

Political Ecology of Environmental Conflict in the Tumpang Pitu Gold Mining, Indonesia

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Abstract

Abstract: *This study examines environmental conflict surrounding the Tumpang Pitu gold mine in Banyuwangi through a Political Ecology perspective. The conflict, ongoing since the start of mining operations, reflects not merely technical environmental impacts but unequal power relations among the state, corporations, and local communities. Using a qualitative document-based approach, data were drawn from government policies, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) documents, civil society reports, media coverage, and relevant academic literature. Thematic analysis was applied, employing the Environmental Justice framework to assess distributive injustice, procedural exclusion, and the lack of recognition of affected communities' rights. Findings show that mining governance prioritized economic growth and investment security, while ecological sustainability and meaningful public participation were marginalized. Licensing and EIA processes were largely formalistic, restricting community involvement and overlooking ecological risks to coastal ecosystems and local livelihoods.*

Abstrak: Penelitian ini menganalisis konflik lingkungan di kawasan tambang emas Tumpang Pitu, Banyuwangi, dengan menggunakan perspektif Ekologi Politik. Konflik yang berlangsung sejak awal operasi tambang menunjukkan bahwa persoalan tersebut tidak semata-mata disebabkan oleh dampak teknis pertambangan, melainkan merupakan manifestasi relasi kuasa yang timpang antara negara, korporasi, dan masyarakat lokal. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif berbasis studi dokumen, dengan sumber data berupa kebijakan pemerintah, dokumen Analisis Mengenai Dampak Lingkungan (AMDAL), laporan organisasi masyarakat sipil, pemberitaan media, serta artikel ilmiah terkait. Analisis dilakukan secara tematik dengan kerangka Keadilan Lingkungan untuk menilai ketimpangan distribusi dampak, ketidakadilan prosedural, dan pengabaian terhadap pengakuan hak-hak masyarakat terdampak. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tata kelola pertambangan lebih berorientasi pada pertumbuhan ekonomi dan stabilitas investasi, sementara keberlanjutan ekologis dan partisipasi publik cenderung terpinggirkan. Proses perizinan dan AMDAL bersifat formalistik, membatasi keterlibatan masyarakat serta mengabaikan risiko ekologis terhadap ekosistem pesisir dan mata pencaharian lokal.

Introduction

Environmental conflict has become a central issue in studies of public policy and natural resource governance in Indonesia over the past two decades (Sihidi et al., 2024; Sihidi et al., 2025; Sihidi et al., 2026). The increasing intensity of natural resource exploitation, particularly in the mining sector, demonstrates a persistent tension between economic development goals, political interests, and ecological sustainability (Cheng et al., 2024). In many regions, mining not only presents problems of biophysical environmental degradation but also gives rise to social conflict, unfair distribution of risks, and a crisis of government legitimacy in environmental management (Leonard, 2024). Various contemporary studies confirm that mining activities often fail to integrate social and environmental dimensions in a fair and participatory manner, thus triggering social conflict and unequal governance (Carr-Wilson et al., 2024; Domínguez-Gómez, 2024; Glorya et al., 2025; P. Mangani et al., 2025). Therefore, environmental conflict cannot be understood solely as a technical issue, but rather as a product of power relations, policy design, and governance practices that frame how natural resources are exploited and protected.

In a global context, the growing demand for strategic minerals further strengthens mining's position on national development agendas. Minerals are viewed not only as economic commodities but also as a pillar of industrial transformation, energy transition, and economic competitiveness (Zhou et al., 2024). However, scientific studies show that mining intensification actually increases significant ecological pressures, such as soil and water contamination, landscape changes, and disruption of habitats and ecosystem services, particularly in areas with limited governance (Moghim Dehkordi et al., 2024). The Extractive Industries and Society report also notes that extractive industries have significant environmental and social impacts through habitat destruction, land degradation, and land-use change conflicts (Johnstone & Marín, 2026). Similar findings have been reported in socio-ecological impact studies, which indicate that mining operations in indigenous communities' territories often result in reduced ecological well-being and disrupt the ecosystem balance that supports local life (Leyton-Flor & Sangha, 2024). This condition creates a development paradox, where efforts to encourage economic growth have the potential to weaken the ecological foundations that support long-term sustainability.

