

## Local Ethics and Sustainability: Analysis of the Implementation of Ethics in the Management of Repong Damar in Pekon Tanjung Setia, Lampung, Indonesia

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| Artikel Info                                                                                                                                                   | Abstract                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| <p><b>Received: Oktober 2025</b><br/><b>Received is revised: November 2025</b><br/><b>Accepted: November 2025</b><br/><b>Publish online: Desember 2025</b></p> | <p>Repong damar is a traditional agroforestry system that integrates resin trees (<i>Shorea javanica</i>) with various agricultural crops in a sustainable manner. This traditional agroforestry system has long been part of the life of the people in Pekon Tanjung Setia and has been passed down from generation to generation through unwritten customary norms. This research aims to analyze the ethics applied in the management of repong damar land. This research aims to analyze the ethics applied in the management of repong damar land in Pekon Tanjung Setia. A qualitative approach with a case study method is an option in this study. Data collection was carried out through participatory observation, in depth interviews, and documentation studies, then analyzed to obtain results related to ethics applied in the management of repong damar land in Pekon Tanjung Setia. The results of the study show that local ethics play a role as a moral foundation in maintaining a balance between ecological, economic, and social aspects in the management of repong damar. The ethics of tapping resin are strictly carried out to maintain the health of the resin tree and the quality of resin resin, and contain a spiritual dimension through traditional rituals before tapping. In the economic aspect, marketing ethics emphasizes the values of solidarity and justice, such as the obligation to sell produce to close family to strengthen the social bonds of the community. In addition, the prohibition of indiscriminately cutting down resin trees and selling resinous land is a form of conservation ethics that protects ancestral heritage and ensures the sustainability of repong damar. Customary sanctions function as a mechanism to restore the balance between humans and nature so that the repong damar can be sustainable.</p> |

**Keywords:** *local ethics; local knowledge; sustainability; natural resource management; repong damar*

### Abstrak

Repong damar merupakan sistem agroforestri tradisional yang mengintegrasikan pohon damar (*Shorea javanica*) dengan berbagai tanaman pertanian secara berkelanjutan. Sistem agroforestri tradisional ini telah lama menjadi bagian dari kehidupan masyarakat di Pekon Tanjung Setia dan diwariskan turun-temurun melalui norma adat yang tidak tertulis. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis etika yang diterapkan dalam pengelolaan lahan repong damar di Pekon Tanjung Setia. Pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus menjadi pilihan dalam penelitian ini. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui *observasi partisipatif*, wawancara mendalam, dan studi dokumentasi, kemudian di analisis untuk memperoleh hasil terkait etika yang diterapkan dalam pengelolaan lahan repong damar di Pekon

Tanjung Setia. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa etika lokal berperan sebagai landasan moral dalam menjaga keseimbangan antara aspek ekologi, ekonomi, dan sosial dalam pengelolaan repong damar. Etika penyadapan damar dilakukan secara ketat untuk menjaga kesehatan pohon damar dan kualitas resin damar, serta mengandung dimensi spiritual melalui ritual adat sebelum penyadapan. Dalam aspek ekonomi, etika pemasaran menekankan nilai solidaritas dan keadilan, seperti kewajiban menjual hasil kepada keluarga dekat untuk memperkuat ikatan sosial komunitas. Selain itu, larangan menebang pohon damar sembarangan dan menjual lahan repong menjadi bentuk etika konservasi yang melindungi warisan leluhur dan menjamin keberlanjutan repong damar. Sanksi adat berfungsi sebagai mekanisme pemulihan keseimbangan antara manusia dan alam sehingga repong damar dapat berkelanjutan.

