



Ethnoecology of Communication of Fatumnasi Community and Mount Mutis

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to determine how the Ethnoecology of Mount Mutis communication with the Fatumnasi Community as one of the community groups that live and 'coexist' with Mount Mutis. The method used in this study is Qualitative using a case study approach. The results of this study are that the Fatumnasi community views Mount Mutis as a source of life and a mother who breastfeeds most of the island of Timor. This view and belief are benchmarks for the community to continue to maintain and respect the existence of Mount Mutis by performing various rituals and implementing various prohibitions through the government and customs, thus proving that the Fatumnasi community is able to build environmental communication or combine ethnology and ecology which is evident in communication in the form of community responses to the existence of Mount Mutis.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This research was specifically conducted in Fatumnasi Village, precisely in Mount Mutis. Geographically, Mount Mutis is located between Fatumnasi and Tobu Districts, South Central Timor Regency (TTS) and North Central Timor Regency (TTU) (Date 2024), (Abi, Purnama, and Pramatana 2023). Mount Mutis is one of the highest peaks on Timor Island with a height of around $\pm 2,427$ meters above sea level. The journey to Mount Mutis can be done through several routes, namely via Fatumnasi (TTS), Tobu, and Miofa (TTU). However, the fastest route to reach Mount Mutis is through Fatumnasi Village, Fatumnasi District, TTS Regency (Maak, Muga, and Kiak 2022), (Elim and Mba 2021). Mount Mutis is not only famous for its exotic natural scenery, but also rich in protected biodiversity such as parrots, cuscuses, civets, wild boars, monkeys, and honey bees. Protected plants on Mount Mutis include Ampupu trees (*eucalyptus urophylla*), natural bonsai, orchids, tree moss, pine trees, and all the natural wealth in the forest that must be well maintained. (Widi 2017).

In January to February, there is a hereditary ban on cutting down bamboo and banyan trees because it can cause strong winds and heavy rain. (LARGE and POWER nd), (Nature nd). The Mount Mutis area is relatively fertile so that it supports the lives of the people around the foot of Mount Mutis, especially in Fatumnasi Village. Fatumnasi Village is located at an altitude of around ± 1150

meters above sea level with temperatures that tend to be low. During the rainy season, the air temperature in Fatumnasi Village can drop to 15°C. The people in Fatumnasi Village belong to the Dawan tribe who live as the Swapraja Mollo community (an area that has its own government authority in the Mollo area) known as Oenam (Sep 2023).

The origin of the name Fatumnasi comes from the combination of the words Fatu (stone) and Mnasi (old) which means "Old Stone" (Ratih et al. 2016). The name Fatumnasi also refers to two large tribes, namely the Batu Isu Tribe and the Batu Fainman Tribe, which are combined into one, producing Fatumnasi. This stone is the place of ritual or Faut Kanaf (Marga Stone). The Fatumnasi area has abundant water sources from Mount Mutis and provides life for the community through nature and fertile soil. The Fatumnasi community is very dependent on nature because the majority of their livelihoods are farmers and ranchers. (West et al. nd), (Father 2013).

The closeness of the relationship between society and the natural environment is an undeniable fact. Since the existence of society in an area, it is certain that the signs and characteristics of nature have been understood and studied by the group. (SARI and). Especially for traditional communities, signs that come from nature are even applied in various forms of rituals and traditions. The results of studies in various regions can show that this phenomenon has occurred. Like how the Fatumnasi community understands Mount Mutis as a giver of life for them. Mount Mutis, which is a type of natural object, is considered by the Fatumnasi community as a living object, therefore, the community also has a kind of kinship with the mountain. (Pradhani and others), (IN WEST TIMOR-NUSA nd).

The attachment to the relationship with nature which is then manifested in the form of various activities, is also seen from how the people of Fatumnasi hold annual rituals around the foot of Mount Mutis and have certain taboos while in the area around Mount Mutis. (Sep 2023). In the language of Sociology, this is often referred to as local wisdom. Understanding the structure of nature is indeed the key word for organizing a stable life and minimizing natural disaster problems. This is done with a prerequisite that the environment and humans are one inseparable unit. Fighting the structure and type of nature will never benefit humans, therefore the best thing is to be friends or understand the rhythm of nature (Yenrizal 2016), (Farhaeni 2023). This is what AT Rambo calls the term ethnoecology, or viewing nature from a human perspective which is an inseparable unity. This perspective is not in an anthropocentric context, but there is an inseparable unity. (Darmawan and others), (Yenrizal, Muhamin, and Sirozi 2024).

