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# **Teluk Benoa Reclamation and its Impacts**

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**Abstract: Purpose**: This article aims to analyze the impacts and community reactions to Teluk Benoa (Benoa Bay) reclamation.

**Research methods**: This research is a descriptive analysis. The data collection method used is a literature study with a statutory regulation approach and case studies.

**Findings**: There are positive and negative impacts that will be received by the community if Teluk Benoa reclamation is continued and the actions taken by the community to reject the plan.

**Implication**: The impacts might be received by the community if Teluk Benoa reclamation continues, especially those on the sustainability of the surrounding environment.

**Keywords:** Teluk Benoa, reclamation, tourism, environment, community.

#### INTRODUCTION

Bali tourism is a combination of traditional and cultural tourism and natural charm, both mountains and beautiful beaches. This uniqueness makes Bali has its own charm that is able to attract local and international tourists. Through these tourism activities, Bali is able to increase state income through foreign exchange. With a relatively small area compared to the islands of Java, Sumatra and Kalimantan, land for tourism development in Bali is limited. Teluk Benoa (Benoa Bay) reclamation is a solution provided by the government to continue developing tourism in Bali. The term of reclamation comes from the word "to reclaim" which means to fix something that has been damaged (Hasni, 2010). Reclamation can result an occurrence changes in the ecosystem around the area. Some of the changes that may occur are changes in water flow patterns, erosion and sedimentation (Puspasari et al., 2018). In fact, this solution raises a debate that has not been found a solution to date.

Teluk Benoa has been very attractive for investors. There were 2 megaresort development that has been planned within the bay are under the authoritarian regime of Soeharto which both owned by his family. Due to the crisis on 1998, the projects were halted (Wisnawa, 2002). Although no construction work had been started in relation to the Bali Benoa Marina (BBM) as one of the projects, the other project known as Bali Turtle Island Development (BTID) had already undertaken the first phase of reclamation of Serangan Island (Woinarski, 2002). In 2002, this project was resumed by the construction of a bridge

connecting Serangan Island and the mainland of Bali. It also continued the reclamation of Serangan Island even up to four times its original size (Warren & Wardana, 2018).

The Serangan Island reclamation and the bridge's construction changed the water cycle of the bay which triggered coastal erosions around the south coast of Bali and severe sedimentation in the bay. Studies of the water conditions of the bay was stated that it is heavy polluted. The reclamation of Serangan Island has degraded the local mangrove ecosystem and worsened the condition of Teluk Benoa (Putra & Gede, 2009). Based on Law No. 27 of 2007 (in Presidential Regulation No. 122 of 2012), reclamation is an activity carried out by people in order to increase the benefits of land resources from an environmental and socioeconomic point of view by means of filling, draining the land or drainage. Reclamation is related to an effort to use an area or land that is relatively useless or is still empty and watery to become useful land by drying it. The purpose of reclamation is also to improve unused or useless areas or areas into areas that can be used for various human needs, including agricultural land, housing, recreation and industrial areas (Setiawan, 1990).

In 2011 President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) issued Presidential Regulation (peraturan presiden or Perpres) Number 45 of 2011 concerning the Urban Spatial Plan (Rencana Tata Ruang Kawasan or RTRK) for Denpasar City, Badung Regency, Gianyar Regency, and Tabanan Regency (Sarbagita) where the regulation was welcomed. The regulation is considered to be a policy as a supervision and control over business-tended development of domestic and foreign investors and can also protect conservation areas in Bali. At the end of his term as President, SBY issued Presidential Decree No. 51 of 2014 concerning Amendments to Presidential Decree No. 45 of 2011 concerning the Sarbagita Urban Spatial Plan, which changed the conservation status of Teluk Benoa into a public use area namely Surat Keputusan number 445/MENKP/VIII/2014 from the Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries 9KPP) in Teluk Benoa waters. The reclamation location permit is in fact contradicting the Presidential Decree No. 45 of 2011 concerning Spatial Planning for the Sarbagita Urban Area which states that Teluk Benoa area is a conservation area and Presidential Decree No 122 of 2012 concerning Reclamation in Coastal Areas and Small Islands which prohibits reclamation to be carried out in conservation areas (Dewi, 2019).

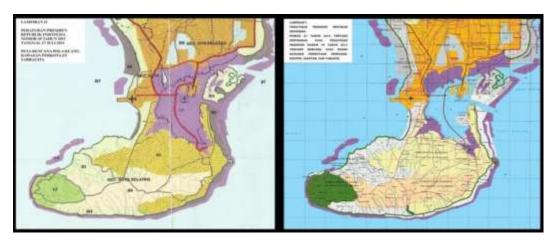


Figure 1. Comparison map of protected areas in Teluk Benoa (Source: Muhajir, 2014 in Wardana, 2018.)

