



## Profile of Ecological Citizenship of the Deli Riverbank Community in Managing the Deli River

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### Abstrak

Setiap warga negara memiliki hak dan kewajiban dalam pelestarian alam dan lingkungan. Pada penelitian ini membahas mengenai profil kewarganegaraan ekologis masyarakat sungai yang meliputi kesadaran hak dan kewajiban kewarganegaraan ekologis, partisipasi, kesadaran akan tanggung jawab kolektif dalam menjaga kelestarian ekosistem dalam mengelola sungai Deli. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif, dimana penelitian yang fokus pada pemahaman mendalam terhadap konteks, makna, dan karakteristik fenomena. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Realitas seputar manajemen lingkungan Sungai Deli mencerminkan bahwa kesadaran akan hak dan kewajiban sebagai warga negara dalam konteks kewarganegaraan ekologis masih kurang. Salah satu indikator utamanya adalah tingginya tingkat polusi air di Sungai Deli. Kegiatan industri dan domestik yang kurang terkelola dengan baik menyebabkan masalah kualitas air, termasuk polusi oleh limbah industri, limbah rumah tangga, dan penggunaan pestisida pertanian. Pentingnya peran masyarakat dalam pengelolaan Sungai Deli melibatkan partisipasi aktif dalam menjaga kebersihan sungai, pengelolaan limbah, dan upaya konservasi lingkungan untuk memastikan ekosistem sungai tetap terjaga.

**Kata kunci:** Kewarganegaraan Ekologis, hak dan kewajiban dan Pengelolaan sungai deli.

### Abstract

Every citizen has rights and responsibilities in the preservation of nature and the environment. This research discusses the ecological citizenship profile of river communities, including awareness of ecological citizenship rights and obligations, participation, and awareness of collective responsibility in preserving the ecosystem while managing the Deli River. The research method employed is qualitative, focusing on a deep understanding of the context, meaning, and characteristics of the phenomenon. The findings indicate that the reality of Deli River environmental management reflects a lack of awareness regarding rights and obligations as citizens in the context of ecological citizenship. A major indicator is the high level of water pollution in the Deli River, stemming from poorly managed industrial and domestic activities, leading to water quality issues, including pollution from industrial waste, household waste, and agricultural pesticide use. The significance of community involvement in Deli River management entails active participation in maintaining river cleanliness, waste management, and environmental conservation efforts to ensure the preservation of the river ecosystem.

**Keywords:** Ecological Citizenship, rights and obligations, Deli River management.

## INTRODUCTION

Every citizen has rights and obligations in preserving nature and the environment. Preservation of nature and the environment is important because most human needs are obtained from natural resources to support survival. Indonesia is one of the countries currently experiencing environmental damage issues, especially due to the development of industrial progress in big cities. People as citizens must protect and preserve the environment, this definition leads to the concept of ecological citizenship. Ecological citizenship is a concept that emphasizes the responsibility of citizens to the environment. Ecological citizenship can be defined as the awareness and actions of citizens to protect, manage and preserve the environment. (Sari et al., 2020). Data from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia proves that the level of damage to Indonesia's natural environment has occurred in various aspects of the environment.

Rivers, forests, seas, and air have been polluted by human activities. The occurrence of environmental damage is not only caused by natural factors, but also due to the low awareness of citizens in environmental conservation efforts for the survival of life in the present and future. Evidence that is widespread in everyday life such as littering, illegal logging, and development between the physical sector and environmental conservation efforts shows an unbalanced condition. (Nurdiansyah & Komalasari, 2023).

Based on this reality, it is important that citizens have a good understanding of ecological civics or ecological citizenship.

