



Collaborative Governance in Palm Oil Permit Enforcement: Anti-Corruption Supervision, Indigenous Rights, and Sustainable Development in West Papua

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Abstract

Background: Drawing on the integrative framework of collaborative governance developed by Emerson, Nabatchi, and Balogh, the article analyzes how provincial and district governments, the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK, civil society organizations, technical experts, and Indigenous communities interacted in the review and revocation of problematic plantation licenses.

Objective: This article examines how collaborative governance shaped palm oil permit enforcement in West Papua, Indonesia, during the implementation of the province's palm oil governance moratorium.

Methods: The study used a qualitative case study approach based on interviews with 12 key informants selected through purposive sampling, policy documents, legal-administrative materials, and field narratives from government, civil society, expert, anti-corruption, and community actors.

Results: The findings show that collaboration emerged because palm oil licensing problems cut across administrative, legal, spatial, environmental, fiscal, and customary land dimensions. The KPK played a crucial role as a supervisory and accountability-inducing actor, while EcoNusa and technical experts strengthened legal, spatial, and social analysis. In Sorong Regency, collaboration resulted in concrete administrative actions, including company clarification, action plans, and permit revocation. However, the durability of collaborative outcomes was constrained by fragmented licensing data, limited institutionalization, litigation risks, and insufficient integration of Indigenous communities as rights-bearing subjects.

Conclusion: The article contributes to collaborative governance literature by showing that, in resource frontier contexts, collaboration must be assessed not only through coordination and joint action but also through legal durability, Indigenous rights recognition, and post-revocation socio-ecological restoration. This study extends previous collaborative governance research by introducing legal durability as a novel evaluative dimension applicable to natural resource permit enforcement contexts.

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INTRODUCTION

The governance of palm oil plantations in Indonesia lies at the intersection of economic development, land tenure, environmental protection, and public accountability. Palm oil is a strategic commodity that makes an important contribution to the national economy, but its expansion has also given rise to administrative problems, deforestation risks, land conflicts, and

relationships that are not always balanced between the government, corporations, and Indigenous communities.

These tensions become more pronounced in West Papua because this region has extensive forest cover, strong customary land relations, and a sustainable development agenda that explicitly places forest protection as part of the regional policy direction. Data from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry indicates that West Papua retains approximately 9.1 million hectares of primary forest, representing one of the largest remaining forest areas in Indonesia (Gaveau et al., 2022). Between 2010 and 2020, West Papua experienced forest cover loss linked to agricultural and plantation expansion, with oil palm being a significant driver (Austin et al., 2019). At the same time, agrarian conflicts involving Indigenous communities and plantation companies have been documented across several regencies, reflecting the contested nature of land governance in the region.

The national policy context changed when the Indonesian government issued a moratorium on oil palm plantation permits in 2018. This policy instructed ministries/institutions and regional governments to postpone the issuance of new permits and evaluate existing permits to improve palm oil plantation governance. In West Papua, this national mandate intersected with the Manokwari Declaration and the province's conservation/sustainable development agenda. This policy direction is not only oriented towards the administrative enforcement of permits but is also related to the protection of living spaces, recognition of Indigenous communities, and control over natural resource utilization. At the national level, the 2018 moratorium produced mixed outcomes: several regions conducted permit evaluations and some problematic concessions were identified, yet implementation remained uneven across provinces due to data fragmentation, limited institutional capacity, and resistance from business actors (EcoNusa, 2021; Mongabay, 2021). These limitations underscore the importance of examining cases where multi-actor collaboration was mobilized to overcome such systemic constraints.

The evaluation process for oil palm permits in West Papua attracted public attention because it did not stop at ordinary administrative checks. The West Papua Provincial Government conducted an evaluation together with the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) and EcoNusa, resulting in recommendations to revoke permits for a number of concessions deemed administratively and legally problematic. EcoNusa also described this process as a long effort lasting approximately three years, involving cross-ministerial and institutional coordination, evaluating 24 company permits. The findings of this research indicate that this process was not an intervention by a single institution, but rather collaborative governance that combines the formal authority of the government, the accountability pressure of the KPK, the expertise of civil society and technical experts, and the social knowledge of Indigenous communities.

Despite its importance, the West Papua case has not been discussed in depth within the collaborative governance literature, particularly in the context of natural resource permit enforcement. Collaborative governance studies generally emphasize the role of multiple actors, face-to-face dialogue, trust-building, shared understanding, institutional design, and joint action. The integrative framework by Emerson (2012) expands this discussion by connecting system context, collaboration drivers, collaborative dynamics, actions, outputs, and adaptation (Wati et al., 2024).