Indonesia is a prime example of this paradox, given its mineral wealth, making the mining sector a crucial pillar of national and regional economic development (Asmiani et al., 2023). Since the era of decentralization, local governments have played a strategic role in natural resource management, including granting permits and overseeing mining activities (Nugroho, 2019). However, decentralization has also given rise to various environmental governance challenges, such as fragmented authority, uneven institutional capacity, and increased local political-economic pressures (Chen et al., 2024). In many cases, mining policies tend to position environmental aspects merely as administrative requirements, rather than as a primary foundation for decision-making.

One prominent case of environmental conflict in Indonesia is the Tumpang Pitu gold mine in Banyuwangi Regency, East Java. The Tumpang Pitu area is known for its high ecological value, particularly due to the presence of coastal ecosystems, forests, and protected areas that play a vital role in maintaining environmental balance (Jamilah et al., 2020). Since the commencement of large-scale gold mining activities, the area has become an arena of conflict between the government, companies, local communities, and civil society organizations (Setiawan, 2024). These conflicts relate not only to direct environmental impacts but also to issues of public participation, policy transparency, and the legitimacy of government decisions.

Various studies have shown that gold mining activities pose significant ecological risks, ranging from land cover changes and water quality degradation to threats to biodiversity (Timsina et al., 2022). In tropical ecosystems, mining impacts tend to be long-term and difficult to reverse, while mining infrastructure development expands the ecological footprint and increases the potential for social conflict. A political ecology approach emphasizes that environmental issues are inseparable from the social, political, and economic relations that govern the control of natural resources (Ayelazuno & Mawuko-Yevugah, 2019). Within this framework, the state is not understood as a neutral actor but rather as an entity that actively shapes ecological conditions through policies, regulations, and governance practices (Spiegel, 2019). Consequently, political ecology has developed as a critical approach that highlights how power and economic interests shape natural resource governance and produce social inequality and uneven ecological impacts (May, 2022).

Mining conflicts also reflect issues of environmental justice, where the most vulnerable communities bear the greatest environmental impacts, while powerful actors reap economic benefits (Akchurin, 2023; P. Mangani et al., 2025). In the mining sector, environmental injustice is often evident through limited community participation, weak recognition of local knowledge, and minimal protection of ecological rights. In Tumpang Pitu, environmental conflicts demonstrate that gold mining policies are implemented amidst strong political-economic pressures, resulting in investment interests often trumping ecological and social justice considerations (Du & Yi, 2022; R., B.A., & H.B.D. Mangani, 2025). Several studies have revealed that the AMDAL process is often normative-administrative in nature and does not fully guarantee environmental protection or justice for local communities (Kumayza & Hariyadi, 2022).

Recent studies increasingly emphasize that AMDALs in mining projects are often prepared using a limited, technocratic approach, thus failing to capture the complexity of ecological and social impacts at the local level (Kumayza et al., 2025). Empirical findings indicate that the AMDAL process often fails to accommodate the socio-cultural realities of affected communities (Alberts, 2022; Kumayza et al., 2025). Public participation in the environmental impact assessment process is also often formalistic and has no significant influence on final licensing decisions (Alberts, 2022). Furthermore, other studies indicate that AMDALs that focus too much on technical aspects often neglect socio-ecological relationships, particularly for indigenous communities and the local economy (Dilay, 2020; Johnson, 2020). In the context of gold mining, the risk of water pollution and coastal ecosystem degradation is a crucial issue due to the close link between inland mining

activities and downstream water systems (Tunggala et al., 2024). When oversight is weak and public participation is limited, environmental impacts become increasingly difficult to control and have the potential to increase distributional inequities between companies and local communities (Laksito et al., 2024).

Although the Tumpang Pitu gold mining conflict has been widely discussed in the media and reports from civil society organizations, academic studies specifically utilizing an Environmental Justice perspective are still relatively limited. Most previous research tends to separate legal, social, and environmental aspects without placing them within an integrated analytical framework. As a result, the issues of unequal distribution of impacts, limited public participation, and minimal recognition of the rights of affected communities have not been adequately examined.

This study seeks to fill this gap by analyzing the Tumpang Pitu conflict through a Political Ecology perspective as the primary framework, and using the concept of Environmental Justice to examine the distribution of impacts, decision-making processes, and power relations within mining policy. With this approach, this study confirms that the Tumpang Pitu conflict is a manifestation of structural environmental injustice rooted in the design of mining policies and governance practices, not simply a technical issue of environmental management.