There are several previous and similar studies, namely: 1) Research entitled Rivers in the Meaning of Rural Communities, Ethnoecological Study of Communication in the Karang Anyar Village Community, Banyuasin, South Sumatra by Yenrizal from the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Raden Fatah State Islamic University, Palembang, which obtained research results that there is a symbolic meaning process from the community towards the local environment which is marked by the meaning of rivers, borders, settlements, and plants that grow around them. These meanings are attached to all community activities in Karang Anyar (Yenrizal 2016), (Al Qutuby, Kholiludin, and Salam 2020).

Research entitled Ethnoecology of Coastal Communities in Banyutowo, Dukuhseti, Pati, Central Java by Thiyas Tono Taufiq from the Faculty of Ushuluddin and Islamic Thought, UIN Sunan Kalijaga, which obtained research results that the perspective of the Banyutowo coastal community towards the sea is an inseparable unity, because the majority of Banyutowo residents depend on marine products for their livelihoods. (Taufiq and Th 2018). The perspective of the coastal community in Banyutowo through their local knowledge can be typified into 3 types, First, people who do not care at all about the surrounding environment, because the marine environment in coastal areas is considered less important. Second, people who have the view that they actually know, but are reluctant to care about the environment. Third, people who know and care about the marine environment. The actions of the coastal people of Banyutowo towards nature vary. Coastal people who care about the marine environment, they are reluctant to treat the sea as they please. On the

other hand, people who do not care about the marine environment, treat the sea as they please. The role of the coastal community of Banyutowo in overcoming environmental problems in the coastal area is divided into three groups; First, the role of church youth who care about the environment, through the village social service movement. Second, the role of mosque youth through the village clean-up movement (sambatan). Third, the role of fishermen through traditional knowledge about the marine environment is reflected in the form of use and utilization of the sea, one of which is the tradition of the sea alms ritual. Overall, the perspective and role of the coastal community of Banyutowo towards the marine environment is currently shifting along with changes in environmental conditions in the coastal area(Wardah et al. nd),(Nisa 2022).

Research entitled Postmodern Critique of Discourse, Culture and Ecotourism 'Ethno-Ecological Study of Komodo Village Tourism Destination - Labuan Bajo - NTT by Felisianus Efrem Jelahut, Siti Karlinah and Evi Novianti from Padjadjaran University which obtained research results namely Cultural background is the whole way of life of humans where he himself plays an important role in a masterpiece of development that aims for the benefit of the whole. Culture and society are two dimensions that are very closely related and it cannot be denied that both cannot be separated(Natuna and Pratiwi 2024),(2018). Therefore, discussing culture is in line with discussing the people who live in it. The bond between the Komodo Village community and Komodo itself has a strong cultural background, even before TNK was designated as ecotourism. The determination of TNK as ecotourism is also inseparable from the role of the community which in itself has an inner connection with the culture and customs of Komodo. This is an absolute thing and cannot be described as two independent dimensions. Thus, talking about Komodo, also talking about the Komodo Village community. Both are dimensions that bridge natural phenomena and social phenomena. Natural phenomena represent Komodo and the community's culture about Komodo. While social phenomena represent social responses to these natural phenomena. It should be noted that according to this study, society and ecotourism are subjects that cannot be separated from the Komodo entity on Komodo Island because if this separation occurs, it will cause a cosmic imbalance. The impact is that one of the two elements will not be able to become one and lose its identity as an ecotourism. In other words, the discourse on closing Komodo Island needs to be reviewed from an ethno-ecological aspect, especially if there is a separation between the community and the Komodo itself. The community, which initially acted as a bridge between the government and the natural phenomena in TNK, if separated, the possibility is that the Komodo itself will become extinct, apart from the reason for the community providing food to the animal, they also have an inseparable bond like siblings 'sebae'(Suni 2019),(Kurniati and others).