Previous studies on collaborative governance in natural resource management have largely focused on water governance Ansell (2018), forest conservation and environmental policy implementation (Bauer et al., 2023). While these studies demonstrate the effectiveness of multi-actor collaboration in improving governance outcomes, they have paid limited attention to enforcement contexts involving anti-corruption institutions, Indigenous rights recognition, and the legal durability of administrative decisions. Studies specifically addressing palm oil governance in Indonesia tend to focus on supply chain sustainability or global certification mechanisms Afrizal (2023), rather than on local permit enforcement processes involving cross-sectoral collaboration. This gap is significant because enforcement contexts introduce distinctive dynamics: accountability pressure, legal contestation, and the risk that collaborative achievements may be reversed through litigation. However, the case of West Papua as a resource expansion frontier raises questions: how does collaboration work when the problem encompasses overlapping authorities, non-uniform licensing data, customary land rights, and the

risk of legal challenges? What is the position of the KPK as an anti-corruption agency when it does not take over the authority of local governments but is able to encourage actor compliance? How are Indigenous communities positioned when the policy object is not merely an administrative permit, but land that is embedded in social relations and collective identity.

This article answers these questions by analyzing collaborative governance in the enforcement of palm oil plantation business permits in West Papua, with special attention to follow-up actions in Sorong Regency. The West Papua experience demonstrates a form of collaborative governance where the administrative authority of the state is reinforced by economic accountability pressure, civil society expertise, and the social knowledge of Indigenous communities. Collaboration resulted in important achievements such as data consolidation, legal-spatial analysis, company clarification, action plans, and permit revocation. However, these achievements remain vulnerable when not supported by strong legal documentation, institutionalized monitoring, and post-revocation arrangements that position Indigenous communities as rights-bearing subjects.

This study contributes to collaborative governance theory in three ways: first, by introducing legal durability as a distinct evaluative dimension for collaboration outcomes in regulatory enforcement contexts; second, by reconceptualizing anti-corruption institutions (such as the KPK) as accountability brokers rather than merely enforcement agencies; and third, by positioning Indigenous communities as rights-bearing subjects rather than ordinary stakeholders within collaborative governance frameworks. These contributions extend the Emerson (2012) integrative framework to resource frontier contexts where administrative, legal, and socio-ecological dimensions intersect.

METHOD

This research used a qualitative approach with a case study design. This approach was chosen because the case study allows the research to explain contemporary policy processes in depth by paying attention to the relationships between actors, institutions, documents, and the surrounding social context (Creswell & Poth, 2020; Yin, 2018). The case study design was chosen because the research seeks to understand contemporary governance processes in depth, especially when the boundaries between institutional authority, policy processes, and social context are not simple. The case analyzed is the collaborative governance process in the evaluation and enforcement of oil palm plantation business permits in West Papua, with special attention to the follow-up of permit revocation in Sorong Regency.

The research data came from several types of materials. First, the research used semi-structured interviews with 12 key informants selected through purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in the permit evaluation and enforcement process. Informants included representatives from the provincial government (3 informants), Sorong Regency government (2 informants), the Coordination, Supervision, and Prevention unit of the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK Korsupgah, 2 informants), EcoNusa (2 informants), technical experts (2 informants), and community representatives (1 informant). Each interview lasted between 60 and 90 minutes and was conducted between 2022 and 2023, either in person or via video conference. Access to informants was facilitated through institutional contacts established during the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and anonymity was maintained where requested.

Interviews provided information on actor roles, motivations, coordination mechanisms, data problems, company responses, litigation challenges, and Indigenous community perspectives. Second, the research analyzed policy and administrative documents, including permit evaluation materials, action plans, documents related to permit revocation, and provincial policy commitments regarding sustainable development. Third, the research used public reports and secondary sources to place the case in the context of the national palm oil moratorium and the permit revocation process in West Papua (EcoNusa, 2021; Mongabay, 2021).

Data analysis was conducted through thematic coding guided by the collaborative governance framework. This strategy aligns with the qualitative analysis tradition emphasizing data condensation, data display, conclusion drawing, and iterative verification (Miles et al., 2014). The coding process was conducted manually using a structured code book developed from the

Emerson (2012) framework, supplemented by codes emerging inductively from the data. Manual coding was chosen to maintain close interpretive engagement with contextually rich interview narratives and policy documents. All codes were reviewed in two rounds: an initial coding pass and a focused review for consistency and saturation. The codebook included 18 thematic codes covering actor roles, institutional dynamics, legitimacy mechanisms, data quality, legal dimensions, and Indigenous rights elements. The first stage was coding the empirical material based on actor roles and process chronology. The second stage was organizing the codes into categories of system context, collaboration drivers, collaborative dynamics, collaborative actions, outcomes, and adaptation. The third stage was identifying cross-cutting issues that emerged inductively, especially the role of the KPK as an accountability actor, the position of Indigenous communities, and legal vulnerability after permit revocation. The fourth stage was constructing a narrative synthesis connecting the empirical process with theoretical debates on collaborative governance.