Research Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a Political Ecology framework to analyze environmental conflict in the Tumpang Pitu gold mine. This approach was chosen because mining conflicts cannot be understood solely as technical or ecological issues, but rather as the result of power relations, policies, and natural resource governance practices. Within this framework, this study utilizes the concept of Environmental Justice as an operational analysis tool to assess how environmental risks are distributed, the extent to which affected communities are involved in decision-making processes, and how their rights and interests are recognized in policies (Reeder et al., 2022). The focus of the research analysis covers three main aspects: mining policy and licensing practices, the dynamics of conflict between communities, the government, and companies, and the ecological and social impacts that arise as a consequence of these policies.

This study utilizes secondary data obtained through a documentary study of various sources, including government policy documents and regulations, environmental impact analysis (EIA) documents, official government reports, civil society organization reports, academic literature for the 2018–2025 period, and relevant media coverage. Data collection was conducted systematically by applying source triangulation to increase the validity and reliability of the information. Data analysis was conducted thematically through data reduction stages, classification of information into Environmental Justice analysis categories, including distributive justice, procedural justice, and recognition of community rights, and drawing conclusions based on a synthesis of the various sources studied. Through these

procedures, this study seeks to produce a comprehensive picture of the Tumpang Pitu gold mining conflict and the forms of ecological injustice experienced by the local community.

Results and Discussions

The management of the Tumpang Pitu gold mine in Banyuwangi Regency is inextricably linked to the multilevel framework of natural resource policy and governance in Indonesia. National-level mining policy provides the normative basis for mineral resource exploitation, while local governments play a key role in implementing these policies at the local level (Ananda et al., 2025). In this context, Tumpang Pitu serves as an important example for understanding how national policies, regional economic interests, and local governance practices interact and shape the dynamics of environmental conflict. This interaction demonstrates that mining conflicts do not emerge spontaneously but are shaped through a multi-layered process of policies and political decisions.

Historically, the mining sector in Indonesia has been positioned as a primary instrument for economic development and increasing state revenue. This mineral extraction-based development orientation has been deeply rooted in the national policy paradigm, even after the era of reform and government decentralization. Within this framework, local governments are often encouraged to utilize the potential of natural resources as a source of economic growth, job creation, and increased local revenue (Koch & Lawhon, 2025). This development logic is also reflected in the gold mining policy in Banyuwangi, which positions mining investment as a strategic opportunity for regional development, despite the implications for increasing pressure on the environment and community living spaces.

However, recent studies have shown that mining policy orientations that overemphasize economic aspects often systematically neglect ecological and social dimensions. Research in *The Extractive Industries and Society* reveals that many mining sector policies still focus on production expansion and economic value creation without adequate integration of ecosystem services, public health impacts, and potential social conflict. Consequently, measuring environmental and social impacts is often marginalized in policy formulation (Leyton-Flor & Sangha, 2024). Furthermore, studies of mining policies in various countries confirm that the economic orientation of extractive policies tends to create a blind spot for public participation rights and the equitable distribution of environmental burdens, ultimately contributing to conflict between governments, companies, and local communities (Vuola, 2022).

Other studies have also shown that mining governance driven by economic priorities often fails to ensure ecological and social accountability, particularly in the context of indigenous communities and vulnerable areas, thus fueling community resistance to mining policies (Berberoglu et al., 2024). From a political ecology perspective, this situation emphasizes that mining policies are never neutral, but rather reflect power relations between the state, corporations, and local communities. In Tumpang Pitu, the gold mine's licensing and management processes demonstrate how the state actively creates space for natural resource exploitation while simultaneously limiting community participation in environmental decision-making (Frederiksen, 2018).

The gold mining policy in Tumpang Pitu is implemented within an environmental regulatory framework that normatively stipulates environmental protection obligations, including the preparation of Environmental Impact Assessments (AMDALs), waste management, and post-mining reclamation. However, the existence of these formal regulations does not always translate into effective environmental protection on the ground. Various studies have shown that in many mining areas, AMDALs often function more as administrative instruments to fulfill permit requirements than as substantive tools to prevent environmental degradation (Parnika et al., 2024). As a result, environmental impact control mechanisms, which should be preventative in nature, tend to be formalistic and reactive.

In the context of local governance, institutional capacity is a crucial factor influencing the effectiveness of environmental policy implementation. Studies show that limited human resources, technical capacity, and oversight authority often weaken local governments' ability to control the environmental impacts of mining activities (Widiasih et al., 2024). In Banyuwangi, pressure to maintain the investment climate and regional economic stability has the potential to create a policy dilemma, where strict enforcement of environmental standards is perceived as an obstacle to economic development. This situation demonstrates that governance practices are shaped not only by formal regulations but also by short-term political and economic calculations that influence decision-making.