Based on the background, the researcher is interested in researching the ethnoecology of the Fatumnasi community in their interaction with Mount Mutis. The purpose of this study is to find out how the Ethnoecology of Communication to the Community Around Mount Mutis (Case Study in Fatumnasi Village, Fatumnasi District, South Central Timor Regency). The urgency of this study is that the interaction of the Fatumnasi community with Mount Mutis sometimes causes so much turmoil from certain parties who want to make the location of Mount Mutis a nature reserve, without any community living or just being in the area. This study will support the Fatumnasi community to stay, be, and utilize the Mount Mutis area as a place to seek a living.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This type of research is qualitative with a case study approach. According to Bogdan and Taylor (Moleong, 2016; 4-5) defines qualitative methodology as a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior. Meanwhile, according to Denzim and Lincoln, qualitative research is research that uses a natural setting, with the intention of interpreting the phenomena that occur and is carried out by involving various existing methods. According to Creswell (2013: 135), what is meant by case study research is a qualitative approach in which researchers explore real life, contemporary limited systems (cases) or various limited systems (various cases), through detailed and in-depth data collection involving

various sources of information or multiple sources of information (eg observations, interviews, audiovisual materials, documents and various reports), and report case descriptions and case themes.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Interaction between the surrounding community and Mount Mutis

Mount Mutis, which previously had the status of the Mutis Timau Nature Reserve, changed its status. On September 8, 2024, through the Decree of the Minister of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) Number 946 of 2024, the status of this area was changed to the Mutis Timau National Park. This change aims to improve protection of biodiversity and provide a legal umbrella for indigenous people's activities that have been considered illegal. The process of changing the status began with a proposal from the then Governor of NTT, Viktor Bungtilu Laiskodat, in January 2023. KLHK formed an integrated team involving various parties, including academics and government institutions, to conduct studies and recommendations regarding changes in the function of the area. Mutis Timau National Park now covers an area of 78,789 hectares, which is a combination of the Nature Reserve and Protected Forest. Overall, although the change in the status of the Mutis Timau National Park aims for environmental conservation and empowerment of indigenous peoples, the challenges in its implementation and the need for active community involvement in the decision-making process remain a major concern. This was expressed by Environmental Activist Beny Agusto Obe:

"The public's understanding of the change in the status of Mount Mutis is dualistic. There are people who understand that the nature reserve means that a dead key cannot enter Mount Mutis. When there is a change in status, the community understands that they can enter and manage what is on Mount Mutis, this understanding is dangerous for the balance of the ecosystem on Mount Mutis, the effects of which will be felt by future generations."

This statement shows that the status change of Mount Mutis is not fully understood by the community. On the other hand, the government has not provided sufficient understanding and socialization about the status change of Mount Mutis. This has the potential to cause wrong behavior from the community, not only the local community but also tourists, researchers or investors who are interested in Mount Mutis.

For the people of Timor Island, long before the South Central Timor Regency was formed, Mount Mutis was an important history for the people of Timor Island. The Dawan tribe considers Mount Mutis as a holy and sacred place and the place of origin of their ancestors. The Fatumnasi community, most of whom come from the Dawan tribe, believes that Mount Mutis is the figure of a "breastfeeding mother" for most of Timor Island. This belief encourages the community to maintain and preserve Mount Mutis so that it continues to provide life. The ancestors of the Dawan tribe specifically called Mount Mutis "Namtis", in the local language, which means "everything is complete", marked by four water sources called Oe Kanaf (marga water) which form the River Basin (DAS) to the Benain area (river located in Kakaniuk Village, Malaka Tengah District, Belu Regency) and Noelmina DAS (river located in TTS Regency) and several other areas in NTT, four water sources that form the River Basin to the Benain area. This is found in the statement of the Fatumnasi community leader Mateos Anin:

This Mutis means dripping, melting, flowing so that it can be consumed by all creatures. Well that's the meaning of Mutis. Mutis, melting, dripping, to be consumed by all creatures. This Mutis is said to be a beautiful lady as I said earlier in my child, this beautiful lady or mother. So this beautiful lady or mother can breastfeed all countries, eh all living creatures. Including animals, including plants and including humans. Because why is it said that a beautiful lady or mother is breastfeeding? Because there are 4 sources of water. Four sources of water that can come out of Mount Mutis"

The above statement shows that the local community interprets Mount Mutis as a giver of life and a determinant of the sustainability of community life through the flow of water that comes out of the springs on Mount Mutis. In the context of the community living in the courtyard of Mount

Mutis, clans or "kanaf-kanaf" have a central role in their social structure and identity. The Fatumnasi community believes that Mount Mutis is the place of origin of their clans. Their belief states that their ancestors found these clans during their journey to the peak of Mount Mutis, where they gained identity and responsibility in the social hierarchy according to the clan they have. These clans not only function as social markers, but also regulate the behavior and obligations of individuals in society. Each clan has principles and norms that must be upheld by its members, including in maintaining environmental sustainability and paying respect to ancestors. Thus, Mount Mutis is not only a source of life for the Fatumnasi community, but also a symbol of their origins and identity as a community bound by the existing clans. As a "Nursing Mother" Mount Mutis not only supports the surrounding community but also supports the community in the neighboring country, the Republic Democratic Timor Leste. This was revealed by Beny Agusto Obe, an environmental activist at Green House:

"TTU and TTS drink water directly from Mutis, the river whose water flows from Mount Mutis flows through 4 districts, to Malaka and to Timor Leste. This means that the people of Timor Leste also live from the water that comes down from Mount Mutis."