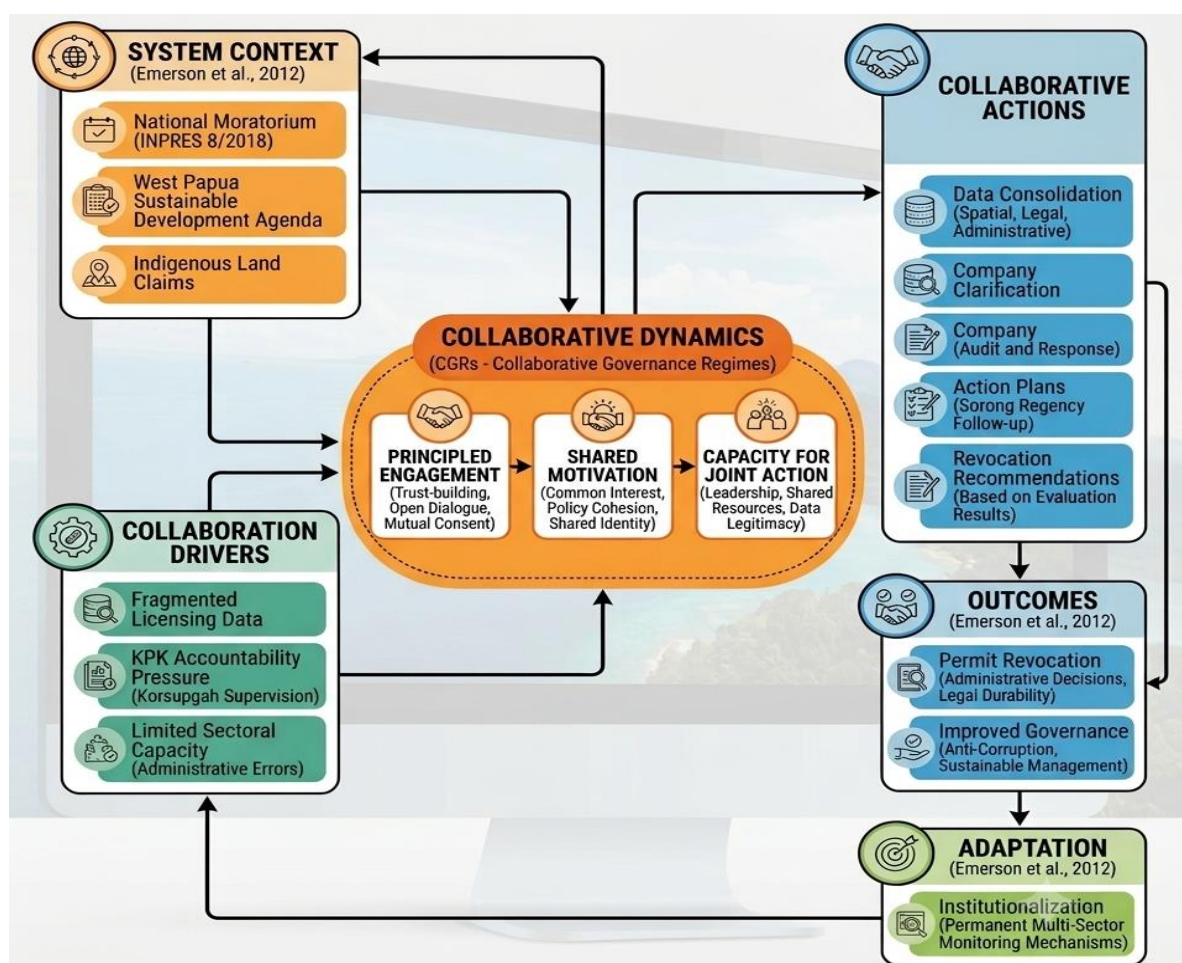


Figure 1. Diagram of the Collaborative Governance Analytics Framework in the Evaluation of Palm Oil Permits in West Papua
Source: Adapted from Emerson (2012)

To maintain analytical integrity, the research distinguished between direct statements from sources, documentary evidence, and researcher interpretation. Interview quotations are treated as empirical evidence of actors' perceptions, experiences, and assessments, not as sole verification of legal facts. This distinction is important because palm oil permit disputes often involve non-uniform administrative records, differing institutional memories, and ongoing legal consequences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Regional Context, Evaluation Scale, and Licensing Data Problems

The process of issuing oil palm permits in West Papua shows how correcting natural resource governance begins with seemingly administrative problems but soon develops into spatial political problems. Presidential Instruction Number 8 of 2018 provided the basis for the government to temporarily suspend new permits, evaluate those already issued, increase productivity, and improve palm oil plantation governance. However, in West Papua, this national mandate gained broader meaning because it intersected with the provincial conservation agenda and sustainable development commitments. The permit evaluation, therefore, did not stand as a sectoral action of the plantation service but as an effort to restructure the relationship between investment, forests, administrative authority, and Indigenous community rights (Nurhasam et al., 2021).