The political ecology approach explains that local governments, along with corporate interests and political elites, are involved in power relations that shape natural resource management policies and determine the distribution of their ecological impacts. In the case of Tumpang Pitu, government decisions regarding mining permits, area status determination, and environmental monitoring have direct implications for changes in the local ecosystem (Lutfiyah et al., 2024). The government acts not only as a regulator but also as a facilitator of extractive activities that have significant ecological consequences. This perspective aligns with the findings of Ungureanu & Popartan (2024), who emphasized that governance practices are an integral part of a region's ecological dynamics.

From a political ecology perspective, the Tumpang Pitu gold mining policy reflects a pattern of extractive development that prioritizes economic growth, while environmental costs are disproportionately borne by local communities and ecosystems (Datta, 2018). Research shows that resource-producing regions often bear the greatest ecological burdens, while economic benefits tend to be distributed unequally (Charnley et al., 2018). This dynamic is particularly evident in Tumpang Pitu, where local communities face high risks of environmental degradation with limited involvement in decision-making. Furthermore, the development of supporting mining infrastructure, such as mining roads and processing facilities, extends the impact of policies beyond the formal concession area. Extractive infrastructure is often a major driver of habitat fragmentation and landscape change, even more significant than mining activities themselves (Ntuli et al., 2021). In the context of Tumpang Pitu, this infrastructure development further intensifies ecological pressures on coastal and hilly areas, which serve a crucial role as buffers for terrestrial and marine ecosystems.

An analysis of the policy and governance context in Tumpang Pitu shows that environmental policies tend to be reactive, implemented after conflict or damage has emerged, rather than preventively implemented during the planning stage. One study confirms that a reactive approach is a common feature of extractive sector governance, particularly in areas with high investment pressure (Wang et al., 2020). In the long term, this pattern has the potential to deepen environmental conflicts and undermine government legitimacy.

Thus, the Tumpang Pitu gold mine case demonstrates that environmental conflict cannot be separated from power relations and state political decisions that favor extractive interests, as explained in the political ecology approach. Mining policies oriented toward economic growth, limited institutional capacity, fragmented authority, and weak enforcement of environmental regulations collectively create conditions vulnerable to ecological degradation and social conflict. This analysis provides an important foundation for understanding the following section, which will delve deeper into the practices of political ecology and power relations in the Tumpang Pitu environmental conflict.

Within the framework of political ecology, the management of the Tumpang Pitu gold mine is understood as an arena for power contestation between the state, corporations, and local communities. The environmental conflicts occurring in this region cannot be seen solely as a direct result of the physical impacts of mining activities, but rather as a manifestation of structural tensions between extractive development policies, government practices, and the socio-ecological interests of local communities. Therefore, conflict analysis needs to focus on how power is exercised, negotiated, and legitimized in public policy. In this context, political policy plays a vital role in determining the distribution of ecological impacts and who bears the most environmental risks.

Power relations in the mining sector are generally characterized by unequal access to resources, information, and decision-making processes. Toumbourou et al. (2020) emphasize that the state often finds itself in an ambiguous position, acting on the one hand as a protector of public and environmental interests, while also acting as a facilitator of economic and investment interests. This ambiguity is evident in the Tumpang Pitu case, where the government simultaneously prioritizes a narrative of economic development while, in practice, providing ample space for mining expansion (Monalisa et al., 2025). This situation demonstrates that the state is not entirely neutral but is actively involved in shaping policy directions that favor economic interests over ecological sustainability.

Licensing practices are a primary arena for the manifestation of these power relations. The permit-granting process in Tumpang Pitu demonstrates how administrative authority is used to legitimize resource exploitation in areas of high ecological value. Licensing mechanisms in the extractive sector are often closed and technocratic, limiting public participation in decision-making (Samad et al., 2021). In this context, the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) often serves only as a legal-formal instrument to meet regulatory requirements, rather than as a deliberative tool for comprehensively assessing ecological risks. Public participation in the EIA process tends to be procedural rather than substantive,

failing to effectively accommodate residents' aspirations and concerns ([Santyaningtyas & Atikah, 2023](#)).

Political ecology views mining policy as the result of an alliance of interests between the state and corporations. The state tends to prioritize investment stability through simplified regulations and accelerated licensing ([Mohamad Nasir, 2022](#)). Narratives of development, economic growth, and job creation are used to justify exploitation, while environmental damage is positioned as a tolerable consequence. However, this technocratic approach often ignores the socio-ecological dimension and the dependence of local communities on the ecosystems in which they live ([Kumayza, 2021](#)). As a result, mining policy prioritizes investment interests over protecting communities' ecological rights.