## INTRODUCTION

Natural resource management is an increasingly important global issue along with the increasing threat of environmental damage due to unethical exploitation practices (Ismail *et al.*, 2023; Weiskopf *et al.*, 2020). The concept of sustainability is key in designing environmental management policies and practices that maintain a balance between economic, ecological, and social needs (Kumar *et al.*, 2024). Ethics in land management play a very important role as a moral foundation to balance the interests of different generations and ecosystems (Khumairoh *et al.*, 2025). Ethical implementation is strengthened through the participation of various stakeholders, including local communities (Pratama *et al.*, 2024). Ethical-based land management has been proven to be able to create a collective commitment to preserving the environment (Almegi, 2020). In some countries, the application of ethical-based land management principles has helped to suppress conflicts of interest and reduce the negative impact of natural resource exploitation (Sangha *et al.*, 2019). Forestry development in Indonesia is increasingly highlighting the importance of an ethical approach to forest resource management so that economic benefits remain aligned with conservation (Putri *et al.*, 2024). UU No. 32 of 2009 concerning Environmental Protection and Management has become the legal basis for the implementation of environmental ethics, although its implementation has not been optimal in various regions. Forestry sector regulations also mandate the principles of ecological responsibility and justice in forest utilization activities (Abdeta *et al.*, 2025). In practice, local communities are often at the forefront of preservation through local wisdom that is inherited across generations (Adiputra *et al.*, 2025). This local wisdom is combined with an ethics of responsibility and symbiosis that maintains the harmony of humans and nature (Tohari, 2025).

Repong damar is one example of traditional agroforestry found in the West Coast area, Lampung, Indonesia that combines resin trees (*Shorea javanica*) with other agricultural crops in a sustainable manner (Oktarina *et al.*, 2022). Repong damar is often considered a forest as well as a garden because its management system relies heavily on unwritten customary rules (Sari *et al.*, 2024). This system integrates resin trees with other agricultural crops to create an ecologically and economically sustainable system (Wibowo *et al.*, 2023). Repong damar is able to maintain biodiversity and provide a stable income for local communities (Hariyanto *et al.*, 2022). These traditional agroforestry systems also contribute to climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration and forest conservation (Harrahap *et al.*, 2023). The management of repong damar based on the application of ethics which have become the foundation of culture, forming a pattern of community interaction with nature in harmony (Istiawati *et al.*, 2021). Management practices are passed down from generation to generation, so that this practice not only maintains the preservation of the ecosystem, but also strengthens the social and economic identity of the community (Nugroho *et al.*, 2025). Repong damar that prioritizes sustainability has proven to be able to survive in the midst of the changing times. The implementation of customary ethics in repong damar is a guideline for the community to balancing economic and ecological needs

