

Mother and Mother Earth in the Era of Oil Palm Plantations: Ecological Feminism Study in Tebo Regency

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to describe the impacts caused by the land conversion that occurred in Tebo Regency from rubber plantations to oil palm plantations. Ecological Feminism is used as an analytical tool to see how women are marginalized from nature and how the opening of oil palm plantations has an impact on ecological diversity and women lives. In this research, a descriptive-analytical qualitative method was used where data collection was carried out by observing and exploring literature related to the impact of oil palm plantations, women poverty, and women relationship with nature. The findings in this research are that women are marginalized from nature, nature from nature, and women from economic access by the conversion of land from rubber plantations to oil palm plantations. The marginalization of women in accessing land returns them to the domestic sphere. This also causes environmental damage to get worse, so that directly or indirectly it is a form of empowerment of women.

They have difficulty in obtaining firewood, clean water, and the diversity is reduced .

Keywords: Mother, Mother Earth, Marginalization, Domestication

A. Introduction

For more than three decades , rubber plantations have been the community's main plantation commodity. However, today they are starting to be replaced by palm oil. The community, through the governments plantation rejuvenation program, turned its rubber plantations into oil palm plantations with aid funds of 30 million per hectare of plantation (BPDP, 2020). Tebo Regency, todays area is starting to be dominated by oil palm plantations, both community plantations and company-owned plantations. The entry and development of palm oil. However, in Tebo has had a significant impact on the environment and vulnerable groups, such as women and children.

The opening of oil palm plantations gives a new atmosphere in environmental changes, crises and economic discrimination. Palm oil plantations marginalize women from the economic sector. Women were pushed out from agricultural land and forced to return to taking care of the domestic sphere. Directly marginalizing women from livelihoods is a process of impoverishing women. This is based on the hegemony of masculinity in a patriarchal society and the domination of capitalism over societys economy. Women are directed to live their lives in the domestic sphere, while men are directed to work and receive wages (Moraletat, 2020) .

In the history of development and modernization , the green revolution has clearly become a direct process that eliminated women in the world of agriculture, replaced by the presence of new technology. Women have also become poorer over time, especially in the family at its narrowest level. Sexist policies support the process of marginalization of women .

Policy implementation is still dominated by the assumption that the public domain and STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) are identical to men, so that women still occupy the position of second class society (*second gender*) in the development process (Utomo & Haryani, 2019).

Women who are attached to a double workload also have to face the direct impact of environmental changes that occur, such as water crises during the dry season, floods during the season or high rainfall, crises in clean water sources, wells dry up, or unavailability of clean water for daily needs. Women have experienced changes in their social lives since plantations were taken over by oil palm, which is included in the type of cultivated plant because it has a fairly large production scale and requires special requirements that suit their needs.

Departing from the line of thought above, this study seeks to examine the impact caused by land conversion from rubber plantations to oil palm plantations on the natural environment and women in Tebo. The reason for choosing the Tebo area is because Tebo is a concession area for industrial planted forests, oil palm plantations, rubber plantations, coal mines, rice fields, and moors. During the New Order, the area that was formerly Bungo-Tebo Regency was a use-right area for the use of forest products by both state-owned companies and private companies. This Forest Utilization Rights Company (HPH) took a lot of time to exploit forests in the Jambi Province area, one of its concession areas was Bungo Tebo district, including the current Tebo District. In the 1980s, along with the wave of transmigration, large-scale land clearing for rubber plantations was also carried out (Angraini & Ramona, 2020) .

There are several studies that discuss the impact of oil palm plantations on women. An article by Fatimah Azzahra, et al. entitled "Women and the Resilience of Palm Oil Farmers Household Livelihoods: Analysis of the Impact of Expansion Palm Oil Plantations" in *Sodality: Journal of Rural Sociology*, 2017.

Azzahra, discussed the expansion of oil palm plantations which caused changes in the livelihood structure in the form of a shift in sources of livelihood from rubber plantations to oil palm plantations. Apart from that, Azzahra, also explained that in the lower levels of households there was a change in women work from the domestic to the public sphere, namely as oil palm workers. This is done in order to increase household income so that they remain economically resilient when a crisis occurs. However, the environment has become very vulnerable, causing drought and being exacerbated by forest fires (Azzahra et al., 2017, pp. 25–35).