Unequal power relations also determine the production and legitimacy of environmental knowledge. Technical documents such as feasibility studies and environmental impact assessments (EIAs) often reflect the interests of dominant actors, marginalizing local knowledge and the empirical experiences of communities ([Beban & Banks, 2023](#)). Differences in risk perceptions between the government and communities are a major source of conflict, with the government relying more on formal and quantitative indicators, while communities assess risks based on direct experiences of environmental change ([Setiawan, 2024](#)). Empirical experience in various regions shows that extractive activities have long-term ecological impacts that are difficult to reverse ([Haddaway et al., 2022](#)). This situation triggers community resistance as an effort to maintain the socio-ecological relationships that have supported their lives ([Wardhani & Cahyati, 2020](#)).

The state's response to the Tumpang Pitu conflict exhibits contradictory dynamics. While the government has expressed a commitment to environmental protection, security measures and the criminalization of protests have often been used to quell community resistance, particularly against projects deemed strategic to the state's economic interests ([Scheidel et al., 2020](#)). Administrative mechanisms such as permit evaluations or corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs often fail to address the root causes, focusing more on technical mitigation than on substantive changes in power structures ([Wagner & Suteki, 2019](#)). These narratives of sustainability and CSR are often symbolic and serve to quell public criticism without being followed by real policy transformation ([Schilling et al., 2021](#)).

On the other hand, weak environmental oversight and law enforcement is a structural issue closely linked to the power relations between the government and business actors ([Nilsson et al., 2021](#)). This situation creates space for environmentally harmful practices without adequate control mechanisms. As a result, affected communities are encouraged to engage in various forms of resistance in an effort to defend their right to a healthy environment. This resistance is often supported by civil society organizations and the media, which play a role in broadening public discourse and pressuring government accountability ([Sholikin, 2023](#)).

Political ecology analysis shows that environmental conflict in Tumpang Pitu is persistent because it is a structural consequence of a development model that places natural exploitation as the primary foundation of economic accumulation. The unequal bargaining

power is stark, with corporations enjoying strong political access while local communities have limited access to information, complaint mechanisms, and channels for participation (Perdiansyah et al., 2025). This situation emphasizes that conflict resolution cannot be achieved solely through technical improvements or formal law enforcement but requires fundamental changes in natural resource governance.

Therefore, a more deliberative and participatory approach is needed to enable meaningful community involvement in the decision-making process (Rose et al., 2025). Transforming power relations and the direction of political policies toward a more inclusive and ecologically just environment are essential prerequisites for achieving environmental sustainability. Without these changes, the conflict in Tumpang Pitu will continue to recur, as its root causes lie in unresolved unequal distribution of resources, political access, and environmental justice.

Ecological Impacts and Governance Implications in Tumpang Pitu Gold Mining

From a political ecology perspective, the ecological impacts of the Tumpang Pitu mine cannot be understood solely as a technical consequence of mining activities, but rather as a product of political decisions and power relations that govern the exploitation and management of natural resources. Therefore, an analysis of the ecological impacts in Tumpang Pitu needs to be directly linked to the governance practices that shape them. One of the most significant ecological impacts is land cover change and terrestrial ecosystem degradation. Open-pit mining activities, the development of supporting infrastructure, and the opening of mining roads contribute to habitat fragmentation and the loss of natural vegetation. Land cover changes in tropical mining areas often result in reduced biodiversity and disrupted the area's ecological function (Pangemanan et al., 2022). In the context of Tumpang Pitu, the degradation of the hill ecosystem and buffer forest increases the region's vulnerability to erosion, landslides, and disruption of the local hydrological system.

The ecological impacts of gold mining are also significantly felt in the water systems surrounding the mining area. The mining and mineral processing processes have the potential to produce liquid waste and sediment that can pollute rivers and coastal areas. Various studies have shown that water pollution from gold mining directly impacts water quality, disrupts the health of aquatic ecosystems, and the sustainability of the livelihoods of communities dependent on aquatic resources (Pretty & Utami, 2025). In coastal areas like Tumpang Pitu, the close relationship between terrestrial and marine ecosystems increases the risk of cumulative ecological impacts. This situation demonstrates that environmental damage from mining is not isolated but rather spreads across ecosystems and impacts various aspects of community life.

