

The Contentious Politics of Palm Oil Expansion in Southeast Asia Double Panel proposal

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Abstract

The rapid expansion of oil palm plantations in Indonesia is generating a large and growing number of conflicts between rural communities and palm oil companies over, mainly, access to land. Communities are protesting against both companies and governments, engaging in demonstrations, lobbying and litigation as well as road blockades, destruction of company's property and violence. So far, these conflicts have been mainly studied through scattered case studies, thereby precluding an understanding and comparative analysis of general patterns. To address this challenge, this double panel aims to bring together researchers working on the conflicts sparked by the expansion of agribusinesses across Southeast Asia. Some of the papers in this panel stem from a collaborative research project studying 150 such conflicts in Indonesia, while also including other papers to discuss not just the causes, character and outcomes of these conflicts, but also the role of the courts, the effectiveness of the RSPO, the contributions of NGO's, informal mediation and the conflict strategies pursued by palm oil companies. By bringing together papers on diverse aspects of the contentious politics sparked by oil palm expansion, this panel aims to spark discussions about the character of civil society in Southeast Asia and the obstacles it faces in addressing the downsides of Southeast Asia's economic development.

Papers

Confirmed papers (with room for three more):

1. Collusion and Land Conflicts: The Contentious Politics of Palm Oil Expansion in Indonesia . Ward Berenschot, Ahmad Dhiaulhaq and Afrizal
2. Corporate Contentious Politics: How Oil Palm Companies address community grievances in Indonesia. Otto Hospes
3. Contentious Courts: The adjudication of land conflicts in Indonesia. Daniel Peterson and Adriaan Bedner
4. Palm oil conflicts in Malaysia: a comparative view: Helena Varkkey.