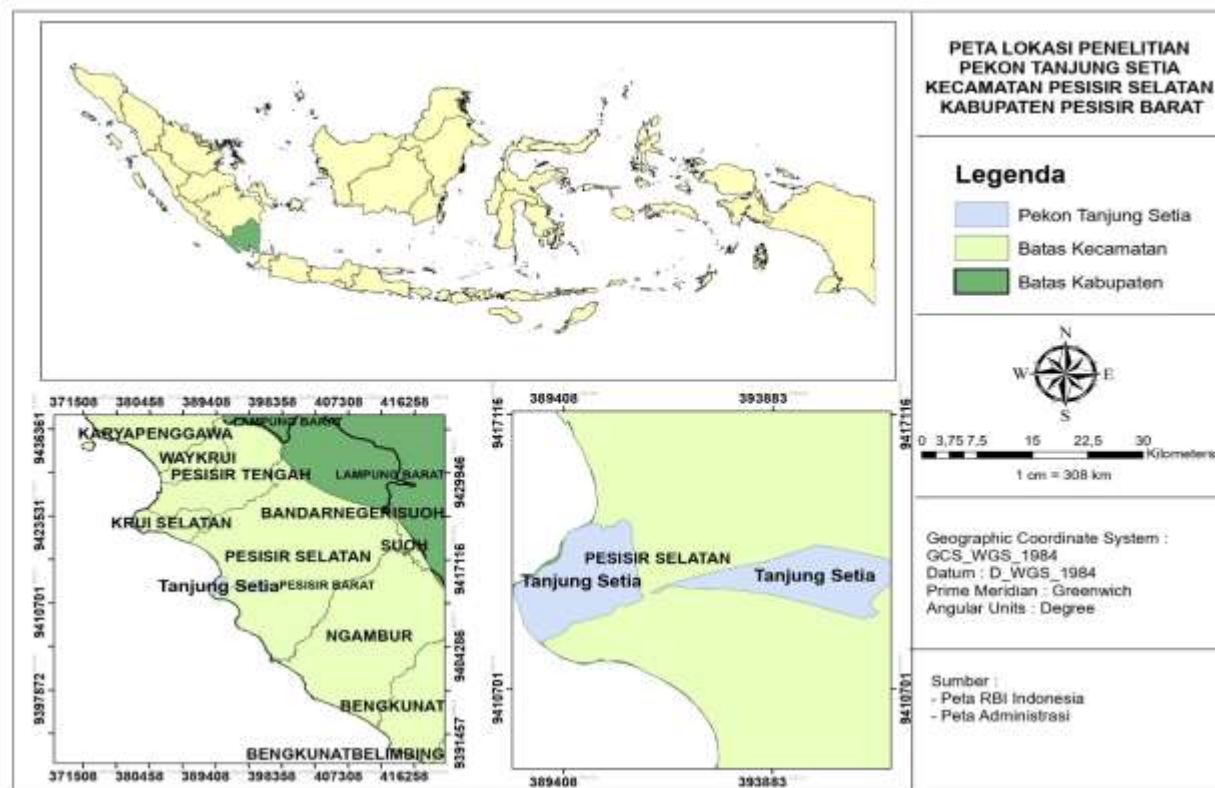
(Oktarina *et al.*, 2022). Compliance with customary norms and community ethics maintains social sustainability and minimizes internal conflicts (Desky *et al.*, 2024). Every activity in repong damar is regulated in customary law which provides sanctions if there is a violation of conservation values (Sari *et al.*, 2024).

Sustainability of repong damar is highly dependent on management ethics that are firmly held by the local community. Management ethics includes values such as respect for nature and a sense of responsibility (Gregor, 2023). Customary practices in land management are a tangible form of this ethical system (Dalyan *et al.*, 2024). An ethical system not only protects the environment, but also strengthens the social solidarity and economic sustainability of the community (Anggraini *et al.*, 2025). Local ethics are the main force in maintaining ecological, economic, and social balance (Minarti *et al.*, 2024). The integration of local ethics in the management of natural resources is the key to future environmental sustainability (Rahayu *et al.*, 2025). Ethics in the management of repong damar land are very important to ensure the sustainability of the repong damar system. Without ethics, the management of repong damar can turn out to be exploitative and damage the ecosystem. Land management ethics ensure that the use of natural resources is carried out wisely and sustainably (Christmas *et al.*, 2021). Therefore, this study aims to analyze the ethics applied in the management of repong damar land in Pekon Tanjung Setia, Pesisir Barat, Lampung, Indonesia.

## METHOD

### 2.1. Research Location and Time

Research was carried out in September-November 2025, in Pekon Tanjung Setia, Pesisir Selatan District, Pesisir Barat Regency, Lampung Province, Indonesia (**Figure 1**).



**Figure 1.** Map of the Research Location

## 2.2. Research Approach

Study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. Case studies are a suitable strategy to answer research questions related to "how" and "why" (Yin, 2023).

## 2.3. Data Collection

Data collected consists of primary data and secondary data. Data were obtained through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. Data collected directly through in-depth interviews and participatory observation is called primary data, while data obtained through documentation studies is secondary data. The key informants selected for the in-depth interview were conducted by purposive sampling, namely: pekon heads (1 person), traditional leaders (3 people), and resin farmers (5 people).