Spatially, West Papua differs from the old palm oil centers in Sumatra and Kalimantan. Before the division of Southwest Papua, the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) recorded the area of West Papua province as 102,955.15 km² or approximately 10,295,515 hectares, with administrative areas spread across 13 regencies/cities (BPS West Papua Province, 2021). The area size, distance between regencies, natural forest cover, and the strength of customary land claims mean that plantation business permits cannot be treated as standalone legal documents. Every permit always intersects with spatial planning, forest area release, environmental permits, cultivation rights (HGU), company obligations, potential idle land, and the history of land tenure by clans and villages. Therefore, the problem of oil palm permits in West Papua is simultaneously an administrative, spatial, tenure, and ecological issue.

The scale of this problem is evident from the Report on the Evaluation Results of Oil Palm Plantation Permits in West Papua Province. The evaluation was conducted on 24 companies spread across at least eight regencies, namely Sorong, South Sorong, Maybrat, Fakfak, Manokwari, South Manokwari, Teluk Wondama, and Teluk Bintuni (Department of Food Crops, Horticulture, and Plantations of West Papua Province, 2021). The official report recorded a total evaluated area of 576,090.84 hectares. Meanwhile, several public reports referring to the same evaluation process mention a figure of 611,440.84 hectares, of which 383,431.05 hectares are still natural forest cover (Betahita, 2022; Mongabay, 2021). The numbers may differ due to different categories of permits counted, the status of forest area release, HGU status, returned areas, and the scope of concessions used by each source. In this article, the figure of 576,090.84 hectares from the official report is used as the main basis, while the figure of 611,440.84 hectares is used as a comparison to demonstrate the importance of integrating data across institutions.

The discrepancy between official and public data sources has direct implications for the validity of the analysis. It illustrates that palm oil governance in West Papua operates within a context of data fragmentation, where no single institution maintains a comprehensive and authoritative dataset. This condition is itself an analytical finding: it explains why collaboration was functionally necessary and highlights the epistemological challenge of conducting governance research in contexts where the administrative record is contested. The use of official figures as the analytical baseline is methodologically justified because these figures derive from the formal evaluation process that is the subject of this research, while the comparative figure serves to acknowledge the broader empirical uncertainty rather than diminish the analysis.

If the figure of 576,090.84 hectares is compared to the area of West Papua province before division, the evaluated permit area is equivalent to about 5.6 percent of the province's area. Using the comparative figure of 611,440.84 hectares, the proportion approaches 5.9 percent. This proportion shows that the evaluation of oil palm permits is not a small correction to company documents but a re-examination of spatial control on a large scale. This significance is even stronger because the concessions evaluated are located in forested landscapes, customary territories, and regencies with non-uniform administrative capacities. At this point, the idea of collaborative governance becomes relevant not because theory demands it, but because the structure of the problem itself forces the state to combine dispersed data, authority, and knowledge.

The distribution of companies and concession areas by regency shows that governance risk cannot be read solely from the number of companies. Sorong is recorded as the regency with the highest number of companies, namely seven companies, with a concession area of approximately 214,129.26 hectares and forest cover of approximately 101,579.88 hectares. Teluk Bintuni has five companies with an area of approximately 127,649 hectares, but its forest cover ratio reaches more than 86 percent. South Sorong has six companies with an area of approximately 119,877.04 hectares and forest cover of approximately 89,396.06 hectares. Teluk Wondama only recorded one company, but almost all of its concession is still forest cover. This pattern shows that regencies with fewer companies can have high ecological risk if their concessions are still dominated by natural forest.