Desy Ade Trya and Eddy Gunawan wrote an article entitled “The Effect of Agricultural Land Conversion on Women Farmers in West Aceh Regency” in *the Scientific Journal of Development Economics Students*, 2017. Trya and Gunawan in their writing stated that the conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural land tends to increase. This is driven by land prices which are increasing day by day and the strategic location of land is a consideration for farmers when selling or converting the agricultural land they own. It was also stated that the age factor did not affect the income of female farmers, while the education level and area of land conversion had a positive and significant effect on the income of female farmers in Aceh Besar Regency (Trya & Gunawan, 2017, pp. 481–488)

Nikodemus Nikos article entitled “Mali Dayak Women: Protecting Nature from Death” in *Umbara: Indonesian Journal of Anthropology*, 2017 discussed that a strong connection between the lives of Mali Dayak women and nature had been formed. They maintain culture and customs related to nature, especially in the context of the emergence of the mining industry and palm oil plantations (Nico, 2018, pp. 78–87). An article by Meylan SF Wambrauw et al with the title “Analysis of the Impact of the Forest Crisis on Merauke Women from an Ecofeminist Perspective” in the *Journal of Women and Children (JPA)*, 2022.

In their paper, Wambrau et al. stated that the crisis occurring in Merauke are mostly caused by the opening of plantations dominated by oil palm. The impact on indigenous communities, including women, is oppression, violations of indigenous peoples rights, increasingly heavy double burdens and the threat of poverty, hunger and disease. In this case, government policy is considered not optimal in overcoming this problem (Wambrau et al., 2022, pp. 104–130).

Based on the studies above, it can be seen that there is great attention to the problem of the relationship between nature and women. However, each has a different study and focus. In previous research, there have been no studies that specifically discuss the impact of land conversion from rubber plantations to oil palm plantations on the sustainability of womens lives from a feminist ecological perspective. This research trend departs from previous studies which did not specifically discuss the impact of oil palm plantations on womens access to nature.

In this research, a qualitative method is used, involves interpretation, a natural approach to the subject material (Pradoko, 2017, p. 1). Qualitative methods not only describe what is visible but also examine what is behind a symptom or event. Furthermore, descriptive methods are also used. In which researchers try to photograph the symptoms, facts and reality of events related to the conversion of land from rubber plantations to palm oil plantations that occurred in Tebo, then describe them as they really are. (Raco, 2010, p. 50). Collecting data sources is done by observation and tracing written sources. Both in the form of books and journal articles that examine the impact of oil palm plantations, womens poverty, and womens relationship with nature.

B. Discussion

1. Palm Oil and the Future of Ecology

Palm oil, which has the Latin name *Elaeis Guineensis*, is an imported plant from the African continent. It was first imported by the Dutch in 1848 to the Bogor Botanical Gardens from Mauritius and Amsterdam (Fachrizal et al., 2014). It was first developed in 1904 in Deli, East Sumatra as a commercial commodity plant. (Wulansari & Sigit, 2016). Still quoting from the environmental news platform Mongabay, in the 1980s, in line with the program to increase food productivity, the commodity Palm Oil became popular. Plantation development is also included in the transmigration program (Wulansari & Sigit, 2016).

Competing with rubber plantations, both environmentally, socially and economically, palm oil plantations are the most favored commodity by the government. In Tebo for the last five years, there has been a very significant increase in the opening of oil palm plantations. 2017 (Tebo, 2018, p. 223). Palm oil plantations in Tebo has total 16,558 hectares; an increase from 15,982 hectares in 2016. In 2016, no private plantations were found in Tebo. However, the BPS report in 2017 stated that at least 42,911 hectares of palm oil plantations were privately owned. The total oil palm plantations owned by the public and private sector in 2017 were 59,469 hectares. This number continues to increase in 2018, the total area of oil palm plantations in Tebo is 103,072 hectares with the division of 60,128 hectares being community plantations and 42,944 hectares being private plantations (Tebo, 2019, p. 223).