This expression shows that the life given by Mount Mutis is not only felt by the people who live around it but also by people in other places far from Mount Mutis but whose river water comes from Mount Mutis. In the context of village government, Mount Mutis is seen as a place where various traditional rituals are carried out by clan owners spread across the grounds of Mount Mutis. The people who live around it can perform traditional rituals such as harvesting honey, rituals asking for rain or heat. The rituals carried out are not always special rituals related to the survival of humans and animals but also other rituals that can be carried out by residents related to the division of clans and suf. This is found in the expression of the Head of Fatumnasi Village, Alfred Imanuel Bay:

"Well, we usually do that in every Suf, later each clan will have a ritual there, they have a ritual where they automatically have to go to the ritual there. For example, if he has a cow, maybe he has a kadang there, whether he likes it or not, he has to pray there. And the most ritual places are in nature reserve areas, if Bai Dong back then there was no church, they would pray there."

The above expression shows that the community around Mount Mutis interprets the existence of Mount Mutis as a place for the community to build their relationship with God through special rituals. Communication between the community around Mount Mutis and God is marked by a series of prayers expressed in the local language known as "Natoni". Natoni usually contains the community's request for God to bless their crops and give them abundant harvests. Natoni is usually expressed by traditional elders who use local traditional languages.

3.2 Customary Rituals and Traditions of the Community Related to Mount Mutis

Just like other areas in the Indonesian plains, the Gunung Mutis region is also bound by customs and beliefs towards nature. One form of respect for customs and nature is through the implementation of rituals and enforcement of prohibitions that are considered sacred or important by the community. In Fatumnasi Village, there are several groups of clans known as Suf. They have special myths and beliefs that lead to the implementation of the "Faut Kanaf Oe Kanaf" ritual as a place where the community carries out ceremonies.

This ritual is not only ceremonial, but also an important part of the daily life of the local community. For example, during the ritual, the community will give offerings from the produce of the earth as a sign of gratitude to nature for the abundance given. In addition, there are also certain prohibitions that must be followed during the ritual, such as a prohibition on entering certain areas or disturbing the ongoing procession.

In the socio-cultural context, the "Faut Kanaf Oe Kanaf" ritual is a symbol of togetherness and solidarity between residents. Through this ritual, the relationship between residents in the Fatumnasi Village community becomes closer and more harmonious. This is also a momentum to strengthen cultural identity and preserve ancestral heritage that has existed since ancient times.

Thus, the ritual is not only a religious practice, but also a means of strengthening the unity and integrity of the local community.

The people in the Gunung Mutis area usually perform traditional rituals, such as rituals to collect honey bees, and rituals to ask for rain and heat. In addition, there are other rituals that they usually do related to clans and the division of suf. This was expressed by the Head of Fatumnasi Village:

"Well, we usually do it in each suf, later each clan will go to a ritual there, they have a ritual place where they automatically have to go to the ritual there. For example, if they have a cow, maybe they have a barn there, they have to pray there. And the most ritual places are in nature reserve areas, if in the past there was no church, they would pray there. For example, if their cow is sick, they hear that there is a disease, they will go out to say it, they will say it and pray to God and then hand over the sick animal there to nature, so that nature can take care of it."

Based on this statement, it can be concluded that the people on the island of Timor, especially around Mount Mutis, still maintain the tradition of performing rituals for various purposes such as honoring ancestors, honoring Mount Mutis, and asking for something. This reflects the community's appreciation of the ancestral heritage that has been passed down from generation to generation, which also binds them to customs and nature, so that these rituals are considered an obligation for them.