## 2.4. Data Analysis

Collected data was analyzed qualitatively to examine the land inheritance system and the local knowledge inheritance system in the management of repong damar land which is part of the culture of the local community. The stages are as follows: (a) raw data collection, (b) data transcription, (c) coding, (d) data categorization, (e) temporary inference, (f) data triangulation, and (g) final conclusion (Sugiyono, 2021).

# RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

## 3.1. Ethics in the Management of Repong Damar

### 3.1.1. Local Ethics as the Foundation for Repong Damar Sustainability

Local ethics in the management of repong damar in Pekon Tanjung Setia is a manifestation of local wisdom that has developed from generation to generation in the resin farming community. Ethics in the management of repong damar serve as the foundation for maintaining the sustainability of repong damar and are seen as an "unwritten law" that governs people's behavior in interacting with natural resources (Handayani *et al.*, 2023). This concept of local ethics not only regulates the technical aspects of management, but also the social, economic, and ecological dimensions that are interrelated in community-based forest management systems (Andari *et al.*, 2025). Local wisdom in natural resource management has proven to be a sustainable solution that not only protects the environment, but also strengthens people's adaptive capacity in facing global challenges such as climate change and environmental degradation (Putra *et al.*, 2024). According to research by Aldyan *et al* (2024), local wisdom practices based on hereditary knowledge have been proven effective in maintaining ecological sustainability and strengthening community resilience. This is in line with the results of research on the ethics of repong damar in Pekon Tanjung Setia, where local ethics function as a regulatory mechanism that prevents overexploitation and ensures the continuity of resources for future generations.

Local ethics in the management of repong damar not only function as customary norms, but also become philosophical that affirms the relationship between humans and nature (Kosmas *et al.*, 2023). People do not view resin trees solely as an economic commodity, but as part of an ecological system, that has intrinsic value (Doria *et al.*, 2021). This perspective fosters a respect for nature and encourages sustainability-oriented management practices. Local ethics act as a social control mechanism that limits exploitative behavior, while strengthening community solidarity in preserving resin forests (Zabadi *et al.*, 2025). This is in line with Wibowo's (2024) research which confirms that local cultural beliefs and practices in the management of repong

damar in the Pesisir Barat is still firmly held by the community, including the prohibition of cutting down trees indiscriminately and the obligation to maintain the balance of the ecosystem.



**Figure 2.** Repong Damar in Pekon Tanjung Setia

### 3.1.2. Ethics of Resin Tapping

Ethics of tapping resin resin is one of the most important aspects of the repong damar management system in Pekon Tanjung Setia (Daracan *et al.*, 2020). The people in Pekon Tanjung Setia have very strict rules in the process of tapping resin. In practice, there are several stages in tapping resin resin. Before the tapping is carried out, the part of the resin tree trunk to be tapped is cleaned of moss or dirt to ensure that the sap that comes out remains clean and healthy. New resin trees can be tapped after reaching the age of 20–25 years or have a trunk diameter of at least 30 cm. Trees that are tapped at a young age will affect the growth of trees and are quickly attacked by pests. The tapping hole is made using a small ax with a technique that has been inherited traditionally. Holes are made in the bark of the trunk without injuring the wood of the terrace, so as not to damage the inside of the tree. The shape of the tapping hole is made in the shape of a triangle. The triangular shape allows the resin to flow more smoothly and makes it easier for the resin to collect at the bottom so that it is easier to hold and not spread to the surface of the rod. A triangular-shaped wound has a narrower wound area than a square or elongated shape. According to Setiawan *et al* (2025), wounds with small areas accelerate the process of closure of cambium tissue. The resin that comes out through the tapping wound is taken using a sling or bucket. The extraction process is carried out when the resin has hardened so that the quality is best (Wibowo *et al.*, 2024).

