and the company.

On the other hand, Kasmanedi (2022) also emphasises that the process of transferring customary land from the community to the local government and companies has been carried out in accordance with applicable legal procedures that respect the rights of local communities and traditional rights. However, in practice, this has led to many conflicts between local communities and palm oil companies as a result of the transfer of land.

This occurs due to a lack of legal awareness and harmony between Ninik Mamak and their grandchildren (tribal members), making them easily influenced by local governments and companies (Herdiansyah et al., 2020). On the other hand, the problems that arose were also caused by the company itself, which was uncooperative and inconsistent (against the law) in its agreement with Ninik Mamak. The company's unlawful actions caused losses to the subjective rights of the customary law community, and the resolution was pursued through legal channels and customary law (customary rules) (Fitri et al., 2023). However, legal resolutions often disadvantage communities that lack resources (material

strength and knowledge) and adequate assistance (Wangi & Naldi, 2024). Therefore, even though the court has decided on the outcome of the case, in some cases, the conflict will continue. This is because the conflict is quite complex, both in terms of plasma distribution and demands for clarification of the boundaries of the area used by the company. As a result, members of the Ninik Mamak tribe will seek clarification from the company, but this will only lead to further conflict (Indrizal, Ermayanti, et al., 2025).

In structuralist theory, the relational structure created between agents (the government, companies, Ninik Mamak, KAN, and tribal and indigenous community members) and the customary system (cognitive structures and rules) played by the elites is as if they are 'dancing without music.' Ultimately, this enjoyment is felt only by the elites themselves, without touching the community (grassroots). The community should not only observe the movements but also be able to hear the beautiful melody and join in the dance, even if not on the same stage.

However, there are elements of elite agents who dance while playing music, namely companies or individuals from the Ninik Mamak who are dominant and have strong interests. The complexity of interests and discourse is played out by both the Ninik Mamak and companies, even though they are in a vortex of conflict and are both resistant and discursive. This is very necessary because companies have greater economic and political power than the Ninik Mamak. Meanwhile, companies are also dependent on Ninik Mamak as representatives of the customary law authority over communal land. Thus, Ninik Mamak relates to companies in the form of a conflict of interest wrapped in the goal of obtaining profit. The relationship between agents, referred to as factions, both carry out covert missions. The covert mission is for companies to dominate the decision-making process related to the use of communal land. Ninik Mamak resists based on customary law, often reinterpreting customs such as *adat diisi limbago dituang*, *siliah jariah/tali asih*, and adopted children-adoptive fathers as strategies or ways to defend their rights to customary land. Thus, they negotiate an agreement over the fate of customary land. Ultimately, they are entangled in the vortex of conflict.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to re-examine the customary system in the transfer of customary land in North Salareh Aia and West Salareh Aia, as well as the structure of the community that has authority over the transfer of customary land. In addition, this paper explains the customary system used in community life and the social conflicts resulting from customary understandings related to the transfer of land to PT AMP Plantation.

This paper contributes to the case of high-level conflicts between palm oil plantations and communities. It illustrates that the frequent conflicts are not entirely the fault of companies perceived as seizing community land, but rather involve internal community factors exploited by traditional leaders for personal gain. This leads to internal conflicts among Ninik Mamak and the division of the community.

## METHODS

This paper is based on the existence of PT AMP Plantation in Agam Regency, West Sumatra. PT AMP Plantation obtained HGU (right to cultivate) in Salareh Aia Utara and Salareh Aia Barat. The land was handed over in 1993 by Ninik Mamak (traditional leaders) in their respective customary areas. The process of land transfer by the Ninik Mamak through the traditional concept of *adat diisi limbago dituang* and compensation with the concept of *siliah jariah/tali asih*.

The research approach uses ethnographic methods. The essence of ethnography seeks to show the meanings of the actions that happen to the people we want to understand (Nader, 2011). The aim is to understand the way of life from the point of view of the indigenous people concerning their vision of the world (the society under study) (Johnson, 2023). Therefore, this approach emphasises field research and direct interaction with the community being studied. The research strategy used is a case study, as it relates to answering the problem formulation with how and why questions. The choice of case study strategy is made to be able to examine something in depth in a context.

