Reconstruction of Local Wisdom-Based Regional Policy as A Legal Instrument for Achieving Green Governance and The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

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| ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the reconstruction of regional policy based on local wisdom as a legal instrument to achieve green governance and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The research explores how indigenous values, local knowledge systems, and socio-cultural practices can be transformed into regulatory frameworks that strengthen environmental sustainability, community participation, and ecological justice within regional development. The research applies a normative legal approach complemented by socio-legal analysis. Primary legal materials, regional regulations, and SDGs policy documents are examined through doctrinal interpretation, while empirical insights were obtained through interviews with policymakers, academics, and community leaders. The data were analyzed qualitatively to identify gaps, strengths, and the potential model of local wisdom-based policy reconstruction. The findings reveal that most regional policies remain formalistic, sectoral, and insufficiently rooted in community-based ecological values. However, local wisdom such as customary norms, collective land management, and traditional ecological rituals contains substantive principles aligned with green governance, including sustainability, balance, and participatory justice. Integrating these values into policy formulation enables regional governments to produce more inclusive regulations, enhance compliance, and accelerate SDGs indicators related to environment, law, and institutional governance. Reconstructing regional policy based on local wisdom provides a transformative legal pathway to realizing green governance and the SDGs. It strengthens regulatory legitimacy, fosters environmental accountability, and expands citizen ownership of development agendas. The study recommends the institutionalization of local wisdom into regional law-making processes through regulatory codification, multi- stakeholder dialogue, and adaptive governance models.

| Keywords:
Local Wisdom, Regional Policy, Green Governance, Sustainability, SDGs.

I. INTRODUCTION

Environmental degradation, climate change, biodiversity loss, and increasing ecological inequality have become pressing global challenges that directly threaten human security and sustainable development. These challenges reveal the limitations of conventional development paradigms that prioritize economic growth while neglecting environmental sustainability and social justice. In response to this condition, the concept of green governance has emerged as a normative and operational framework that integrates environmental protection, democratic participation, accountability, and intergenerational justice into governance systems.

At the global level, green governance principles are institutionally reinforced through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the United Nations in 2015. The SDGs provide a comprehensive roadmap for development that balances economic progress, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability. Several SDGs explicitly emphasize environmental protection, climate action, strong institutions, and inclusive governance, underscoring the importance of legal and policy instruments that are environmentally responsive and socially

rooted.

Within decentralized governance systems, regional governments hold a strategic position in translating global commitments into concrete legal norms and development policies. Regional policies function as the closest regulatory instruments to local communities, directly shaping land use, natural resource management, environmental protection, and public participation. However, in practice, many regional policies remain technocratic, sectoral, and formalistic. They are often formulated using top-down approaches, relying heavily on administrative rationality and uniform legal models, while overlooking local socio-cultural contexts and indigenous ecological knowledge.

This disconnection between formal regulation and local realities frequently results in weak policy implementation, low community compliance, regulatory resistance, and environmental inefficiency. Environmental laws that are detached from community values tend to lack legitimacy, thereby reducing their effectiveness as instruments of governance. Consequently, there is an urgent need to reconstruct regional policies by embedding substantive social values and ecological ethics that are already living within local communities.

Local wisdom represents a repository of indigenous knowledge, customary norms, traditional institutions, and socio- cultural practices developed through long-term interaction between communities and their natural environment. These values regulate human–nature relations through principles of balance, harmony, sustainability, collective responsibility, and respect for ecological limits. In many regions, local wisdom has proven effective in preserving natural resources, managing communal land, and resolving environmental conflicts long before the emergence of modern statutory regulations.

From a legal perspective, local wisdom constitutes a form of living law that reflects societal values and collective environmental ethics. The integration of local wisdom into formal legal frameworks aligns with the pluralistic understanding of law, which recognizes the coexistence of state law, customary law, and social norms. Embedding local wisdom into regional policy not only strengthens normative legitimacy but also enhances participatory governance and environmental accountability. Despite its potential, local wisdom remains marginal within formal regional policy-making processes. Existing regulations rarely provide explicit mechanisms for identifying, codifying, and institutionalizing indigenous values into binding legal norms. As a result, regional development policies often fail to harness local social capital as a driving force for sustainable development. Based on this background, this study examines the reconstruction of local wisdom-based regional policy as a legal instrument for achieving green governance and the Sustainable Development Goals. The central research question addressed is how local wisdom can be systematically transformed into regional legal frameworks that strengthen environmental sustainability, community participation, and ecological justice. By offering a normative and socio-legal analysis, this study aims to contribute both theoretically and practically to the development of inclusi

II. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a **normative legal research method** as the primary approach, complemented by a **socio-legal perspective** to enrich contextual understanding. The normative approach is used to examine law as a system of norms governing regional policy, environmental protection, and sustainable development, particularly in relation to green governance and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Normative legal analysis focuses on the coherence, substance, and orientation of legal norms regulating regional governance and environmental management. This includes examining whether regional policies reflect ecological sustainability, participatory governance, and social justice as fundamental legal principles. The normative approach is essential to assess the extent to which local wisdom is recognized, accommodated, or marginalized within formal regulatory frameworks. To complement normative analysis, a **socio-legal approach** is applied to understand the interaction between law and social reality. This approach acknowledges that law operates within socio-cultural contexts and is influenced by community values, customary practices, and institutional behavior. The socio-legal perspective enables the study to explore how local wisdom functions as a living law and how it can be transformed into binding regional legal norms.

1. **Types and Sources of Legal Materials**, This research utilizes three categories of legal materials:

    a. **Primary legal materials**, consisting of statutory regulations related to regional governance, environmental protection, and sustainable development, including regional regulations (*peraturan daerah*), national environmental laws, and SDGs-related policy documents.

    b. **Secondary legal materials**, comprising scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, legal commentaries, policy reports, and previous research related to green governance, local wisdom, legal pluralism, and sustainable development.

c. **Tertiary legal materials**, including legal dictionaries, encyclopedias, and reference materials that support conceptual clarification and terminological consistency.