In mid-2011, Tanjung Benoa village which is a village heavily eroded by the impact of Bali Turtle Island Development (BTID)'s reclamation of Serangan Island, proposed that the district government rehabilitate the coastal areas surrounding the village. One of these areas was a small island called Pulau Pudut (Wardana, 2016). For the villagers, Pulau Pudut is considered meaningful for the local culture and economy. While waiting for the district government to respond the proposal, a company named the Tirta Wahana Bali International (TWBI) came to the village and promised to help the villagers rehabilitate the western coast of Tanjung Benoa, including Pulau Pudut. The company distributed a huge amount of corporate social responsibility (CSR) projects to Tanjung Benoa. Not really being aware of what the company's interests were, the villagers were relatively welcoming the company. PT Tirta Wahana Bali International (PT. TWBI) was the project developer of Teluk Benoa reclamation and has obtained a reclamation location permit by the President Regulation.

The coverage of TWBI's master plan by the local mass media in early 2013 revealed that the company planned to build mega-resort complexes on 700-hectare artificial islands constructed through reclamation within the Teluk Benoa water areas as shown in figure 2. The TWBI had been granted a permit for development and utilisation of Teluk Benoa by the Govenor of Bali, Made Mangku Pastika, through Governor Decision No 2138/02-C/HK/2012 (Wardana, 2018).

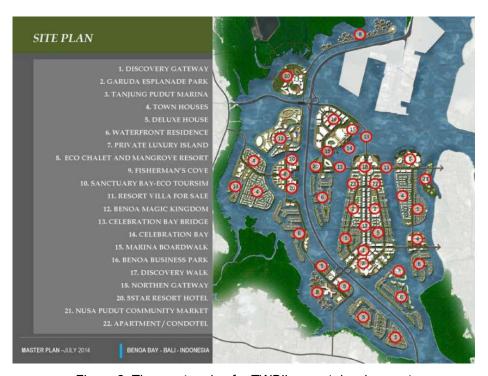


Figure 2. The master plan for TWBI's resort development (Source: Wardana, 2018.)

The reclamation plan caused social upheaval which was marked by the action of rejection by the Balinese people. Reclamation is considered to be damaging to ecological, social, and cultural structures and causing environmental damage. The Balinese people consider the reclamation to be a threat to Balinese cultural values because the area is one of the sanctified places in Bali. Reclamation activities can disturb the balance of the ecosystem. The Coastal Reclamation Area Spatial Planning Applied Module (2017) states that changes in

ecosystems such as changes in current patterns, erosion and coastal sedimentation have the potential to increase the danger of flooding, and the potential for environmental disturbances in other areas (such as erosion of hills or island for embankment material). The community's rejection of the reclamation plan is supported by the results of a feasibility study conducted by Udayana University (Unud) which has provided official information through the mass media that the results of a feasibility study on Teluk Benoa reclamation plan by PT. TWBI was declared unfit. The infeasibility is based on research and study of 4 aspects, namely: technical aspects, environmental aspects, socio-cultural aspects and financial economic aspects (www.forbali.org accessed on 26 October 2020).

In 2018 it was reported that the Amdal (Analisis mengenai Dampak Lingkungan or Environmental Impact Analysis) process for Teluk Benoa reclamation was terminated because the validity period for the location permit had expired and was not extended by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries then the waters of Teluk Benoa were designated as a Maritime Conservation Area and were welcomed by the community. However, this euphoria is considered as a government strategy to reduce conflict because in 2018 Bali is the host for "The 2018 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank", if demonstrations and public protests continue, it is considered that they will affect the image of the Indonesian government in the eyes of world. The strategy worked well and after the event was completed, at the end of 2018, the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries issued a new permit for PT (perseroan terbatas).

#### RESEARCH METHODS

The object of research is Teluk Benoa reclamation and its (positive and negative) impacts. The bay is located in Denpasar City, Bali, Indonesia. This research is descriptive analytical, which describes something as a whole in the form of writing that is analyzed or described systematically or regularly.

The method of data collection in this research is library standard. With secondary data, namely data or information taken from books, internet, archives and others that can support this research. This research uses a statutory approach and case study methods. The results of this study then described in a narrative way.

## **FINDINGS**

#### Positive Impact of Teluk Benoa Reclamation

The increasing population growth rate is one reason why it is necessary to carry out reclamation in Teluk Benoa. Population growth with all its activities cannot be separated from the problem of land needs (kompasiana.com accessed on 26 October 2020). This means that reclamation will provide the community with a new place to live and improve the welfare of the local community. Teluk Benoa reclamation assists the city in providing land for various purposes (urban expansion), tourism development, and coastal arrangement.