Data collection in qualitative research focuses on the actual type of data and the collection process (Strudwick, 2021). Data collection includes seeking permission, implementing a good qualitative sampling strategy (selecting informants

who are truly well informed and credible), developing ways to record information (digital, paper), to anticipating ethical issues that may arise. But what researchers often do in collecting data from field research is observation and interviews (Creswell, 2015). In this study, researchers collected documents because they were related to the results of collective decisions and secondary data.

In research, the need to determine who will be used as informants (participants) can be individuals or groups in a community (Franco & Yang, 2021). The determination of informants is very important in field research, the reason is that the level of generalisation (or not) is partly derived from the sampling technique (informants), as well as related to the validity of the findings. If the people spoken to know little about the research topic, the data that will be generated will not be informative. If the research topic is complex and involves many stakeholders and only collects data from one group of stakeholders, the findings and conclusions in the research will be limited (Heritage, 2023). Sampling in qualitative research includes purposeful sampling, and the focus in qualitative research is a relatively small sample, sometimes a single case, selected purposefully.

The community who became informants consisted of Ninik Mamak (5 people), Wali Nagari (1 person), the Chairman, and the Members of KAN (Kerapatan Adat Nagari) (2 people), Community Leaders (2 people), and the company PT AMP Plantation (1 person).

Data analysis using reflective emancipation with several steps (Madison, 2020). *Data coding*, identifying and coding themes and patterns in data related to power between communities, traditional elites, and companies. *Narrative analysis*, analysing narratives and stories that emerge in the data to understand how individuals and groups experience and interpret their experiences and knowledge of their culture. *Discourse analysis*, analysing how discourse is used to maintain power and knowledge between companies and communities. *Self-reflection*, conducting self-reflection on the researcher's position and role in the data analysis process and its influence on the analysis results. Thus, in this data analysis, the researcher considers contextual aspects (social, cultural, and political contexts), the researcher's position (role and position), and ethical considerations (data confidentiality and anonymity).

In three stages of data analysis, researchers classified data based on context according to interview and observation results, namely, data related to customary regulations interpreted by customary leaders (Ninik Mamak) and the customary land ownership system. In addition, the researchers also collected information on the history and process of land transfers. This was combined with data obtained from transfer documents, HGU letters, and previous studies. This data classification will be gradually organised and interpreted concerning one another. Similar perspectives from informants in the same context will be summarised in concrete statements, while different perspectives will be used for comparison and explained in detail. Furthermore, commonalities will be identified, including the reasons and motives behind the occupation, as well as customary regulations understood by customary leaders regarding land ownership and its transfer.

Ethically, researchers obtained permission from the village head (Nagari) and KAN (Kerapatan Adat Nagari). Researchers ensured that meetings, interviews, or observations were conducted with the consent of informants and that confidentiality and data integrity were maintained. All interviews with informants were recorded with the consent of all informants.

Given the sensitive nature of traditional knowledge and the history of conflict, we established protocols to protect the intellectual property rights of indigenous peoples. Informants retain the right to withdraw information that is considered culturally restricted. All interviews were conducted with cultural sensitivity, respecting local customs and traditional protocols surrounding knowledge sharing. The names of informants are anonymised in interview quotations. Data storage followed strict confidentiality measures, with access limited to the research team. Research findings were verified through a literature review process, allowing researchers to review and verify the contributions of this paper before finalisation.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Customary Dilemma: Customary Systems and Social Structures

The customary system of Nagari Salareh Aia Utara and Barat refers to the Koto Piliang system. This system emphasises an aristocratic and hierarchical social structure, with decision-making tending to be centralised among traditional leaders. Nagari Salareh Aia Utara and Salareh Aia Barat use a customary system called Penghulu Nan Balimo Rajo Tapian Kandih. This system divides the positions of traditional leaders (Datuk) in each region. The Datuk in each region has responsibility and authority over communal land. However, one Datuk has authority over communal land throughout North and West Salareh Aia, known as Rajo Tapian Kandih.