Rituals that are often performed to preserve nature include 1) Ceremonies before and after climbing. This ritual is performed three times. The first takes place at the Matheos Anin traditional house; the second at the fort; and the third stone in the ritual. During the ceremony, climbers are required to give donations in the form of money, food, and betel nut at the ceremony location as a form of respect and asking for protection from the ancestors during the ceremony. The same process is carried out after the climb is complete. 2) Ceremony to ask for rain or sunny weather. The ceremony asks for the presence of honey bees, as explained by the Head of Fatumnasi Village Alfred Imanuel Bay.

"For example, for traditional rituals other than honey, it's like it rains continuously, or it means that all this time it's probably been hot and we're used to it, but that's only for certain clans, not all. It's only for certain clans, and we can't tell it in broad daylight like this because the person who wants to tell it is different from the one we tell in broad daylight, he's at night, meaning that it's quiet, then he sits down to talk to nature. It means that after that he conveys it to the creator."

In this context, the Fatumnasi community understands that this ritual is carried out at the time of harvesting the results that aim to harvest honey bees and so on. The ritual process is carried out by bringing a black chicken to ask for rain, then a white chicken to ask for sunny weather while the yellow chicken asks for a large honey harvest. The rituals carried out generally aim to communicate with the ancestors and also to God so that and also as a way to maintain good relations between the community, livestock and crops owned by the community with Mount Mutis.

3.3 Prohibitions Related to Mount Mutis

In addition to traditional ceremonies, there are also prohibitions imposed to protect Mount Mutis, such as a prohibition on taking air roots, a prohibition on littering, a prohibition on cutting down trees, a prohibition on grazing wild livestock, a prohibition on entering restricted areas, and an obligation to perform a ceremony before climbing. Violations of these rules will be subject to a fine of five million rupiah, and are required to bring animals as requested and feed the local community. If violations are repeated, a ritual prayer will be held so that nature will punish the violators.

Even though there are prohibitions and rules that have been set, the community still often violates them because of the view that Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) are considered as private property rights that allow excessive extraction for personal interests. This action causes the community to continue to raise livestock and take natural products excessively on Mount Mutis, which can damage the environment because the wild animals that are raised pollute the forest, eat

newly grown plants, and excessive tree felling and aerial root extraction can cause water sources to dry up. As expressed by the Traditional Leader, Mateos Anin:

"It is related to the taking of tree moss. The taking of tree moss, aerial roots, roots or NTFPs, they cut them directly, cut them and damage the places for animals, places for bees, because they have to perch on trees. So, they cut them and damage them, cut them and damage them. Finally, for several years, we tried to hold events to ask for honey bees, but some of them didn't want to answer, some of the honey bees didn't come back. That is because it is related to us humans who make such a method, in the end the animals can't come back."

The Head of Fatumnasi Village, Alfred Imanuel Bay, said the same thing:

"Because every day they have to bring in, bringing in one cow, maybe he puts the cow in the pen, then they have to take wood for their daily needs. Now this is what we sometimes want, yesterday I said this is us at the foot of the village, then we just want to take wood like thieves."

Prohibitions or 'pamali' in the local language were created to maintain and protect Mount Mutis. Maintaining Mount Mutis means maintaining the balance of the ecosystem in it which provides a livelihood for flora and fauna on Mount Mutis as well as for humans who live around Mount Mutis to the place where the water flow from Mount Mutis ends. If the prohibition is not obeyed, a customary fine of Five Million Rupiah will be imposed, it is mandatory to bring animals as requested and feed local residents. In the context of violating the prohibition on Mount Mutis, if it is done repeatedly, a ritual will be held so that nature will punish the perpetrators. In the view of environmental activists, the prohibitions implemented on Mount Mutis are things that should be done to maintain the sustainability of nature and suppress human behavior that has the potential to damage the balance of the Mount Mutis ecosystem. Interventions carried out by environmental activists and even by the government should be carried out in a humane manner and must pay attention to local culture.

3.4 Ethnoecology of Communication: "Mutis is a Breastfeeding Mother"

The majority of Timor Island people depend on Mount Mutis for their livelihood, especially the people of Fatumnasi village. Mount Mutis is a natural wealth asset that is owned and must be maintained by the community. Through the results of this study, it is known that the community understands the existence of Mount Mutis from a cultural, economic and social perspective simultaneously.

Culturally, the people of Fatumnasi village understand Mount Mutis with a local identity called the "breastfeeding mother" of the people of Timor Island. This term gives the meaning that Mount Mutis provides attention and is a source of life for the community. This understanding provides a community bond with customary and cultural values that see Mount Mutis as a sacred place. Calling Mount Mutis a Mother for the people of Fatumnasi village places Mount Mutis as a family of the people of Timor Island, so that the relationship that is built is a relationship that needs each other to maintain survival. This answers the understanding of environmental communication written by Corbett in *Communicating Nature: How We Create and Understand Environmental Messages*, that environmental communication in a broader understanding is presented in values, words, actions and daily practices, like family relationships.