In the Tebo annual report for 2019, the area of community plantations increased to 61,002 hectares, in 2020 it was 61,476 hectares, and in 2021 it was 60,985 hectares. However, in the 2019, 2020 and 2021 reports, there is no report on the number of additional private plantation areas. If we look at 2017 and 2018, there was increasing in land area for oil palm plantations

managed by the private sector, this also does not rule out the possibility of land expansion in the last three years. Quoted from Mongabay (Wulansari & Sigit, 2016), for large-scale companies in under 1000 hectares, the maximum area in one province reaches 20,000 hectares, while throughout Indonesia the maximum area is 100,000 hectares.

If based on the regulations on the amount of land as stated in the environmental news platform Mongabay, land cover for oil palm plantations in Tebo has exceeded the maximum area limit, which is in the five year period (2017-2021) an area of $\pm 61,000$ hectares, of the total area of Tebo 646,000 hectares. This number could continue to increase every year by reducing the amount of forest cover in Tebo and the conversion of rubber plantation land to oil palm plantations.

The oil palm plantations are spread across twelve sub-districts in Tebo Regency, namely Tebo Ilir, Muara Tabir, Tebo Tengah, Sumay, Tengah Ilir, Rimbo Bujang, Rimbo Ulu, Rimbo Ilir, Tebo Ulu, VII Koto, Serai Serumpun, and VII Koto Ilir. The sub-district with the largest private plantation area is Tebo Ilir with 10,848 hectares. This number continued to increase in 2018, the area of private oil palm plantations in Tebo Ilir increased by 4,790.13 hectares. The increasing in the area of privately owned plantations that occurred in Tebo Ilir is a concession area for the palm oil company owned by PT. Lestari Asri Jaya (LAJ). PT LAJ itself is a member of the Business Permit for Utilization of Timber Forest Products in Plantation Forests (IUPHHK-HT), one of two companies operating in Tebo (Indonesia, 2016) which is in Tebo Ilir.

Oil palm is a type of plant that is a monoculture type of plant. This type of monoculture plant requires a large area to grow and cannot be interspersed with other plants or intercropping systems. As a result, forests inevitably lose various types of plants and several animal species experience extinction. The loss of this type of plant affects the function of the forest as a water

regulator and water producer. The amount of water needed for oil palms, starting from seeding, is around ± 2 liters of water/poly bag per day. This is adjusted to the age of the seeds, if every 1000 palm oil seeds are of the same age, they will need 2000 liters of water/day. Meanwhile, the water requirement for adult palm oil plants is about 10 liters/day, meaning that every 1000 adult palm oil plants require 10,000 liters of water/day. That means no less than 1,000 liters of water are needed every day for 1 hectare of oil palm plantations. (Badrun & Mubarak, 2010, p. 75)

The government is intensively promoting land conversion from rubber plantations to palm oil plantations, one of which is by distributing palm oil funds to improve the performance of the Indonesian palm oil sector. The distribution of these funds is regulated in Presidential Decree no. 61/2015 jo. Presidential Decree No.66/2018 concerning the rejuvenation of oil palm plantations. Through this presidential regulation, the government distributed aid funds amounting to Rp.30 million/hectare/planter (BPDP, 2020). This presidential regulation was issued in line with the agricultural departments view that plantation crops are a way to obtain and increase the countrys foreign exchange (Oksana et al., 2012, p. 30). However, this government program is not in line with the presidents commitment to reducing deforestation. The President emphasized protecting forests, peat lands and improving community welfare based on forest management. The conversion of land and forest functions causes a decrease in land quality.