No	Name	Customary Title	Customary Area	Clan	Village	Description
1	J.P	Dt. Bandaro	Tapian Kandih (Koto Gadang, Tompek, Timadang)	Tanjung	Salareh Aia Barat	Rajo Tapian Kandih/ Pucuk Adat Tapian Kandih
2	M	Dt. Kayo	Sungai Taleh, Tapian Kandih	Caniago	Salareh Aia Barat	Pucuk Adat Tapian Kandih
3	S	Dt. Majo Lelo	Kampung Dalam, Koto Gadang	Sikumbang	Salareh Aia Utara	Pucuk Adat Koto Gadang
4	J.S	Dt. Garang	Kampung Caniago, Koto Gadang	Caniago	Salareh Aia Utara	Pucuk Adat Koto Gadang
5	A.N	Dt. Bando Rajo	Tompek	Caniago	Salareh Aia Barat	Pucuk Adat Tompek

Table 2: Customary structure of Penghulu Nan Balimo Rajo Tapian Kandih  
Interview with Mr R Dt. Jelo Anso, 2025 [source]

From table 2, the five Ninik Mamak are authorised over customary land in the three customary areas (Tapian Kandih, Koto Gadang and Tompek). Ninik Mamak consists of Pucuk Adat, who is the ruler of the customary area and customary regulator. The leader of Penghulu Nan Balimo Rajo Tapian Kandih is Mr JP Dt. Bandaro.

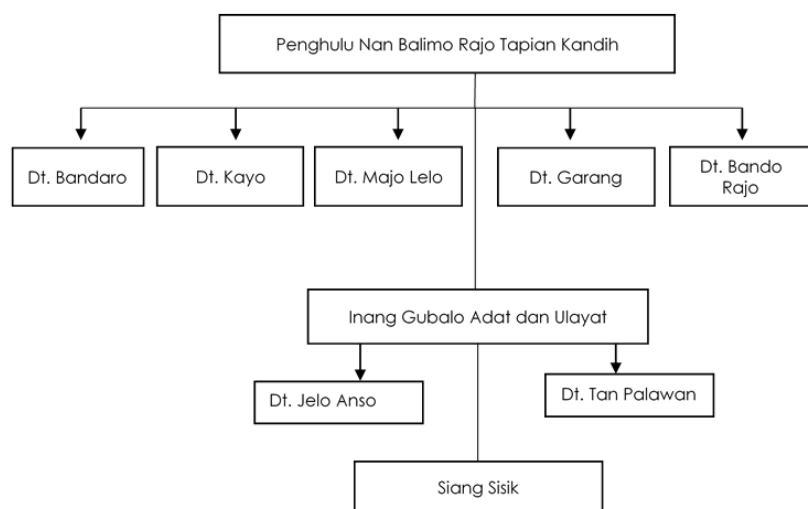


Chart 2: Social Structure of Traditional Leaders in Salareh Aia Utara and Salareh Aia Barat  
Identification, 2025 [source]

In the existing customary structure in Penghulu Nan Balimo Rajo Tapian Kandih, there is conflict and dualism of customary title holders:

- Dt. Bandaro: To date, there has been a dispute between Ninik Mamak, who holds the title of Dt. Bandaro. Mr JP, who currently holds the title, is not recognised by the Ninik Mamak of Tapian Kandih, Tompek and Koto Gadang because he is considered ineligible for appointment as the heir to the title. At the time of his appointment, many Ninik Mamak did not accept the legality of his appointment. Therefore, both Nagari (both West and North Salareh

Aia) did not use/recognise Joni Pranata as the top of adat/Dt. Bandaro. According to Dt. Jelo Anso, this matter will be discussed traditionally within the body of Penghulu Nan Balimo Rajo Tapian Kandih, and if it does not find a bright spot, it will be resolved through court channels.

- b. Dt. Majo Lelo: There are currently two people recognised as holding the title of Dt. Majo Lelo (Mr A and Mr S). Both men are equally recognised by the community, and so, it has not yet been decided which of these two men will be considered the customary title holder of Dt. Majo Lelo. However, Mr A is not a full successor to the title of Dr Majo Lelo because he does not have a clear lineage (*ranji*) and only forces himself to hold the title. Thus, Syafrial is considered the legitimate title holder and is said to be the customary title of pulang ka tampuaknyo (returning to the origin).
- c. Dt. Bando Rajo: the current holder of the title, Dt. Bando Rajo is Mr A.N. He has been determined by a court decision to be the legal holder of the customary title Dt. Bando Rajo.
- d. Dt Bandaro Kayo (Mr I.T.) is a newly created title that Dt Bandaro and Dt Kayo endorsed. However, Ninik Mamak Tapian Kandih did not agree, because he did not know the origin of the title or who his predecessor was who used the title. He also could not explain the customary *ranji* related to the title, did not have customary land and did not have *pandam pakuburan*, *bingkah tanah*, and did not get approval from all Ninik Mamak. Thus, according to Mr R Dt. Jelo Anso and Mr I.Dt Tan Palawan, there was an element of group interest to create a new Datuk title, and there was an 'under-the-table payment' to Pucuk Adat Tapian Kandih. Mr I.T. is an active police officer and wants to obtain plasma rights and authority over customary land.