Table 1. Distribution of companies, concession areas, and forest cover by regency

Regency	Number of Companies	Concession Area (ha)	Forest Cover (ha)	Forest Cover Ratio (%)
Sorong	7	214,129.26	101,579.88	47.44
Teluk Bintuni	5	127,649.00	110,419.34	86.50
South Sorong	6	119,877.04	89,396.06	74.57
South Manokwari	2	50,064.00	24,464.35	48.87
Maybrat	1	40,000.00	24,906.63	62.27
Fakfak	1	32,036.50	8,277.53	25.84
Teluk Wondama	1	28,880.00	28,015.56	97.01
Manokwari	2	17,150.00	8,200.49	47.82

The evaluation findings also show that the licensing problems are not singular. Some companies did not yet have HGU, had not planted, did not fulfill obligations in the IUP, did not have environmental permits or IPK, used problematic documents, or controlled areas potentially categorized as idle land. The evaluation report noted six concessions returned to the government totaling 52,151.93 hectares. Additionally, public sources mention approximately 299,894.05 hectares of concessions with problematic HGU that need coordination with the Ministry of ATR/BPN ([Department of Food Crops, Horticulture, and Plantations of West Papua Province, 2021](#); [Mongabay, 2021](#)). Thus, the key question is not only whether permits are revoked or not, but how the government builds an evidentiary basis for the spectrum of legal-administrative, spatial, environmental, economic, and social-tenure problems.

This field data analysis strengthens this article's position that collaboration is necessary because palm oil licensing problems exceed the capacity of a single institution. The plantation service has sectoral data, regency governments hold part of the administrative authority, land and forestry agencies control spatial and tenure information, companies hold operational documents, civil society organizations have technical support and field knowledge, while Indigenous communities understand the history of land tenure and the impacts of company expansion. No single actor can fully diagnose the entire problem without interacting with other actors. In this sense, collaboration becomes a functional necessity, not merely a normative choice.

Table 2. Analytical meaning of permit evaluation distribution by regency

Regency	Number of Companies	Example Companies/Permits	Analytical Meaning
Sorong	7	PT Inti Kebun Lestari; PT Cipta Papua Plantation; PT Papua Lestari Abadi; PT Sorong Agro Sawitindo	Main locus of change from recommendation to administrative action because several permits were revoked by the regent.
South Sorong	6	PT Anugerah Sakti Internusa; PT Persada Utama Agromulia; PT Varia Mitra Andalan	Shows the strong relationship between administrative problems, Indigenous

			community rejection, and post-revocation dispute risk.
Teluk Bintuni	5	PT Bintuni Sawit Makmur; PT Varita Majutama; PT HCW Papua Plantation	Shows extensive concessions with high forest cover so evaluation directly impacts the forest protection agenda.
South Manokwari	2	PT Anugerah Papua Investindo Utama; PT Mitra Sylva Lestari	Illustrates permits not yet fully operational that can be corrected before widespread land expansion.
Maybrat	1	PT Pusaka Agro Makmur	Shows cross-regency evaluation is necessary because oil palm permits are not concentrated in one administrative area.
Fakfak	1	PT Rimbun Sawit Papua	Shows areas partially returned or not continued due to feasibility constraints and overlapping utilization.
Manokwari	2	PT Permata Sawit Mas; PT Medco Papua Hijau Selaras	Illustrates problems of companies already operating and having relationships with HGU.
Teluk Wondama	1	PT Menara Wasior	Becomes an example of a large-area location permit that did not proceed to effective cultivation.

Actor Configuration and Collaborative Governance Dynamics

The configuration of actors in the West Papua oil palm permit evaluation shows that collaboration emerged because no single institution possessed all the authority and information. The provincial government had policy commitment and cross-agency coordination capacity, but not all permit decisions rested with the province. The Sorong Regency government played an important role in administrative follow-up, including summoning companies, preparing action plans, and issuing permit revocation decisions. The KPK had the legitimacy to encourage accountability and compliance but did not take over the substantive authority of local governments. EcoNusa and technical experts provided technical, legal, and spatial support, while Indigenous communities brought knowledge of land history, social impacts of companies, and claims to living territories. The combination of these actors formed a governance system moving between administrative enforcement, policy correction, and socio-ecological advocacy.

The role of the KPK is a key finding. Based on interviews with several informants from the provincial government, regency government, and non-governmental organizations, the KPK's involvement was a factor that made government actors and companies more serious in responding to the evaluation process. An informant from the KPK also emphasized that the KPK's assistance was not merely administrative but provided moral pressure and accountability for follow-up actions. Informants explained that the presence of the KPK Korsupgah team made companies and regional governments more compliant with the process because there was an

institutional figure with a strong reputation in corruption prevention. Thus, the KPK acted as an actor that strengthened the credibility of the process without replacing local authority.

The presence of the KPK in the evaluation process was understood by field actors as a form of assistance as well as accountability pressure. This role helped ensure that recommendations did not stop as documents but were followed up through action plans and administrative decisions.

EcoNusa and technical experts filled knowledge gaps not always available within the bureaucracy. They helped read maps, permit documents, company obligations, and legal implications. In cases like this, technical expertise becomes collaborative capital because permit revocation decisions must be supported by clear reasons. If the government only relies on political will without a technical basis, the decision can be easily challenged. Conversely, if technical analysis is not connected to the government's formal authority, the results cannot become administrative action. Collaboration brings together both needs.

