Communities around the forest have their own concept of environment conservation that enables forest maintenance measures along with conservation efforts that is now being promoted by the government. Without forest preservation, there is a tendency of illegal logging to meet the needs of community for commercial forest commodities. Therefore, the local wisdom culture in forest conservation by the community should be recognized and be protected.

This was raised in the open examination for doctoral promotion of Sahlan, S.H, S.E, M.S, at Faculty of Geography UGM on Saturday (11/6). The promoter is Prof. Dr. Ir. Chafid Fandeli, M.S. and co-promoter Prof. Dr. HA. Sudibyakto, M.S.

In his dissertation that raised the theme of Wana’s local Wisdom (Tau Taa Wana Bulang) in Central Sulawesi, Sahlan said Wana’s local people have the local wisdom to hold high the principle of balance and sustainability of forests. It encourages citizens to engage collectively and voluntarily in community forest preservations. It is known that the knowledge of forest is the most influential factor in maintaining local wisdom. "Another factor that is also influential in cultural participation of Wana Tribe is motivation. This shows that the motivation presents in a person will be able to encourage the person for participation," said the lecturer at the Faculty of Law, University Tadulako Palu.

From the result of Sahlan’s research, Wana’s cultural practice is embodied in a number of rituals which still consider the forest as having a 'supernatural power'. According to Sahlan, these local cultural practices have a positive impact on forest conservation by Wana community. "The positive impact is marked by the occurrence of forest conservation with the tendency that the higher the local wisdom of communities in managing their natural environment, the greater the community participation in forest conservation," he said.
The strategy of Wana in preserving and maintaining its local wisdom is by continuing the existence of customary law and cooperating with the government in preserving forests, using customary institutions for managing forest damage. Sahlan said there are 14 ritual forms of local wisdom practices among Wana community to preserve the forest and surrounding environment. Some of these rituals are Manziman Tana (asking for permission), Monguyu Sua (the first planting ritual), Mpopondoa Sua (giving strength to the trees), Palampa Tuvu (rejecting danger), Nunju (exorcism), Ranja (repelling plague), and Polobian (treatment).

The man born in Ujung Pandang in 1960 said that the level of local wisdom in conducting the conservation of forest was quite high. Some communities hold firm the local wisdom as a customary rule that must be obeyed by indigenous residents in Wana that spread in three districts, namely Tojo Una-una, Banggai, and Morowali.

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