Teluk Benoa reclamation is expected to help the development of tourism in Bali, one of which is the creation of an iconic tourist destination. The making of this iconic tourist destination will attract many tourists to visit. The increase in the number of tourists coming will be directly proportional to the increase in hotel occupancy rates which will stimulate the construction of new hotels. The community will get benefits such as more jobs that will be available, business and

investment opportunities will increase and the income per capita of the surrounding community will increase. Each region that develops tourism will increase the income of the surrounding community. With the increase in people's purchasing power, the economy will move forward and be excited (www.news.beritabali.com, accessed on 26 October 2020). Negative Impact of Teluk Benoa Reclamation

Reclamation has the potential to increase the level of turbidity in the waters that will spread beyond the bay. This has the potential to damage the ecosystem outside Teluk Benoa which is considered to be able to recover after previous activities, so that development must be carried out in a sustainable and ecosystem-based manner (Handadari et al., 2018). Teluk Benoa reclamation causes changes in sea water currents around Teluk Benoa waters. The seawater currents that should enter Teluk Benoa will experience changes due to the presence of marina islands around the archipelago and cause sea water currents to shift to the surrounding coastlines. If the flow of sea water changes, the mangrove trees will experience disruption of growth and development. Marine biota around mangrove waters will also be disturbed due to the lack of nutritional intake brought by the sea water itself (Oktavia et al., 2014). Siltation in the Benoa Harbor Area cannot be avoided due to the pile of sediment which makes it difficult for ships to lean.

The implementation of Teluk Benoa reclamation will pollute the coastal environment by the resulting waste, cause erosion, decrease the quality and quantity of water, and have the potential to cause flooding. This reclamation will exploit the environment for tourism. Excessive exploitation of tourism has an impact on the conversion of green land functions (Dewi, 2019). Presidential Decree Number 51 of 2014 concerning Amendments to Presidential Regulation Number 45 of 2011 concerning the Sarbagita Urban Area Spatial Plan, changing the conservation status of Teluk Benoa to a public use area will damage the surrounding ecosystem such as mangroves, seagrass beds and coral reefs. By making it a public use, it will increase waste production which will also have an impact on the environment. Reclamation will make the area a disaster-prone area such as tsunami and coastal abrasion. The existence of coastal reclamation has a large negative impact, namely reclamation activities and infrastructure development will cause the death of aquatic biota, especially those with less rapid mobility such as plankton and benthos which in turn will cause disruption in the production of fish, shrimp, shellfish and so on (Husna et al., 2012). This has a negative impact on fishermen who make this location their source of livelihood. Reclamation activities are considered to interfere with local wisdom values that exist around Teluk Benoa area (Dewi, 2019).

For Balinese people who are predominantly Hindu, loving nature is a form of devotion to God and this reclamation plan is considered a form of exploitation and not a form of devotion to God. Communities around the reclamation area will be forced to sell the land where they live and move so that they are no longer able to carry out their profession as usual, where the majority are fishermen. In the implementation of reclamation, the surrounding community may be involved but when the reclamation implementation is complete, it is assumed that local people with low levels of education will not be able to compete to participate in business activities that will be carried out in the reclamation location which will ultimately increase the unemployment rate.

Teluk Benoa reclamation will result in a flood disaster due to silting. If a flood occurs, the bad impact on the surrounding community is very high, especially the impact on public health. Flood water contains infectious substances that can cause various diseases, especially skin and digestion, various other diseases, namely typhus, diarrhea, hepatitis-A, cholera, etc. (Amelia et al., 2016).

## **Community Reaction to Teluk Benoa Reclamation**

The community, who initially welcomed Teluk Benoa reclamation plan, strongly refused because of a change in the regulation issued by the president stating that Teluk Benoa area was no longer a conservation area. The community believes that the reclamation will only have a negative impact. Reclamation is considered merely a business that benefits investors and harms the Balinese people because it will damage the quality of the environment (Khoirunnisa, 2018). The community's rejection was marked by demonstrations and the formation of the "Bali Tolak Reklamasi" (Bali Refuses Reclamation) alliance. Youths in Tanjung Benoa responded by organising themselves into a local opposition group named Tanjung Benoa Tolak Reklamasi (TBTR, Tanjung Benoa Refuses Reclamation of Benoa Bay). They were concerned about the impact of this reclamation project, which brought back memories the impact of BTID's Serangan Island Reclamation. In building a broader alliance, the TBTR worked together with an NGO-led group, the Balinese People's Forum against Reclamation (Wardana, 2018). The Bali environmental movement against reclamation is understood as a new social movement because the movement's demands are not around the discourse of class struggle, but rather contemporary human issues, namely environmental issues. That is, the demands of the movement are not limited to promoting the interests of one class, but of humanity at large. However, as a new social movement strategy, there really isn't really a new style of using social media. Creativity is born from the ability of actors to package conventional campaign methods into new forms of resistance that can be easily facilitated by social media (Galuh, 2016).

