

**Pre-sessional Working Group for the 78<sup>th</sup> Session of CEDAW**  
**Joint submission by**  
**Aksi! for Gender, Social and Ecological Justice, and Save Gunung Slamet, Indonesia**  
**on**  
**Geothermal Project in Gunung Slamet, Central Jawa, Indonesia**

A feminist participatory action research was conducted in February 2020 on women and energy option. One of the community selected comprised two villages (*Panembangan* and *Kalisari*). These villages--located at the foot of *Gunung Slamet* in the sub-district of *Cilongok* in the regency of *Banyumas* in Central Jawa--are directly affected by the geothermal project (*Pembangkit Listrik Tenaga Panas Bumi* (PLTPB)) operated by PT Sejahtera Alam Energy (PT SAE).<sup>1</sup> *Gunung Slamet* is a mountain (1,400 meter above sea level) and part of a protected forest with an area of 6,775,770 meter<sup>2</sup>.<sup>2</sup>

The action research **concluded** that:

- 1) There is no information that meaningful consultation by PT SAE with the villagers from *Panembangan* and *Kalisari* was held before the geothermal construction and exploration activity though these villagers are most impacted by the geothermal project since they reside at the foot of *Gunung Slamet*. This indicates that the women and men in the two villages were not consulted prior to the project. ***The meaningful participation of communities at risk, including women, did not happen.***
- 2) There is no information that gender impact assessment/analysis was carried out in *Panembangan* and *Kalisari* prior to the geothermal project. This shows that the opinion of the women in the two villages was not taken into consideration even though their lives, health, and income are drastically affected by the geothermal project. ***This points to a total disregard of the women's rights to participation, rights to full development and advancement, and their rights as rural women.***

**In summary**, the findings (see Annex) and conclusion from this action research can be generalised to the whole of Indonesia with regard to geothermal development supported by the International Financial Institution in particular the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, and Climate Financier such as the Climate Investment Fund and the Green Climate Fund. As civil society organisations, we support the shift from fossil fuel to clean and renewable energy in addressing climate change. However, it must not be at the expense of the lives, health, and livelihood of the rural poor population. Clean and renewable energy projects do no harm to the rural people and the environment from the very beginning of its implementation. Low carbon economy push must not undermine the environmental, socio-economic, and gender considerations. Full participation of women, who are one of the key stakeholders in the community, at all stages of a project is essential to ensure that their rights are upheld. Environmental and social plus gender assessment and management must not be tokenistic in geothermal projects. Even though there is grievance mechanism in place, it is too late when forest, animals, livelihoods, and water catchments are destroyed as they can never be replaced.

**Question we would like the CEDAW Committee to ask the Indonesian government:**

What kind of measures have you established to involve women in decision-making and to protect their rights from impacts and risks from infrastructure and energy projects? If you do not have them yet, what would be your commitment and plans for those matters?

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<sup>1</sup> PT SAE is a subsidiary of STEAG PE GmbH (Germany) <http://www.saegeothermal.co.id/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJA6QMsUeGY>

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## **Annex: Findings that led to the above conclusion**

In 2017, the two villages, among other villages in *Cilongok* district, were experiencing muddy river water from upstream *Cipendok* waterfall (part of *Gunung Slamet*). All these years, the main water source for these two villages and other villages in the district of *Banyumas* are the springs above *Cipendok* waterfall and its nearby rivers.

*Panembangan* village experienced negative impact such as fishes in their fish ponds died suddenly and their paddy fields are affected by thick mud flood due to the geothermal project construction activity.<sup>3</sup> This affected their harvest (rice and fishes), which is their main source of income.

*Kalisari* village is famous for its yellow tofu making home industry. Tofu production needs a lot of water. The water source is from the springs located on the slope of *Gunung Slamet* and it has very clear and sweet water, thus producing a distinctive yellow tofu flavor. Since the incident of the muddy water, the production of yellow tofu has stopped. This affected the livelihood and main source of income of the villagers.

The villagers in *Panembangan* and *Kalisari*, especially women, were baffled as to why the water suddenly turned murky. They first suspected that there might be landslide around *Cipendok* waterfall and began asking their neighbor, relatives and village leaders about the water issue. Some villagers went to enquire the management of the Village Irrigation and the management of the provision of community-based water and sanitation (PAMSIMAS) about the muddy water. However, these two institutions were unable to provide the villagers any answer. As a last resort, some villagers and leaders decided to walk for five hours to *Cipendok* upstream to find out what is happening. When they arrived they saw logging activity. They were told that the trees were cleared to make a road for heavy vehicles to transport construction materials (e.g. steel). They were not told that there is a geothermal project in that location. Other villagers also made a trip to investigate the *Cipendok* waterfall and the upstream. They witnessed workers using heavy equipment to cut down the trees and found out this is a project by PT Sejahtera Alam Energy (PT SAE). Despite that, the villagers were still unaware that a geothermal project is operating in their vicinity.