Indigenous communities have a more complex position. In tenure and Indigenous rights studies, Indigenous communities cannot be understood merely as one of the stakeholders, but as holders of collective rights to land, forests, and livelihood sources (Afrizal et al., 2023; Myers et al., 2022); Constitutional Court of the Republic of Indonesia, 2012). On one hand, community narratives strengthen understanding of the impacts of oil palm expansion, unclear consent, and the relationship between permits and customary land. On the other hand, community involvement has not always been equal to that of technical actors and the government in decision-making processes. This condition shows the limits of collaborative governance: it can open participation spaces but does not automatically transform communities into decision-makers if the institutional design does not explicitly position them as rights holders.

Table 3. Actor configuration in collaborative governance of oil palm permit evaluation

Actor	Main Role in the Process	Contribution to Collaborative Governance
West Papua Provincial Government	Policy direction, cross-sector coordination, and liaison for sustainable development agenda	Provides political legitimacy and policy direction for the permit evaluation
Sorong Regency Government	Administrative follow-up, company clarification, action plans, and permit revocation	Transforms recommendations into concrete administrative actions
KPK/Korsupgah	Supervision, corruption prevention, and accountability pressure	Strengthens actor compliance, urgency of follow-up, and process credibility
EcoNusa	Technical support, policy advocacy, and field knowledge consolidation	Connects legal-spatial analysis with forest protection agenda
Technical Experts	Legal, administrative, and policy analysis	Strengthens evidentiary basis and decision durability
Companies	Parties clarified and assessed for compliance	Becomes object of evaluation and source of operational documents
Indigenous Communities	Holders of social knowledge and affected parties	Demonstrates rights dimensions, customary land, and socio-ecological impacts

The collaborative dynamics in the West Papua case can be read through three main elements in the framework of Angelina (2022), namely principled engagement, shared motivation, and capacity for joint action. Principled engagement is evident in the process of data consolidation, technical evaluation meetings, company clarification, and cross-actor discussions. This process not only brought institutions together but also forced actors to align problem

categories. Permits originally understood sectorally had to be read together with spatial planning, environmental obligations, area status, company compliance, and Indigenous community claims.

Shared motivation developed because the actors had concerns that partially converged, although not always identical. Regional governments were interested in improving governance and strengthening sustainable development directions. The KPK was interested in preventing corruption and improving natural resource governance. EcoNusa and technical experts were interested in ensuring data-driven evaluation and siding with forest protection. Indigenous communities were interested in protecting land, forests, and living spaces. These perspectives align with the literature on commons and community-based resource management, which places local rules, trust, and rights recognition as important prerequisites for sustainability. The convergence of these interests formed a shared motivation to address problematic permits.

Capacity for joint action was formed through a combination of leadership, information, authority, and technical resources. The government provided administrative authority; the KPK provided accountability pressure; EcoNusa and technical experts provided analysis of maps, permit documents, and legal implications; while the community provided social knowledge and experiences of being affected. This shared capacity is dynamic. It is strong when there is evaluation momentum, political support, and institutional pressure, but can weaken if not institutionalized. Therefore, the collaborative capacity in the West Papua case must be understood as a capacity that worked strongly during the evaluation and revocation phase but requires permanent mechanisms so as not to depend on specific figures, projects, or case pressure.

KPK informants conveyed the importance of action plans and follow-up deadlines as part of efforts to keep collaboration from stopping at recommendations. The logic of the action plan shows that collaboration requires administrative instruments that can force actors to work within a certain time frame. Without an action plan, recommendations easily become normative notes. With an action plan, each actor has clearer obligations, although effectiveness still depends on monitoring and the courage to make decisions.

Discussion

From Recommendation to Administrative Enforcement in Sorong Regency

Sorong Regency is an important arena for seeing how collaborative recommendations turn into administrative actions. At the regency level, the evaluation process was followed up through company clarification, preparation of action plans, and issuance of permit revocation decisions. These stages show that collaborative governance not only produces shared knowledge but can also produce concrete state actions. However, transforming recommendations into administrative decisions requires political courage, legal basis, and readiness to face legal consequences.

To strengthen credibility, the research employed source triangulation by cross-checking interview data with policy documents, administrative records, and public reports. Member checking was conducted by sharing key findings with three informants who reviewed the accuracy of the interpretations regarding the evaluation process and its outcomes. Peer debriefing was conducted with two academic colleagues familiar with collaborative governance and Indonesian natural resource policy to review the analytical categories and interpretive conclusions (Creswell & Poth, 2020).