These rejections were socialized on a large scale through social media, one of which was by using Instagram, Facebook, and the forbali.org website which contained information about the impact that would be generated if the reclamation continued. Figure 3 shows one form of rejection made by the local community. It was taken from www.forbali.org which is one of the media used in the socialization of reclamation's rejection, the website contains the latest information on action movements carried out by the local community so that the general public can find out the reasons for the Balinese people rejecting these activities. Until now, the rejection action is still continuing.

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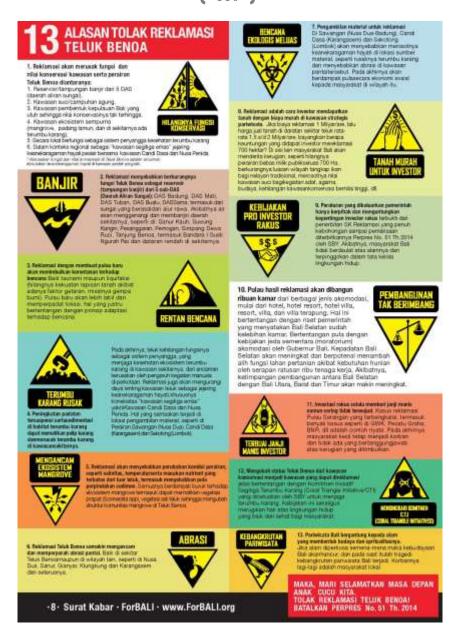


Figure 3. Reasons Why Local Communities Reject the Reclamation (Source: Source: <a href="https://www.forbali.org/id/mengapa-kami-menolak/">https://www.forbali.org/id/mengapa-kami-menolak/</a> accessed on February 2021.)

# CONCLUSIONS

Teluk Benoa reclamation is still a debate today because it will trigger major changes in community activities. Based on the description above, it can be seen that Teluk Benoa reclamation has both positive and negative impacts. If we look more deeply, it is found that Teluk Benoa reclamation will have more negative impacts than positive impacts on the community. If the reclamation plan around Teluk Benoa waters is actually realized, it can be estimated that the South Bali area will experience floods and disease outbreaks due to overflowing water in polluted conditions in the city of Denpasar. This is what underlies the actions against Teluk Benoa reclamation plan. In fact, if reclamation is carried out by following the principles of reclamation that does not have the potential to damage the environment and is proven by a feasibility study conducted by professionals, the government only needs to echo it to the wider community.

The government needs to convince the public that the purpose of reclamation itself is to advance an area without neglecting environmental sustainability aspects. With the current condition of tourism which prioritizes sustainable tourism activities, Teluk Benoa reclamation plan should not be carried out because the negative impacts that will be caused to the environment are more and it will have the potential for Bali tourism to be abandoned by tourists. the government only needs to echo it to the wider community. The government needs to convince the public that the purpose of reclamation itself is to advance an area without neglecting environmental sustainability aspects. With the current condition of tourism which prioritizes sustainable tourism activities. Teluk Benoa reclamation plan should not be carried out because the negative impacts that will be caused to the environment are more and it will have the potential for Bali tourism to be abandoned by tourists. the government only needs to echo it to the wider community. The government needs to convince the public that the purpose of reclamation itself is to advance an area without neglecting environmental sustainability aspects. With the current condition of tourism which prioritizes sustainable tourism activities, Teluk Benoa reclamation plan should not be carried out because the negative impacts that will be caused to the environment are more and it will have the potential for Bali tourism to be abandoned by tourists.

Based on the description above, the suggestions that can be given from this study are as follows. For the government, the results of the study show that if the reclamation continues, the government should review the draft reclamation plan so that there will be more positive impacts and good socialization to prevent misinformation between the government and the community. For local communities, the amount of information held by the community should be used as a basis for always monitoring decisions and actions to be taken by the government regarding Teluk Benoa reclamation plan so that the local community is not harmed by these activities. It is suggested to discuss more about the impacts that will be received by the local community and make it a consideration whether Teluk Benoa reclamation is appropriate to continue.

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