The promotion of land conversion and conversion of forests into oil palm plantations means that womens access to land and nature are lost. This is closely related to the environmental impacts caused by oil palm plantations. The impact of oil palm plantations starts from the loss of forest cover which functions as a natural water storage area and protects the soil from erosion due to rainwater. After the forest cover was changed to potential oil palm plantation land, soil erosion and flooding occurred. Soil

erosion occurs when rainwater falls directly onto the ground without a canopy of tree leaves to provide protection (Rizka et al., 2019, p. 137). Apart from that, the presence of oil palm plantations causes a reduction in the effectiveness of the soil in absorbing rainwater, this is due to the quality of the soil changing after oil palm is planted. When the soil loses its ability to absorb water, what happens is flooding during high rainfall. Another impact caused by oil palm plantations is related to the use of non-organic fertilizers to help the growth and development of oil palm plants. Fertilizers used on oil palm plants include pesticides, herbicides and petroleum-based fertilizers. The use of fertilizer on a large scale and continuously causes damage to the soil and causes pollution in the waters. Thus, the existence of oil palm plantations can damage other land in the area surroundings (Badrun & Mubarak, 2010, p. 75).

Oil Palm Plantations have a 25 year harvest period, it means Oil Palm plants have a productive life of 25 years. Unproductive oil palm plantation land will become bushes, because it is abandoned or becomes new critical land. The soil will lose its nutrients, especially in an acidic environment, so that the land has no vegetation other than wild grass which burns easily. (Badrun & Mubarak, 2010, p. 76). Not to mention the costs of clearing land or forests for oil palm plantations which must be borne by nature. Primitive land clearing is often done by burning the land. In 2015, for example, a large-scale fire occurred in Jambi, causing smoke haze and causing other problems, such as acute respiratory infections (ARI).

The fire that occurred was not without cause, it was caused by massive deforestation in the context of converting land to palm oil plantations. Fires resulting from conversion of oil palm plantation land do not only occur in Jambi. Throughout 2015-2017, areas in Indonesia that experienced large-scale fires included; The provinces of South Sumatra, Riau, Central Kalimantan, South Kalimantan and West Kalimantan also experienced fires

and haze. In Jambi itself, it was the worst forest fire, where almost 80% of the peat land was burned (Kurniawan, 2016). Palm oil plantations are the biggest contributor to the process of resource destruction natural resources, then deforestation, and also social conflict (Fachrizal et al., 2014)

2. Mother, Mother Earth and Patriarchal Capitalism

Rubber plantations have been included in Tebo (formerly Bungo Tebo or Bute) since the establishment of the first rubber factory in Jambi province, namely PT. Djambi Waras in 1964, which then operated in the 1970s (Angraini & Ramona, 2020, p. 338). As the rubber factory opens in Jambi, demand for rubber in Jambi continues to increase. This affects the amount of land cover cleared for rubber plantations. Next PT. Djambi Waras opened a branch in Jujuhan, Bungo district (formerly Bungo Tebo or BUTE) under the name Djambi Waras Plant Jujuhan (Kiranamegatara, 2020). This rubber factory accommodates rubber originating from communities around Bungo and Tebo and as far away as West Sumatra and South Sumatra.

To meet production needs, land was cleared and turned into rubber plantations. The practice of clearing land at that time was still traditional, namely by burning it. However, the community clearing of rubber plantation land is carried out by working together, so that when the burning takes place, the fire does not spread beyond the boundaries of what will be used as a plantation, this method is called *merun*. Burning is done during the day after sunrise before the sun rises, or after the sun almost sets. Burning is done by looking at the wind direction to avoid the spread of the fire. Everyone stood guard at the edge of the boundary, guarding the fire, until the land used for the garden was burned down and the fire was completely dead and there were no more fire sparks left.

Clearing land for rubber plantations by burning the land is not without negative effects. Clearing forest to make plantations

means displacing and shifting the habitat of the animals that live in the forest. Here are also the plants that live in it. Before initiating the burning process, the forest is opened, the trees are cut down, and then the logs left over from the logging are usually used as materials to make shelter in the gardens during the planting period, usually requiring a waiting period of two years.