The role of the regency government in this case is important because permit revocation cannot be done solely through external pressure. The KPK, EcoNusa, and technical experts can strengthen the process, but the decision still requires the formal authority of the local government. This shows that collaborative governance does not replace the state. Instead, collaboration strengthens state capacity when formal authority is supported by data, analysis, and accountability pressure. In the Sorong context, collaboration helped reduce bureaucratic hesitation because the decisions taken did not stand alone but were part of a cross-sector evaluation series. However, this situation also requires local governments to have neat documents, clear clarification procedures, and decision reasons that can be legally tested.

The Sorong case shows that the outcome of collaborative governance in permit enforcement cannot only be measured by the issuance of a revocation decree. An administrative decision is an important achievement but is not final. When a company sues, the collaboration

results enter the legal arena. From a public administration perspective, the quality of procedures, authority, reasons for decisions, and documentation are important elements for a state administrative decision to have legitimacy and durability (Republic of Indonesia, 2014a). Thus, legal durability must become one measure of collaboration outcomes. A successful collaboration is not only one that can produce recommendations but also one that can build a strong evidentiary package to support decisions in the face of disputes.

This understanding extends the collaborative governance literature. In many studies, collaboration success is seen from agreements, trust, network design, mandate clarity, and policy implementation (Ansell & Gash, 2018; Bauer et al., 2023; Bianchi et al., 2021; Rapp, 2020; Wang & Ran, 2023). In the case of regulatory enforcement, these measures need to be supplemented by the durability of decisions against legal challenges. That is, every stage of collaboration must be directed not only to build consensus but also to produce a strong documentary trail. Company clarification, recording of obligations, documentation of violations, analysis of land status, and preparation of action plans must be understood as part of the legal-administrative strategy, not merely coordination activities.

The involvement of Indigenous communities is the most important normative dimension in the West Papua case. Enforcing oil palm permits can indeed improve administrative governance, but the fundamental question is what happens to the land after the permit is revoked. If the former concession land is not managed through mechanisms that recognize Indigenous community rights, permit revocation can open new uncertainties. The area could again become the object of new permits, enter into non-participatory conservation schemes, or remain in an unclear administrative status.

The research findings show that Indigenous communities cannot be positioned merely as sources of information about company impacts. They are rights holders who have historical, social, and spiritual relationships with the land. In the West Papua context, forest protection and sustainable development cannot be separated from the recognition of customary territories. Therefore, strong collaborative governance must move from mere consultation towards substantive recognition. This recognition includes mapping customary territories, meaningful consent mechanisms, livelihood protection, and community involvement in determining the future of post-revocation land.

The limitations of Indigenous community participation also reveal a critique of overly technocratic collaborative models. Meetings, data, maps, and legal documents are indeed important, but they can all ignore community experience if not structured in a fair design. Therefore, this article places recognition of Indigenous community rights as an indicator of collaboration success, not merely an additional issue. A successful collaboration is one that not only revokes permits but also strengthens the position of communities that have borne the impacts of natural resource expansion.

From Moratorium to Institutionalizing Sustainable Governance

Enforcing oil palm permits can indeed improve administrative governance, but the fundamental question is what happens to the land after the permit is revoked. If the former concession land is not managed through mechanisms that recognize Indigenous community rights, permit revocation can open new uncertainties. The area could again become the object of new permits, enter into non-participatory conservation schemes, or remain in an unclear administrative status. Therefore, the success of permit revocation must be linked to the agenda of post-revocation governance restoration.

KPK informants emphasized that the lesson from this process is the need for a more institutionalized collaboration team. Collaboration cannot only depend on momentum, figures, or specific case pressure. It needs to become part of the local government system. Thus, permit evaluation can be conducted periodically, not only when a major problem arises or when there is external supervision. Institutionalization is also important so that forest protection, Indigenous community rights, and legal certainty do not operate separately.

In the West Papua context, this restoration must position Indigenous communities as rights holders. The principle of free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC), mapping of customary territories, livelihood protection, and recognition of customary forests following Constitutional

Court Decision No. 35/PUU-X/2012 become important references to ensure that permit enforcement does not stop as administrative correction (Shohibuddin, 2019). If former concession land still lacks status certainty and is not returned to fair governance mechanisms, permit revocation risks merely shifting the form of uncertainty. In such a situation, Indigenous communities remain in a vulnerable position even though the company permit has been revoked.

Therefore, the palm oil moratorium should be understood as an entry point, not an end goal. The moratorium provides momentum to evaluate permits but is insufficient if not followed by institutionalization. The West Papua case shows the importance of transforming collaborative energy into permanent mechanisms, such as an integrated permit database, cross-sector monitoring forums, permit audit standards, mechanisms for involving Indigenous communities, and procedures for handling post-revocation disputes. This need is consistent with research findings that a more institutionalized collaboration team is necessary so permit evaluation can be conducted periodically, not only when a major problem arises or when there is external supervision.