Resin tapping is carried out once a month and based on needs, to keep the quality of the resin good and the tree is not damaged (Kurniawan *et al.*, 2021). The prohibition of excessive wiretapping is one of the main ethics so as not to damage trees. This ethics is not just a technical rule, but a manifestation of the ecological understanding that the natural balance must be maintained so that the repong damar remains productive in a sustainable manner (Zhang *et al.*, 2024). The principle of wiretapping that is carried out sufficiently and not excessively is a reflection of the concept of *sustainability ethics*, where humans regulate needs based on the carrying capacity of nature (Upreti, 2023). According to Sukmana *et al.* (2022) in the Journal of Sustainable Forestry, the principle of proportional profit-taking is a form of applying

*environmental ethics* that able to maintain the forest production cycle without interfering with natural regeneration (Wola *et al.*, 2023). Eavesdropping ethics in Pekon Tanjung Setia is a real practice of sustainability ethics based on local wisdom.

Ethics of wiretapping also show a spiritual relationship between resin farmers and resin trees (Rival, 2021). Resin farmers in Pekon Tanjung Setia believe that before tapping resin for the first time, farmers perform a *ngababali ritual* in the form of prayers in the repong damar so that the results obtained remain good and ask for protection so that there are no reinforcements when managing the repong. Based on research by Agusta *et al* (2024), tapping practices that follow customary norms are able to increase the productive life of trees, on the other hand, unethical tapping causes the productivity of resin sap to decrease drastically. This fact shows that the eavesdropping ethics applied by the community are not only traditions, but also adaptive strategies to the ecological conditions of the resin forest (Oktarina *et al.*, 2022). The people of Pekon Tanjung Setia are committed to maintaining the ethics of wiretapping despite increasing economic pressure. Farmers are aware that the momentary benefits of excessive tapping will be detrimental in the future. This awareness illustrates the moral responsibility to protect resources for the next generation. Eavesdropping ethics function to maintain economic and ecological sustainability across generations (Neill, 2022).



**Figure 3.** Resin Tapping

### 3.1.3. Resin Marketing Ethics

Ethics in the marketing aspect of resin products is one of the characteristics that distinguishes the economic system of the Pekon Tanjung Setia community from the modern market system. In Pekon Tanjung Setia there is an unwritten rule that farmers must sell the resin taper to collectors from close families if there is any. This ethics is not only based on economic considerations, but is also rooted in the values of solidarity, kinship, and justice that are an essential part of the local social system (Aboelenien *et al.*, 2023). This principle shows that economic activities in the Pekon Tanjung Setia community are not solely oriented towards material gains, but also consider moral and social values. For the people of Pekon Tanjung Setia, selling produce to the family is not only

a form of loyalty, but also an effort to maintain social ties in the community. This is in line with the concept of the moral economy, where economic activities are controlled by ethical norms and social responsibility, not just market mechanisms (Mele, 2024). Such a social ethics-based economic system serves as a "social safety net" for rural communities. Economic relationships between family members or communities not only create economic stability, but also strengthen trust and solidarity (Flores *et al.*, 2023). The same principle is seen in the people of Tanjung Setia, where marketing ethics function to maintain the balance of the local economy and prevent the dominance of outsiders.

Marketing ethics also show that the community still holds the value of trust as the main social capital. In resin sales transactions, the relationship of trust is often more important than a formal contract (Zanuary *et al.*, 2024). The key informant explained that "if there is still a family that is a collector, it is obligatory to sell to him so that they can live together." This statement affirms that economic solidarity is based on mutual help and shared responsibility in maintaining the welfare of the community (Casla *et al.*, 2024). The value of solidarity in resin marketing is a clear example of how the local economic system is able to operate fairly without having to rely on modern economic structures. Marketing ethics also have a cultural function, namely maintaining the value of togetherness as part of the identity of the Tanjung Setia community (Kushwah *et al.*, 2020). In this context, selling produce to the family is not just an economic obligation, but a form of respect for long-established blood ties and customs. This ethics is a social adhesive tool that ensures that economic activities do not break kinship relationships, but rather strengthen them (Zailan, 2024).