The practice of burning land appears to still be carried out today. The opening of large-scale palm oil plantations by companies by burning land will of course save production costs. Opening a rubber plantation to become an oil palm plantation can be done by opening without burning (zero burning) by cutting down all the rubber trees and collecting them, which are then sold to be made into wood chips (Vachlepi, 2015). Logging activities usually use *senso* tools and are carried out collectively. For one hectare of land, a minimum of three workers are needed. It takes workers 3-4 days from morning to evening to cut down all the rubber trees. Wages are paid using the piece rate method, which is an agreement between the land/plantation owner and the worker, with the cost of chainsaw fuel being borne by the worker. Additionally, wages are calculated daily, fuel costs are borne by the land/plantation owner. The land is cleaned from the remains of rubber trees that have been cut down, for 2-3 days. Cleaning is carried out using heavy equipment like excavators. The heavy equipment used for land clearing is obtained by renting , the rental fee is Rp. 700,000/hour. If land clearing takes 5 hours to complete, the rental fee will be IDR. 3,500,000. The rental fee will be more expensive if the land clearing time is 3 days. The rental costs incurred are Rp. 10,500,000/3 days and this cost does not include expenses for excavator fuel. This makes the costs or costs of clearing land without burning expensive, so clearing land by burning is chosen to reduce costs and save time on land clearing (Syah & Aprio, 2021).

One hectare of land is usually owned by lower middle families, while upper middle families own more than five

hectares of land. Likewise with the company, which owns more than one hundred hectares of land. Choosing the burning method for clearing land means that the costs or costs are not borne by the land owner, but are borne by nature. Animals that lived on rubber plantations previously were also affected by this method of clearing land by burning . Large-scale land burning often does not follow the practices of local communities, so that the fire spreads to other areas/plantations and threatens the sustainability of the function of the surrounding environment.

The conversion of land from rubber plantations to oil palm plantations does not place women in strategic positions. If women actively participate in the plantation transfer process by not using the method of using heavy equipment as unpaid workers. Women are active in this conversion, just like men, but are seen as helping the process.

In rubber plantation, women are active in family gardens and government plantation. Women are actively involved in processing, maintaining and harvesting rubber sap products. Rubber processing, or tapping, takes different time from one farmer to another. In communities in the Tebo area, tapping is carried out for a whole week, with reference to the harvest period being carried out before market day. The harvest of rubber latex is related to the local market tradition which is carried out once a week. The market depends on each village and has different trading times. For example, in one sub-district, Tebo Ulu sub-district, Teluk Kualii village holds a market on Friday, so rubber farmers will harvest the sap from tapping on the previous day, on Thursday. Meanwhile, Pulau Temiang Village holds a market on Saturdays, so farmers will harvest and sell the harvest on Fridays.

Meanwhile, garden maintenance times are repeated according to the needs of the garden and the needs of the rubber trees. Garden maintenance by cleaning the garden is carried out every three months during the rainy season and once every four

to six months in the dry season by cleaning the land. Apart from optimizing tapping yields, this cleaning of rubber plantations also aims to protect farmers from wild animals in rubber plantations. Fertilizing rubber trees is done every six months. Maintenance is carried out to obtain more and optimal sap yields. Rubber trees that are well maintained will produce lots of high-quality latex.

However, a diversion The conversion of land from rubber plantations to palm oil plantations means that women are once again subordinated to sources of livelihood. After previously the government implemented a green revolution in the agricultural sector. The green revolution was carried out to increase agricultural production by applying modern technology, such as the use of non-organic fertilizers, medicines for plants, and superior seeds (Nugraheni, 2017, p. 534). The revolution in agriculture that began in the early 1970s (Rinardi et al., 2019, p. 126) placing women in a subordinate position in the field of work (agriculture) (Fakih, 2013).

The change in community plantation patterns from rubber plantations to palm oil plantations means that women are also directly marginalized from nature and the environment. Previously, women could directly cultivate their gardens by utilizing unplanted land or between rubber plants to plant other plants. Rubber farming women also use old and fallen rubber trees to harvest mushrooms made into vegetables. Apart from that, ferns can thrive in rubber gardens. Rubber gardens are usually well maintained by planting various types of trees and other vegetables. Women Rubber farmers also use dead Rubber wood to make fuel/firewood. This shows that nature and women take care of each other.