Local governments need to build a permit data system that connects the plantation, land, forestry, environment, tax, and spatial planning sectors. The government also needs to prepare legal audits before revocation decisions are issued, strengthen documentation of the company clarification process, and prepare post-revocation plans that recognize Indigenous community rights. The KPK can continue to act as a supervisory actor, but this role must be directed to strengthen local institutional capacity, not create long-term dependency. Several practical institutional mechanisms can support the sustainability of collaborative governance after permit revocation. First, provincial governments should establish a permanent multi-sector permit governance forum with a clear mandate, regular meeting schedule, and secretariat function to prevent collaboration from being case-contingent. Second, a shared digital permit data platform integrating plantation, spatial, land, environmental, and fiscal records should be developed with open access protocols for civil society monitoring. Third, standardized legal audit procedures—conducted prior to any revocation decision—should be institutionalized as part of the administrative workflow to ensure decisions can withstand legal challenge. Fourth, dedicated budget allocations for Indigenous community mapping and FPIC processes should be included in regional planning documents (RPJMD), transforming ad hoc consultations into systematic rights recognition procedures. Fifth, a post-revocation monitoring mechanism, jointly operated by local government, civil society, and community representatives, should be established to track land status, prevent unauthorized re-occupation, and document restoration progress. These mechanisms collectively represent a transition from episodic collaboration to institutionalized governance (Bianchi et al., 2021). Thus, the agenda for enforcing oil palm permits in West Papua must move from moratorium towards institutionalizing accountable, fair, and sustainable natural resource governance.

Table 4. Findings and Implications

Key Finding	Theoretical Implication	Policy Implication
KPK strengthens actor compliance without taking over regional authority	Expands the concept of facilitative leadership to include accountability broker	Anti-corruption supervision needs to be linked to strengthening local systems
Permit revocation is an important but vulnerable achievement vulnerable to legal challenge	Collaboration outcomes need to be measured through legal durability	Legal audits and evidentiary documentation must be prepared from the outset
Indigenous communities provide social knowledge and are rights holders	Collaboration must distinguish between ordinary stakeholders and rights-holders	Mapping of customary territories and meaningful consent mechanisms must be strengthened
Action plans help transform recommendations into action	Capacity for joint action requires administrative instruments	Action plans need to include deadlines, role division, and monitoring systems
Collaboration is strong	System adaptation requires	Cross-sector forums and

during evaluation phase but vulnerable to weakening after decision	institutionalization	databases need to be made permanent
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CONCLUSION

This research demonstrates that palm oil permit enforcement in West Papua serves as a critical critical-case study of collaborative governance within natural resource regulation. Driven by the national moratorium, West Papua's sustainable development agenda, and complex indigenous land claims, the collaboration emerged because licensing problems crossed administrative, data, and customary boundaries that no single actor could resolve alone. Applying the framework of Emerson, Nabatchi, and Balogh, the dynamic interplay of principled engagement, shared motivation, and capacity for joint action facilitated by local governments, the KPK as an accountability broker, EcoNusa, technical experts, and indigenous communities successfully generated data consolidation, company clarifications, and concrete administrative action plans leading to permit revocations in Sorong Regency. Moving beyond traditional collaborative compliance, this study underscores that the success of resource governance must not end with a formal decree but must be measured by its legal durability against corporate lawsuits, the institutionalization of permanent monitoring systems, and the capacity to initiate post-revocation socio-ecological restoration.

Theoretically, this study extends the collaborative governance literature by introducing legal durability as an evaluative dimension, reconceptualizing anti-corruption agencies as accountability brokers, and reframing indigenous communities from ordinary stakeholders to rights-bearing subjects. Structurally, Indonesia's reform agenda must now transition from temporary permit-level interventions toward permanent multi-sector data platforms, institutionalized legal audit systems, and secured local financing for customary land mapping, providing a scalable model for other resource-rich provinces. Future research should conduct longitudinal assessments of West Papua's legal outcomes and comparative studies across other resource frontiers to test the generalizability of these dimensions. Regarding administrative declarations, this manuscript is compiled from thesis research using interviews (treated as experiential evidence rather than absolute legal facts), policy materials, and public documents. The author declares no conflicts of interest, and all funding for this private research was independently sourced.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Linda Novi Trianita served as the primary researcher, conceptualizing the study, undertaking field data collection, conducting qualitative thematic coding, and preparing the original manuscript draft. Vishnu Juwono acted as the research supervisor, providing critical intellectual contributions to the theoretical framing within public administration literature, refining the analytical methodology, and conducting rigorous editorial reviews of the final manuscript. Both authors have reviewed and approved the final version for submission.

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