This ecological civic is a citizen's understanding of environmental issues, status, rights, and responsibilities in managing the environment to overcome environmental problems, and promote positive and sustainable human life with the environment. The river is one of the elements that is often damaged by human activities. Deli River is one of the eight rivers in Medan City, North Sumatra, Indonesia. The river has a watershed area of 48,162 hectares (ha) and is located in three regencies/cities, namely Karo Regency (3% of the total area), Deli Serdang Regency (61.55%), and Medan City (35.45%). However, the Deli River is currently polluted by solid and liquid wastes generated by domestic and industrial activities in Medan City. Solid domestic waste or garbage generated in Medan City reaches 1,235 tons per day. In addition, river pollution also damages the river ecosystem and degrades water quality. The occurrence of deli river water pollution is one of the clear evidence that environmental damage occurs which causes many impacts. However, the occurrence of pollution cannot be denied due to the actions of the community, especially those living near the banks of the deli river and factories located near the banks of the deli river, which reflects that the ecological citizenship of the riverbank community in understanding ecological citizenship has not been maximized.

Where the ecological citizenship profile of the Deli riverbank community is also reflected in the level of participation in environmental management. Involving the community as the main stakeholder in river management is the key to the sustainability of the ecosystem. This participation can include various activities, ranging from

water quality monitoring, waste management, to habitat rehabilitation.

The reality surrounding the environmental management of the Deli River reflects that awareness of rights and obligations as citizens in the context of ecological citizenship is still lacking. One of the main indicators is the high level of water pollution in the Deli River. Poorly managed industrial and domestic activities cause water quality problems, including pollution by industrial waste, household waste, and agricultural pesticide use.

In addition, the lack of active community participation in efforts to conserve the Deli River indicates that awareness of rights and obligations as citizens related to river ecology still needs to be improved. Communities may not yet fully realize that a healthy river condition is their right, and conversely, they have an obligation to contribute to maintaining and preserving the environment. Not only that, active community participation in Deli river management not only strengthens their involvement in environmental policy, but also creates a sense of belonging to the ecosystem they enjoy. In this study, it will discuss the profile of ecological citizenship of the riverbank community also includes awareness of the rights and obligations of ecological citizenship, participation, awareness of collective responsibility in preserving the ecosystem in managing the Deli river.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used in this research is to use qualitative research methods. In qualitative research, researchers must be able to pay attention and understand it so that in revealing and exploring the research

subject it is more precise and suitable so that the results are in accordance with the objectives (Fadli, 2021: 39) Seeing the type of data needed for the purpose of this study, the techniques used in this study are observation and interview.

The location where the research took place is around the location of the Deli River in the medan deli sub-district, 2021:39). Deli River in medan deli sub-district, Medan City, North Sumatra Province. Informants who became The informants who are the subjects of this research are residents who live in settlements near the Deli River.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Profile of Ecological Citizenship

Ecological citizenship is essentially having the motivation, confidence, values awareness, practical wisdom and ability to put one's ecologically literate citizenship into action. Ecological citizenship involves empowering citizens to have the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to identify their values and goals in relation to the environment and to be able to act on their knowledge of the consequences. The definition of environmental citizenship essentially also includes an understanding of ecological issues, rights, responsibilities of citizens in environmental issues and actions taken not only to address environmental problems but also to promote positive and sustainable human interaction with the surrounding environment. Ecological citizenship is a thought or idea that is closely related to the ethical and moral procedures of citizens towards their environment responsibly able to be wise in maintaining, managing and preserving the environment.

Ecological citizenship is a concept that connects citizenship and ecology. It emphasizes the important role of citizens in protecting and preserving the environment.

The profile of ecological citizenship can be described as follows:

1. Have environmental awareness

Ecological citizens have an awareness that the environment is an important part of human life. They understand that a healthy and sustainable environment is a basic need for human life.

2. Responsible for the environment

Ecological citizens feel responsible for environmental conditions. They realize that their actions can have an impact on the environment. Therefore, they always try to keep the environment healthy and sustainable.

3. Participate in environmental protection efforts

Ecological citizens actively participate in environmental protection efforts. They can participate in various activities, such as:

- a) Conducting environmental actions, such as river clean-ups, tree planting, or environmental campaigns.
- b) Joining environmental organizations, such as Greenpeace, WWF, or Walhi.
- c) Supporting environmental policies, such as forest protection policies or waste management policies.