Not only plants suitable for consumption can live well on rubber plantations, various types of wild animals can also be found on community plantations. Namely various types of primates (long-tailed monkeys, hoops, *cengkok* and other types of primates), birds, leopards, forest cats, sun bears, wild boars,

tigers and other animals, which can actually threaten the lives of rubber farmers. However, this is a proof that plantation patterns are friendly to nature, bringing harmony to nature and humans themselves, by maintaining biodiversity. The conversion of rubber plantations into oil palm plantations is evidence of the marginalization of nature from nature itself, and from women. Women from nature, and from economic access. Vandana Shiva in the book *Ecofeminism* (Mies & Shiva, 2014, p. 164) states that in practice, nature is subordinated to men, women are subordinated to men, consumer goods become production goods, and the local becomes global. Women and nature have been building a relationship for a very long time, this relationship between women and nature survives through culture, history and language (Merchant, 1989, p. xix). This relationship is well maintained by womens practices in relating to nature.

In a patriarchal society, women are functioned as fulfilling domestic needs, women are marginalized from nature, making nature and women themselves vulnerable. It is increasingly difficult for women to access their needs from nature, and it is increasingly difficult to fulfill their domestic needs. Meanwhile, nature, when land is transferred function as palm oil plantations become vulnerable, and can no longer even support environmental needs. Marginalizing or excluding women from the natural environment and environmental destruction are carried out continuously. Shiva (2014a, p. 165) mentions that in a patriarchal world perspective men measure everything based on its value, including the value (price) of the environment, until there is no longer any space for the natural environment itself, all that remains is patriarchal hierarchy. In this circle of environmental regulation by patriarchy, women are seen as different creatures , treated as figures who are not the same as men and are inferior figures. Likewise, patriarchy views the environment as an inferior part, diversity is seen as a part that has no value. It will be valuable when the natural wealth

produced by nature itself is exploited for commercial purposes.

The conversion of rubber plantation land into oil palm plantations expresses the dominance of patriarchal capitalism in building its anthropocentric hierarchy towards nature. According to Carolyn Merchant (1989, p. 5), this dominance grows from the market economy by marginalizing nature and women (another vulnerable group). This domination is demonstrated by destroying the environment by planting monoculture crops (such as oil palm) which is the main direction of the patriarchal capitalist system. (Mies & Shiva, 2014, p. 165). This plantation or monoculture farming system not only destroys nature, but also marginalizes women from nature. The marginalization of women from nature then bares to new poverty for women. Women are a gender group that consists of class and race differences (Ruether, 2003, p. 7). But according to Rosemary (2003, p. viii), the reality is that women are still the poorest group from poverty which is proof of the existence of limitations wherever gender is analyzed based on class and race in this world.

3. Women Rubber Farmers and the New Poverty

Poverty is the most important problem to study and find a solution to. The problem of poverty affects all communities in the world, including the United States, which is known as a superpower. In the United States most of the wealth (68%) is owned by only 10% of the nations population. Meanwhile, 40% of the countrys wealth is owned by 1% of the population (Sukesi, 2015, p. 11). In Indonesia itself, the problem of poverty seems to be very urgent to be addressed. Especially in rural areas of Indonesia. The condition of poor people can be seen from those who cannot fulfill basic needs, have limited sources of income, do not have basic facilities and infrastructure, such as adequate housing, poor environmental quality, and are uninhabitable. Poverty is not only about lack of food and lack of productive

assets, but also about unease and limited participation in community activities. The characteristics used to identify someone as poor vary, but in general those that can be used as a reference to identify rural poverty are land control, type of work, and level of income, daily living conditions and relationships with other communities (Sukesi, 2015, p. 1).