For other Ninik Mamak, there is no dispute or dualism of recognition for customary title holders. Until now, the conflict is not so big, but waiting for the resolution of the Ninik Mamak Penghulu Nan Balimo Rajo Tapian Kandih in resolving the dispute over the holder (inheritance *sako*) of the customary title.

### **Custom vs. Progress: The History of Land Surrender for Palm Oil Plantations**

The customary land tenure system in Nagari Salareh Aia Utara and Salareh Aia Utara is *babingkah tanah*. Babingkah Tanah is the control of land by Penghulu Nan Balimo Rajo Tapian Kandih as the Head of Adat. Thus, Dt Bandaro and Dt Kayo handed over land in Tapian Kanding (West Salareh Aia), and Dt Bando Rajo and Dt Bandaro handed over land in Tompek (North Salareh Aia). The land surrendered was 1,800 hectares, with compensation (*tali asih*) given to the Ninik Mamak who surrendered the land.

In the 1993s, the development of oil palm plantations reached Nagari Salareh Aia (North and West) as the prima donna of the local economy. The availability of land in the form of community forests, or better known as customary land by the community, has provided interest for companies to build the plantation industry in Nagari Salareh Aia. This opportunity was first exploited by PT AMP Plantation to open an oil palm plantation in Nagari Salareh Aia, centred on Tapian Kandih.

This situation can be seen from the arrival of PT AMP Plantation representatives in the 1990s, who attempted to negotiate deliberately with Ninik Mamak in Nagari Salareh Aia to request permission to use customary land, which would be designated as a factory area and oil palm plantations. Although customary land in Nagari Salareh Aia cannot be traded, and the right to use and manage it is only allowed for the people in the Nagari, for the sake of the development of the Nagari, Ninik Mamak's consideration of the use of customary land by PT AMP Plantation, which covers the Tapian Kandih, Padang Koto Gadang and Tompek areas. By custom, the area is under the authority of Langgam Rajo / Penghulu Nan Balimo. In accordance with the statement of Mr DT. Majo Lelo (72 years old) as Pucuak Adat Langgam Nan Balimo as follows:

“In the 1990s, the Wilmar Group (PT AMP Plantation) came here to ask our permission (Ninik Mamak) to build a factory and oil palm plantation on our customary land. By custom here, customary land cannot be traded, but at that time, we from the Ninik Mamak had deliberated, after we weighed, if there was a factory here, it would be able to make our Nagari more developed, so at that time, we permitted the company to use customary land in Tapian Kandih, Padang Koto Gadang and Tompek.

Before the opening of the oil palm plantation land owned by PT AMP Plantation, in Nagari Salareh Aia, there was no type of livelihood as an oil palm plantation farmer, so the development carried out by PT AMP Plantation in 1992 can be said to be the initial history of the emergence of oil palm plantations in Nagari Salareh Aia. People who are starting to be interested in producing oil palm then try to imitate the way of working and managing oil palm plantations in the PT AMP Plantation plantation.

Initially, there was only oil palm plantation land owned by PT AMP Plantation in Nagari Salareh Aia, but slowly, local farmer households also opened oil palm plantations. The area of plantation land in Nagari Salareh Aia currently reaches 35,273 ha, and the most extensive land allocation is in Jorong Tompek with a land area of 9,254 ha. Mr IME (38 years old) said that most of the plantation land in Nagari Salareh Aia is dominated by oil palm plantations as well as plantations in Jorong Tompek, and the average population now has a livelihood as oil palm farmers.

## Discussion

The land transfer mechanism carried out by Ninik Mamak in Salareh Aia Barat and Utara is a mechanism carried out through customary and political interests.