**Figure 4.** Marketing of Resin

### **3.2. Prohibition in the Management of Repong Damar**

#### **3.2.1. Prohibition of Cutting Down Resin Trees**

One of the most important forms of ethics in the management of repong damar in Pekon Tanjung Setia is the prohibition of cutting down resin trees. The ban on cutting down resin trees has been in effect since ancient times and is still firmly held today. Resin farmers in Pekon Tanjung Setia said that "it is not allowed to cut down resin trees carelessly" because the tree is a source of life for the family and a symbol of natural balance. Cutting down resin trees is deliberately considered to violate customary rules and community ethics. Resin trees are not only seen as an economic commodity, but also as part of a spiritual heritage (Oktarina *et al.*, 2022). Each resin tree has a symbolic meaning as a life support that must be respected. Therefore, the act of cutting down resin trees without a clear reason is seen as a form of greed and disrespect for nature and ancestors. The people of Pekon Tanjung Setia believe that cutting down resin trees carelessly will bring reinforcements or more often called qualifying. This reflects the belief that violations of ethics will have a bad impact on people's lives (Kadarisman, 2024). This ban keeps ecosystems functioning and ensures that natural resources can be used sustainably without damaging the carrying capacity of the environment (Sahusilawane *et al.*, 2024). If a person violates customary rules such as cutting down resin trees intentionally, he will be subject to sanctions in the form of an obligation to replant 3-4 replacement trees on the same land. The main function of customary sanctions is not to punish, but to restore the balance between humans and nature so that repong damar can be sustainable (Helmi *et al.*, 2023).

#### **3.2.2. Prohibition of Selling Repong Damar**

Another important ethics that are strictly maintained by the people of Pekon Tanjung Setia is the prohibition of selling gardens or repong damar land. This prohibition can only be excluded if the owner of the repong damar is really in an urgent situation, such as the need for health costs (saving lives) and children's education. This prohibition emphasizes that repong damar is not just an economic asset, but a symbol of ancestral heritage and family identity that must be preserved (Istiawati *et al.*, 2020). In the view of the people of Pekon Tanjung Setia, selling repong means releasing a heritage that has been guarded for generations. This action is considered to break the bond between the family and the ancestors who inherited the land. The ban on selling resin plantations is not only economic, but also moral and spiritual (Fuad *et al.*, 2023). Violations against it can cause customary sanctions and embarrassment in front of the community. The ban on selling resin plantations also reflects the values of intergenerational justice. The community understands that repong is an inheritance for posterity, so selling it is tantamount to depriving future generations of their rights. Sanctions for violations of the prohibition on selling resin plantations are usually in the form of an obligation or commitment to redeem the land that has been sold. This rule shows that there is a protection mechanism so that the repong does not change hands permanently (Togatorop *et al.*, 2020). This mechanism keeps the repong in the hands of the extended family and does not fall to the outside.

### **CONCLUSION**

Repong damar which is a traditional agroforestry system, has been proven to be able to maintain a balance between ecological, economic, and social aspects through the application of ethical values that have been inherited from generation to generation. Resin tapping is carried out

with strict ethics that regulate the frequency and conditions of trees that can be tapped, aiming to maintain tree health and resin quality so that the system remains productive and sustainable. In the marketing aspect, local ethics encourage transactions based on solidarity and social justice, such as selling produce to close family, thus maintaining economic stability and social ties of the community. The prohibition of indiscriminately cutting down resin trees and selling repong damar land except in special circumstances is a form of conservation ethics that at the same time contains moral and spiritual values. The customary sanctions imposed are not punitive only, but to restore the balance between society and nature and preserve heritage for future generations. The application of local ethics in the management of repong damar in Pekon Tanjung Setia is a key factor in the sustainability of repong damar which not only protects natural resources but also strengthens the social and economic identity of the community.

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