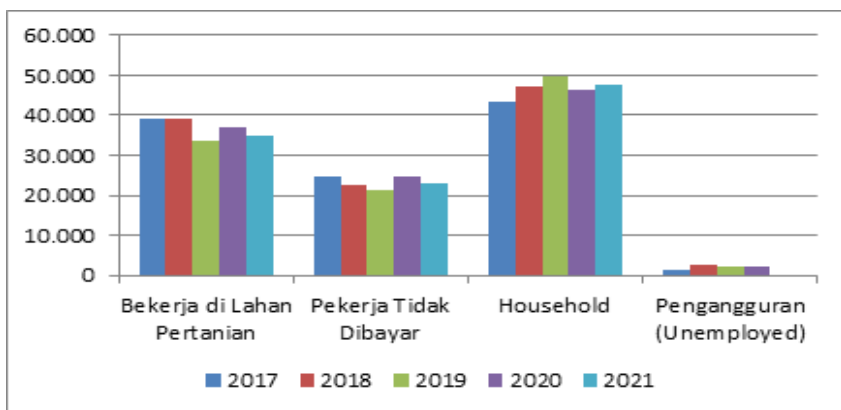
Poverty is a multidimensional structural and cultural problem, including political, social, economic, assets and natural resources, psychology, and so on. In general, poor society is a condition of society that is in a vulnerable, helpless, isolated situation and unable to express its aspirations. This problem is still experienced by many women and causes them to be unable to fulfill the minimum cultural needs properly (Sukesi, 2015, p. 1). When talking about womens issue, it cannot be separated from the issue of poverty. Especially women who live in rural areas in Indonesia cannot be separated from poor and limited living conditions. The living conditions of women in remote and isolated rural areas are no exception, far from access to public facilities. They live in unity with nature and use nature as a source of livelihood. Access to education is also difficult to obtain. After completing their elementary school education, they choose to work in Malaysia, or get married at a relatively young age (Niko, 2018).

The matter above becomes even more serious when women access to water and land is lost. This is what happened to women in Tebo. Problems arising from oil palm plantations are not solely environmental problems. The existence of oil palm plantations also has an impact on the communitys economic sector. The economic problem that often arises is the familys daily needs not being met. For those who own palm oil plantations, their familys economy depends heavily on the palm oil harvest. However, palm oil prices are often uncertain, and fluctuate because they follow global market prices (Azzahra et al., 2017, p. 29).

Data on women main employment status released by the

Tebo Regency Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2017 (Tebo, 2018, p. 77) recorded as many as 24,808 women as family or unpaid workers , in 2018 and 2019 this number decreased slightly to 22,465 and 21,324 respectively. (Tebo, 2019, p. 73, 2020, p. 68). Meanwhile, in 2020 there was an increase in the number of 24,551 women working without payment, and in 2021 there were 22,803 women working as family or unpaid workers. (Tebo, 2021, p. 68, 2022, p. 70). This figure experienced a very drastic increase in 2019 and 2020, with an increase of 3,227 women working unpaid or as family workers. Tebo BPS also recorded that the main activity of Tebo women as housewives was 47,527 women, this figure was obtained from a total of 60,710 women who were included in the non-labor force category. (Tebo, 2022, p. 70). The highest number of women as housewives was in 2019 with 49,730 women working in the domestic sector. Change in quantity women who work on agricultural land, women who work unpaid, unemployed women, and women who work in the domestic sector can be seen in the graph below.

Graph 1. Number of Women Working on Agricultural Land, Unpaid, Household Workers , and Unemployed in Tebo 2017-2021.



Source: Processed from the Tebo Regency BPS report for 2017-2021 (Tebo, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022).

Based on the graph above, it can be seen that from 2017-2021 the number of women working in the domestic sector is greater than the number of women working on agricultural land. In fact, women who work in the domestic sector are not in the labor force (economically inactive) category. Even more than those who don't work at all. However, women are often charged with double work (double burden), in a patriarchal society, women who work on agricultural land simultaneously also work in the domestic sphere. Furthermore, these women are also referred to as family workers, meaning that women who work on agricultural land (rubber plantations) are unpaid workers. Thus, the presence of oil palm plantations among women farmers in Tebo shows the birth of new poverty. This is shown by the increasing number of women as family or unpaid workers and the high number of women as housewives.