Then, some villagers from *Panembangan* went to see the local government and demanded to know why the water is murky, who is the culprit, and why are so many trees felled and scattered along the rivers near *Cipendok* waterfall. The local government's response was to divert water sources for the villagers from unaffected springs. The villagers and village leaders from *Panembangan* also urged the local government to hold PT SAE them

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<sup>3</sup> <https://jateng.inews.id/berita/pltb-di-banyumas-timbulkan-kerusakan-lingkungan>

accountable for the water issue. PT SAE responded by compensating the villagers with water tanks. This did not solve the root cause of the murky water, which is due to the destruction of the reserved forest.

It was later found out that PT SAE did organise a briefing and information dissemination session about the geothermal project. However, only the military and police officers, and regency, districts and sub-districts heads were invited to attend. The villagers and village leaders were not invited.

*"We still suffered the impacts of muddy water flows caused by geothermal construction activities. The muddy water destroyed our four gurami and catfish ponds. The ponds were my savings for paying the school tuitions for my children."*  
Quote from a woman in Panembangan village



Cipendok waterfall: before (L) and after (R) the geothermal project construction  
(Credit: Save Slamet Alliance)



Dead fishes from the villagers ponds caused by the muddy water flows from the geothermal project construction  
(Credit: Save Slamet Alliance)





Community protest action against the geothermal project (L) and Save Slamet banner (R) (Credit: Save Slamet Alliance)

### FAKTA TENTANG PROYEK PENGEMBANGAN GEOTERMAL DI LERENG GUNUNG SLAMET (PLTP BATURRADEN)

Proyek ini bernama PLTP BATURRADEN, akan tetapi perlu diketahui bahwa BATURRADEN hanyalah sekedar nama. Lokasi Wilayah Kerja Panas Bumi tidak hanya mencakup Kec. Baturraden tetapi area lereng Slamet yang berada di 5 Kabupaten: Banyumas, Brebes, Tegal, Pemalang dan Purwokerto.

Saat ini sedang berlangsung kegiatan konstruksi infrastruktur yang "tepat-tahap" merupakan bagian dari kegiatan eksplorasi, sehingga Tim lingkunganmu pun mendampingi in kegiatan eksplorasi berupa UKL, UPL, mengacu pada PerMenLH No. 05 2012 dimana eksplorasi panas bumi tidak butuh AMDAL. Padahal kegiatan konstruksi jalan2 bukan merupakan bagian dari kegiatan eksplorasi karena rangkaian kegiatan eksplorasi sudah sangat jelas didefinisikan dalam UU Panas Bumi 2014. Azwan PermenLH merupakan klaim sepihak dari SAE yang dilamin pihak pemberi izin dan patut dipertanyakan karena banyak melanggar UU Perindungan Pengelolaan LH no. 32/2009.

Lokasi Proyek PT SAE, pengembang panas bumi di lereng Slamet berada jauh dari lokasi pemukiman warga bawah lereng selatan Slamet, Kab. Banyumas. Selama ini telah terjadi kelentutan informasi kepada warga masyarakat, khususnya warga bawah lereng bahwa ada megaprojek di atas kepala mereka.

Perusahaan memulai operasinya dari Desa Pandansari, Kec. Paguyutalan, Kab. Brebes sejak beberapa tahun yang lalu. Diawali dengan membangun basecamp di lokasi dataran tinggi tersebut, kemudian perusahaan melakukan pembabatan hutan lindung dan memasuki area Kabupaten Banyumas yang merupakan bagian lereng Gunung Slamet. Tujuannya adalah membangun jalan dan infrastruktur.

Terdapat foto-foto yang menunjukkan kerusakan lingkungan akibat proyek, seperti tanah longsor, erosi, dan banjir. Terdapat juga gambar-gambar yang menunjukkan lokasi proyek dan lokasi pemukiman warga.

Ar hujan pun bercampur dengan material tanah menyebabkan degradasi kualitas air. Terjadi dampak air keruh "banyu buhek" sampai belasan kilometer dari titik proyek di sepanjang aliran Sungai Pruak yang menyebabkan warga bawah lereng di Kec. Cilongok mengalami krisis air bersih berkepanjangan.

Dari peristiwa inilah, warga bawah lereng baru mengetahui bahwa ada megaprojek di atas kepala mereka. Demikian pula dengan warga Banyumas secara umum. Lokasi proyek sangat terpendi, jauh dari pemukiman warga. Kondisi rimba menyulitkan warga untuk bisa datang dan menyaksikan secara langsung kondisi yang ada. Mencapainya dari daerah Kaligawa, Kab. Brebes pun tidak mudah, karena ada pengamanan berlipis untuk mencapai area proyek. Apalagi jika tujuannya untuk mendokumentasikan kondisi proyek, dipastikan hampir tidak mungkin.

Kelentutan informasi proyek tentunya membuat adanya rasa kekhawatiran. Proyek berlokasi di lereng pada elevasi 1400-1900 mdpl. Dampaknya sangat luas dan telah dirasakan warga bawah lereng. Kekhawatiran utama adalah longsor yang terjadi dapat memicu banjir bandang dan mengancam keselamatan jiwa banyak masyarakat.

**Selamatkan Slamet**

A flyer on fact about the geothermal project produced by Save Slamet Alliance (Credit: Save Slamet Alliance)