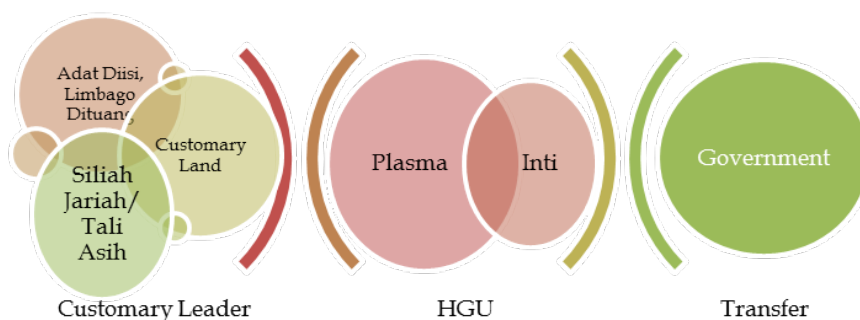


Chart 2: Pattern of Conveyance of Customary Land for Oil Palm Plantation  
(Indrizal et al., 2024) [source]

From the picture above, the concept of authority in the handover of customary land for each Nagari, but in general, the scheme refers to the picture. The customary land to be handed over by Ninik Mamak through the concept of *silih jahiah* and *adat diisi limbago dituang* contains an agreement that the company will manage 70% of the land handed over, and 30% will be managed by Ninik Mamak. After this agreement is approved, the land will be handed over to the local government, which will then be used as HGU by the company.

In the social and cultural system of the community, there are layers of society that play an important role, namely, Ninik Mamak, which is quite a lot. So that there are often mutual claims to customary titles (*datuk*). On that basis, in the traditional structure of Koto Piliang and the matrilineal system, it is common because the concept of inheriting titles (*sako*) and property (*pusako*) is not fully in accordance with the matriarchal system (mother's power). Due to the development of grandchildren, some people feel that they deserve to be able to become/hold the status of customary titles. Therefore, companies must understand that the inheritance of the customary 'special Datuk' sako is closely related to genealogical ties and kinship genealogy. Its inauguration was also marked by sacred traditional ceremonies and processions, as well as showing its recognition and legitimacy by members of the community and the entire Nagari population.

Internal conflicts that occur at the stakeholder level (Ninik Mamak) can be seen as a dynamic that inevitably occurs due to political-economic interests. In some Nagari, there is dualism in customary leadership, with multiple customary leaders. Not only elite conflicts, but some reach the level of grandchildren, because there are differences in the recognition of members of one tribe and another. In fact, the development of capitalism, marked by increased commercialisation and monetisation, as well as political change, has had an impact on rural areas. This is actually not a new phenomenon, but has occurred since the Dutch colonial rule in the past, even until the current post-reform era. Elite conflicts between interested Ninik Mamak will claim each other's customary titles or claim who has the most rights to the customary land under their control. Thus, the company's position does not need to be present as an arbiter, because



it has its own mechanisms and natural selection on that matter. Juridically, title holder disputes are often resolved through legal channels, a sign that customary resolution mechanisms are weakening.

## CONCLUSION

The expansion of oil palm plantations in Salareh Aia Utara and Salareh Aia Barat has disrupted traditional land tenure and leadership, leading to persistent internal conflicts among customary leaders and the community. Although land transfers followed adat and legal procedures, disputes over authority and compensation have fragmented community cohesion. The study highlights the need for companies and policymakers to engage with indigenous communities in culturally sensitive ways, ensuring that economic development does not undermine customary rights and social harmony.

Community conditions and dynamics are intense, and internal conflicts vary from one nagari to another. Thus, we suggest that the company needs to determine its own attitude and assertiveness by sticking to factual data that is understood within the framework of Minangkabau customary rules in each nagari, as well as state and regional policies/legislation. Meanwhile, the company also needs to pay close attention to external dynamics in relation to supranational powers (regional and national). In the more recent external dynamics at the end of this research, the PT AMP Plantation legal process is also ongoing, which has received widespread attention in the country. Sociologically-anthropologically, its dynamics should also be expected to be covered by non-legal factors (economic, social, and political) in the company's relationship with the authorities, and therefore should not be ignored. This research itself focuses on approaching the internal conditions and dynamics of customary law communities; of course, it has limitations and does not pretend to analyse the conditions and dynamics of the external relations of the supranational in question.

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