The majority of Tebo women have the desire to participate further in relation to plantations, in order to increase plantation and economic productivity. However, women are required to remain in the domestic sphere, whether it is providing food, caring for children, cleaning the house, and carrying out other traditional gender roles. The existing patriarchal structure is an obstacle for Tebo women to become more involved in plantations. (Hanifa & Pramudya, Juni 2017, pp. 41-42)

Not only economic problems arise due to the existence of oil palm plantations. Community social problems are also not spared from the impact of oil palm plantations. Rural communities who depend on palm oil plantations for their livelihoods will slowly see their cooperative life eroded. They tend to indirectly avoid socializing with other people. Facts on the ground show that the palm oil economy must be managed individually/industrially, unlike the plantation economy, where farmer cooperation is really needed. This condition causes vulnerability to the livelihoods of oil palm farming households (Azzahra et al., 2017, p. 31). In addition, land conflicts often occur between

communities and palm oil companies. Forest expansion by palm oil companies often targets land belonging to local communities. Not only local community land, but indigenous community land is also the target of oil palm companies, and it is not uncommon for companies to annex land into protracted land conflicts.

Environmental damage caused by oil palm plantations also targets women farmers in Tebo. Women are more vulnerable when access to land and nature is lost. Rubber farmer women mostly depend on nature for their livelihoods. Rubber plantations are a type of intercropping, between the rubber trees fruit trees will be planted, such as Petai (*Parkia Speciosa*), Jengkol (*Archidendron Pauciflorum*), Jackfruit (*Artocarpus heterophyllus*), Kabau (*Archidendron Microcarpum*), Cempedak (*Artocarpus integer*), Durian (*Durio zibethinus*) and so on. Apart from that, traditional medicines are usually planted between rubber trees, such as ginger (*Zingiber officinale*), turmeric (*Curcuma longa Linn*), galangal (*Kaemferia Galanga*), ginger (*Curcuma zanthorrhiza*), and so on (Azzahra, Dharmawan and Pandjaitan, 2017). The results of the tree can be used to meet daily food needs. When the rubber plantation land was transferred converted into oil palm plantations, women lose their management space access land which is then planted with trees and traditional medicinal plants. Oil Palm Plants cause soil in the surrounding area is dry and loses nutrients, which are very necessary for the growth and development of other plants. When land becomes dry and loses its productivity, types of plants such as Petai Tree (*Parkia Speciosa*), Jengkol (*Archidendron Pauciflorum*), Jackfruit (*Artocarpus heterophyllus*), and so on cannot grow.

The existence of oil palm plantations, makes womens access to rubber plantations is lost. The conversion of land causes women to lose their daily livelihood in meeting household needs. The presence of oil palm plantations directly eliminates the economic resources of families in Tebo, through cutting off womens access to land and nature. The takeover of rubber

plantations makes women bear a double economic burden. Income from palm oil plantations is unpredictable and they also have to buy other basic necessities, such as rice, vegetables and other food ingredients. (North, 2010) .

Womens work and knowledge of nature is central to conservation and resource use, because women work in more than one sector, and because women carry out multiple tasks (Mies & Shiva, 2014, p. 167) . If women are not involved in managing nature, or women are kept away from nature by changing the livelihood system of groups of women farmers or planters, it will not only be women who will have a bad impact, but also nature itself. Shiva (Mies & Shiva, 2014, p. 170) added that loss of *biodiversity* is the price that must be paid for applying the concepts of monoculture, plant uniformity and homogeneity promoted by patriarchy.

C. Conclusion

The conversion of rubber plantation land into oil palm plantations makes women a marginalized group. This marginalization of women from plantations or livelihood systems also marginalizes women from economic access. In rubber plantations, women can also carry out production activities, such as processing and maintenance. However, in the oil palm plantation system, women no longer have access to plantations. In Tebo, rubber plantations are starting to be converted function as an oil palm plantation, through funding from the government. Apart from being marginalized from the economic system, women are also marginalized from nature. The marginalization of women from nature causes greater environmental damage. Planting monoculture crops causes ecological damage and environmental vulnerability. Monoculture planting such as oil palm also causes economic displacement among women. Women are deliberately marginalized from agricultural lands, to

return to the domestic sphere. However, the return of women to the domestic sphere is not a solution. Planting oil palm disrupts womens access to nature which supports womens lives in the domestic sphere, making the need for firewood, clean water and *diversity* increasingly difficult. The opening and planting of oil palm can briefly be called the impoverishment of women and the destruction of nature.

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