2. **Data Collection and Analysis**

   a. Data collection is conducted through systematic **document study**, involving identification, classification, and examination of legal norms and policy texts. To strengthen empirical relevance, qualitative data are obtained through **semi-structured interviews** with policymakers, academics, and community leaders who possess knowledge of customary practices and regional governance.

   b. Data analysis is carried out qualitatively using **doctrinal legal interpretation**, conceptual analysis, and thematic analysis. Normative findings are integrated with socio-legal insights to formulate a comprehensive model for reconstructing regional policy based on local wisdom as a legal instrument for achieving green governance and the SDGs.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Existing Conditions of Regional Policy and Environmental Governance

The analysis reveals that most regional policies related to environmental management and development remain **formalistic and sectoral**. Environmental norms are often positioned as administrative requirements rather than as substantive legal principles guiding regional development. As a result, policies tend to focus on procedural compliance instead of ecological sustainability and long-term environmental impact. Moreover, policy formulation processes are largely dominated by governmental institutions with limited substantive participation from local communities. Although public consultation is formally acknowledged, it often lacks meaningful influence on regulatory outcomes. This condition weakens policy legitimacy and reduces community compliance and enforcement effectiveness.

3.2 Marginalization of Local Wisdom in Regional Legal Frameworks

The findings indicate that local wisdom is rarely institutionalized explicitly within regional regulations. Customary norms, indigenous ecological practices, and traditional governance mechanisms are often acknowledged symbolically but lack operational and binding legal force. In many cases, references to local wisdom appear only in policy preambles without substantive regulatory provisions. This marginalization results in the underutilization of indigenous ecological knowledge that has historically supported sustainable resource management. Practices such as communal land governance, customary environmental sanctions, and ritual-based conservation mechanisms demonstrate adaptive and effective governance models. However, without formal legal recognition, these practices remain vulnerable to erosion and exclusion from development policies.

3.3 Substantive Compatibility between Local Wisdom and Green Governance

Despite limited formal recognition, this study finds strong substantive compatibility between local wisdom and the core principles of green governance. Local wisdom embodies values of sustainability, balance, harmony, collective responsibility, precaution, and intergenerational equity. These values align closely with green governance principles, including participatory decision-making, environmental accountability, and inclusive institutions. Local wisdom-based practices promote long-term ecological stewardship and community-based monitoring mechanisms. When integrated into formal legal norms, these values enhance social legitimacy, strengthen voluntary compliance, and improve environmental governance effectiveness.

3.4 Model of Local Wisdom-Based Regional Policy Reconstruction

Based on normative and socio-legal analysis, this study proposes a **local wisdom-based regional policy reconstruction model** consisting of three interrelated dimensions:

Normative integration, through explicit codification of local wisdom values into regional regulations as legal principles, objectives, and substantive norms.

Institutional integration, by formally recognizing customary institutions and community representatives in policy formulation, implementation, and supervision.

Procedural integration, ensuring participatory, deliberative, and inclusive mechanisms throughout the regulatory cycle.

This model transforms regional policy from a top-down regulatory instrument into a collaborative governance framework rooted in local ecological ethics and societal values.

3.5 Contribution to the Achievement of the SDGs

The integration of local wisdom into regional policy contributes significantly to the achievement of the SDGs, particularly goals related to environmental sustainability, strong institutions, and inclusive governance. Local wisdom-based policies enhance policy effectiveness by strengthening community ownership, reducing conflict, and improving regulatory compliance. Furthermore, this approach supports the localization of the SDGs by translating global development targets into context-sensitive legal instruments that reflect local realities and ecological conditions.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the reconstruction of regional policy based on local wisdom constitutes a **strategic and transformative legal instrument** for achieving green governance and advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The findings confirm that existing regional policies tend to be **formalistic, fragmented, and administratively oriented**, with limited integration of community-based ecological values. Such conditions weaken regulatory legitimacy, reduce public compliance, and limit the effectiveness of environmental governance at the regional level.

Local wisdom, as evidenced in customary norms, collective land management systems, traditional ecological practices, and community-based sanctions, embodies **substantive environmental principles** that are highly compatible with green governance. These principles include sustainability, ecological balance, precaution, participatory justice, and intergenerational responsibility. As a form of *living law*, local wisdom provides not only moral guidance but also practical governance mechanisms that have proven resilient in maintaining environmental sustainability.

The study further concludes that the integration of local wisdom into regional legal frameworks must go beyond symbolic recognition. Effective policy reconstruction requires **systematic normative codification**, **institutional recognition of customary actors**, and **procedural guarantees for meaningful community participation** throughout the policy cycle. Without these elements, references to local wisdom risk remaining declarative and ineffective.

From a governance perspective, local wisdom-based regional policy reconstruction enhances **regulatory legitimacy, environmental accountability, and social ownership of development agendas**. These improvements directly support the localization of the SDGs by translating global sustainability commitments into context-sensitive legal norms that resonate with local ecological and socio-cultural realities. Consequently, regional governments are better positioned to achieve SDGs indicators related to environmental protection, inclusive institutions, and sustainable resource management.

In conclusion, embedding local wisdom within regional policy-making is not merely a cultural or ethical consideration but a **normative necessity** for sustainable and inclusive governance. This approach strengthens the role of law as a catalyst for ecological justice and democratic participation. Therefore, future regional development strategies should prioritize the institutionalization of local wisdom as a core legal foundation to ensure that green governance and the SDGs are realized in a substantive, legitimate, and enduring manner.

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