**B. The Role of the Community in the Management of the Deli River**

The role of the community in the management of the Deli River involves active participation in maintaining river cleanliness, waste management, and environmental conservation efforts to ensure the river ecosystem. The reality that occurs in the context of the community's role in the environmental management of the Deli River is that they do not participate. It can be seen from the large amount of garbage on the banks of the river and in the river flow that makes the river polluted. But rather than that, the government has tried to overcome the problem of garbage in the Deli river with mutual cooperation activities on the banks of the Deli River. The lack of community participation in the management of the Deli river is due to the lack of awareness of the Deli riverbank community of the community's obligation to participate in managing the Deli river as a form of ecological citizenship that reflects an understanding of rights and obligations which then raises awareness and becomes involved in Deli river management activities.

The cleanliness of the Deli River is the obligation of all parties, especially the people who live on the banks of the river. So that public awareness of their ecological citizenship obligations must be maximally understood to create community participation in managing the cleanliness of the banks of the Deli River. Many efforts have been made by the government to tackle the problem of waste, but these efforts will be in vain if the community does not participate in carrying out these efforts. The results of the analysis that has been carried out on the Deli riverbank community, that the community has a great understanding and awareness of the obligations of economic citizens so that community participation in carrying out efforts made by the government is not well implemented.

Analysis of the efforts made by the government in handling the problems that exist on the banks of the Deli river, welcomed by the community. However, the sustainability of these efforts is not carried out in a sustainable manner, which causes the same problems and never changes. One of these efforts is gotong royong. Based on news from ArmadaBerita.com, it is explained that the Mayor of Medan, Bobby Nasution, has shown his extraordinary seriousness and commitment in an effort to clean the Deli River and maintain environmental cleanliness. In a recent gotong royong action to clean the river, Bobby Nasution led a group through an inflatable boat owned by the Army to review the location that will be the focus of the massive cleanup on Wednesday (27/9). It was concluded from the interviews that the community participated in the activity only as an act of obeying the government's direction. The seriousness is not taken seriously by the community so that all efforts given will be in vain if the community does not welcome it as a solution to solve the problem.

### C. Challenges and Constraints

Based on the research that has been conducted, there are several challenges and obstacles faced by the communities on the banks of the Deli River in managing the river, including:

1. Lack of public awareness of the importance of preserving the river. There are still many people who litter the river. This causes the river to become dirty and polluted.
2. Lack of government support in river management. The government has not given serious attention to the management of the

Deli River. This can be seen from the lack of budget allocated for river management.

3. Lack of coordination between relevant parties in river management Lack of coordination between parties involved in river management causes river management to be less effective.

These challenges and constraints have caused the Deli River to become increasingly polluted and uninhabitable. This has a negative impact on the lives of the people living along the Deli River, including:

1. Increased risk of disease

River pollution can cause various diseases, such as diarrhea, vomiting, and dengue fever.

2. Decreased agricultural productivity

River pollution can lead to decreased agricultural productivity, as polluted river water cannot be used to irrigate farmland.

3. Increased poverty rate

River pollution can cause an increase in the poverty rate, because people on the banks of the Deli river cannot utilize the river to meet their needs.

To overcome these challenges and constraints, efforts are needed from various parties, including:

1. Increasing public awareness of the importance of preserving the river

The government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) need to socialize and

educate the public about the importance of preserving rivers.

## 2. Increased government support in river management

The government needs to allocate a larger budget for the management of the Deli River. In addition, the government also needs to make strict regulations to prevent river pollution.

## 3. Improved coordination between parties involved in river management

The government needs to establish a coordination forum involving various parties involved in the management of the Deli River.

These efforts need to be carried out on an ongoing basis so that the Deli River can return to being a clean and livable river.

## CONCLUSION

The profile of ecological citizenship can be described as follows:

1. Has environmental awareness
2. Responsible for the environment
3. Participate in environmental protection efforts

The reality surrounding the environmental management of the Deli River reflects that awareness of rights and obligations as citizens in the context of ecological citizenship is still lacking. One of the main indicators is the high level of water pollution in the Deli River. Poorly managed industrial and domestic activities cause water quality problems, including pollution by industrial

waste, household waste, and agricultural pesticide use.

## SUGGESTION

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