Functionally, Mount Mutis is a means to provide daily needs for the Fatumnasi community specifically according to their livelihood. Pragmatically, the function of environmental communication between the Fatumnasi community and Mount Mutis is displayed through traditional rituals carried out in every process of building relationships with nature and Mount Mutis. This communication is built through intermediaries of traditional figures who understand the traditional language to communicate with Mount Mutis, have knowledge and experience in maintaining and carrying out traditional rituals on Mount Mutis. This environmental

communication is not only carried out by the community to Mount Mutis, but is also mandatory for people from outside Fatumnassi Village who visit Mount Mutis.

Constitutively, environmental communication is described through prohibitions and customary rules made to maintain Mount Mutis in its own condition. Theoretically, ethnoecology explained by Ashima and Heddy shows how traditional communities use ecology and live in harmony with their natural and social environment. In their lives, the people of Fatumnasi village are very close to the nature of Mount Mutis, they know its character well and understand very well how to respond to its condition. The results of the interview showed that the behavior of the people of Fatumnasi village who still graze livestock illegally, cut down trees carelessly to open land or sell, take roots carelessly for sale are consumerist and exploitation behaviors that damage the natural ecosystem of Mount Mutis. In the results of the interview with Environmental Activist Beny Agusto Obe emphasized that what should be maintained in the context of preserving the nature of Mount Mutis is human behavior.

The government in its role understands that endemic flora and fauna are one of the riches of Mount Mutis which produce the potential for forest grass stands that can be utilized by the community in wild grazing. The Fatumnai community does not understand the prohibition on the use of grass in the Mount Mutis area carelessly because of the community's habits that are not easily changed and the difficulty of obtaining feed by livestock breeders. This attitude shows a negative response to efforts to preserve and protect Mount Mutis. This behavior is in line with the theory of Communication Ethnoecology explained by Littlejohn (2009) that the socio-cultural aspects of society will determine the form and pattern of communication that occurs. In line with the symbolic interactionism theory of Mead and Blummer, the interaction between humans and their surroundings is the essence and is the central point in communication ethnoecology.

Observing the relationship between the Fatumnasi village community and Mount Mutis Through the results of the interview, the indigenous people understand the importance of the forest as a place to earn a living, a resource provider, a conservation area, a water provider and other functions. This application is also reinforced by binding rules. Such as imposing sanctions and fines on people who are proven guilty. The division of areas in the forest is also part of forest management by the community. This division has several functions, such as areas designated for agricultural activities, areas for hunting and prohibited areas or forbidden forests. These areas are used according to their function, for example agricultural areas must be used for agricultural activities, conversely for hunting areas. Forbidden areas usually should not be disturbed because of the historical sites in the forest area. However, another function of this area is also as conservation, maintaining springs or sloping areas so that landslides do not occur during the rainy season. This habit is what indigenous people use to save the environment. Indigenous people are aware of the dependence of forests, land and water. In an effort to maintain the sustainability of Mount Mutis, human behavior towards Mount Mutis must be maintained and regulated both through legal regulations and customary norms that bind the surrounding community and visitors who want to enter and observe the Mount Mutis area. Changes in the status of Mount Mutis cannot be a reason to exploit Mount Mutis and damage the existing ecosystem, resulting in environmental damage that has a negative impact on humans.

4. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study is that the Fatumnasi community views Mount Mutis as a source of life and a mother who breastfeeds most of the island of Timor. This view and belief are benchmarks for the community to maintain and respect the existence of Mount Mutis by performing various rituals and implementing various prohibitions through the government and customs, thus proving that the Fatumnasi community is able to build environmental communication. In contrast to this, the community's understanding is not in line with the behavior and attitudes of the community towards Mount Mutis which is shown through the behavior of exploitation and careless use so that habits are formed that are oriented towards benefiting the community but ignore the preservation of nature. Along with this, the government and traditional leaders have an important role. The relationship between the government and the community is well established, but if there is an imbalance in the way and behavior, efforts are needed to rebalance it. Synergy between the community, local and central governments, traditional leaders and environmental activists is needed to tighten regulations in order to maintain the sustainability of Mount Mutis..

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