From a political ecology perspective, managing ecological impacts depends heavily on the effectiveness of environmental policy instruments and the capacity of regulatory institutions. Although environmental regulations normatively stipulate waste management and environmental quality monitoring obligations, various studies confirm that implementation of these regulations is often weak in the mining sector. Limited technical capacity, minimal oversight resources, and conflicts of interest between economic goals and

environmental protection are key factors weakening the effectiveness of environmental governance (Nabila & Riofita, n.d.). This situation demonstrates that ecological damage is not solely caused by technical mining activities, but also by structural weaknesses in governance practices and environmental oversight.

The ecological impacts of gold mining also have broad socio-ecological implications for surrounding communities. Environmental degradation can impact communities' access to vital resources such as clean water, agricultural land, and coastal resources. Environmental changes often exacerbate social inequalities, as those most dependent on local natural resources are often the most vulnerable to ecological impacts (Sabrin et al., 2025). In the case of Tumpang Pitu, the ecological impacts of mining have the potential to deepen social conflict and prolong tensions between communities, the government, and the company due to the unequal distribution of risks and benefits.

The governance implications of these ecological impacts highlight the importance of a more preventative and integrative policy approach. Managing ecological impacts cannot rely solely on post-mining technical instruments but requires comprehensive planning from the early stages of decision-making (Wulandari & Sisdiyanto, 2025). Political ecology emphasizes that ecological issues are fundamentally political issues inherent in power relations and the distribution of justice. Therefore, environmental policies need to be designed with social, political, and ecological dimensions in mind, not simply as administrative issues.

Furthermore, the ecological impacts of gold mining in Tumpang Pitu demonstrate the importance of cross-scale and cross-sector governance. The interconnectedness of national policies, regional government practices, and local dynamics demands stronger coordination in environmental management. Recent studies have shown that fragmented authority and weak inter-institutional coordination often hamper environmental protection efforts in the extractive sector (Munim et al., 2024). In this context, strengthening the capacity of regional government institutions and establishing effective coordination mechanisms are crucial prerequisites for improving environmental governance in mining areas.

Another governance implication relates to the need for increased transparency and accountability in mining management. Significant ecological impacts demand open and publicly accessible oversight mechanisms. One study shows that information transparency and public participation can improve the quality of decision-making and strengthen policy legitimacy (Yang et al., 2022). Within a political ecology framework, environmental information disclosure is not simply a technical instrument but part of the power relations that determine who has control over ecological knowledge and decisions.

Furthermore, the ecological impacts of gold mining in Tumpang Pitu underscore the need for a paradigm shift in development from extractivism to ecological sustainability. Development models based on natural resource extraction have structural limitations in maintaining long-term sustainability, particularly in areas with high ecological vulnerability (Dunlap et al., 2024). Therefore, the governance implications of the Tumpang Pitu case are relevant not only to mining policy but also to the broader direction of regional and national

development. Without this paradigm shift, mining policies will continue to generate recurring ecological and social conflicts.

Thus, the ecological impacts of the Tumpang Pitu gold mine and their governance implications reinforce this study's primary argument that environmental conflict is a product of political ecological practices. The resulting ecological impacts reflect not only technical failures in environmental management but also structural failures in governance. This analysis asserts that efforts towards ecological sustainability require fundamental changes in policies, governance practices, and power relations, as a foundation for managing natural resources more equitably and sustainably.

Conclusion

This research confirms that the environmental conflict at the Tumpang Pitu gold mine is a product of the unequal power relations between the state, corporations, and local communities in natural resource management. From a political ecology perspective, mining policy is not neutral, but rather reflects an extractive development orientation that prioritizes economic interests over ecological sustainability and social justice. The licensing process, the use of environmental instruments such as the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), and mining governance practices function more as mechanisms of political legitimacy than as substantive environmental protection tools. As a result, the distribution of benefits and risks is unequal, with economic gains concentrated in the hands of the state and corporations, while ecological and social burdens are predominantly borne by local communities.

From an Environmental Justice perspective, research findings demonstrate distributional and procedural injustice, reflected in minimal community participation in decision-making and the marginalization of local knowledge in mining policies. Ecological impacts such as ecosystem degradation, habitat fragmentation, and water pollution demonstrate that the environmental conflict in Tumpang Pitu is a direct consequence of political decisions that disregard environmental carrying capacity. Therefore, conflict resolution cannot be achieved solely through technical approaches; it requires policy transformation that is more inclusive, transparent, and oriented toward ecological justice. Integrating Environmental Justice principles, strengthening public participation, and recognizing the rights and knowledge of local communities are key prerequisites for more equitable and sustainable mining governance.

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