

POLITEKNIK KESEHATAN KEMENKES PALANGKA RAYA: HEALTH FORUM AND INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR
THE NEW NORMAL : Creating a Pleasant Virtual Communication

Peatland Coffee: Potential Export Commodity from Dayak's Land

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DOI: [10.35898/ghmj-51590](https://doi.org/10.35898/ghmj-51590)

Selection and peer-review under responsibility of the scientific committee and the editorial board of the Annual Health Forum and International Seminar of the Politeknik Kesehatan Kemenkes Palangka Raya

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Coffee is one of Indonesia's leading export commodities which made Indonesia the fourth largest coffee exporting country in the world (Lisdayanti & Anwar, 2018; Sunarharum, Fibrianto, Yuwono & Nur, 2019). This is inseparable from the historical story of Dutch colonialism in the 17th century where coffee seeds brought from Malabar (India) were planted on Java Island. They were of very good quality compared to those cultivated in Europe. Therefore, to meet the increasing demand for coffee from Europe, the colonial Dutch expanded the coffee plantation areas to Sumatra, Sulawesi, and Bali islands (Tim Karya Mandiri, 2018). In Kalimantan (aka Borneo Island), the coffee crop was introduced in the 1980s by Javanese transmigrants.



Figure 1 Peatland Coffee Cultivated in Gandang Barat Village, Pulang Pisau Regency, Central Kalimantan.

In Central Kalimantan Province, Gandang Barat Village is one of the most famous peat coffee-producing villages. This village is located in Pulang Pisau Regency. Though its vegetation is dominated by peatlands, coffee can still grow and have a unique taste. There are two types of coffee cultivated in Central Kalimantan, namely Robusta and Liberica. As the name implies, Robusta coffee (*Coffea canephora*) is known as robust coffee against pests and hostile environments (Tim Karya Mandiri, 2018). The size of Robusta coffee beans is smaller, therefore the local farmers call it “kopi kecil” (small coffee beans). However, it has a strong bitter taste than Arabica coffee (*Coffea arabica*) because it contains more caffeine (Chindapan, Soydok & Devahastin, 2019).



Figure 2 Robusta Coffee, also known as 'kopi kecil'

On the other hand, Liberica coffee (*Coffea liberica*) beans are larger, therefore they are known as ‘kopi besar’ (bigger coffee beans). Due to its predominant sour taste, coffee lovers identified its taste to be vegetable-like taste (Duaja, Simatupang & Kartika, 2019). Central Kalimantan is one of the three producing regions of Liberica coffee in Indonesia. Both Robusta and Liberica coffees can grow on peatlands due to their characteristics that are easy to grow in lowlands (no higher than 200 m) with high humidity levels (Martini, Riyandoko & Roshetko, 2017). According to the Indonesian Ministry of Agriculture, 2,828 hectares of the Central Kalimantan area have been planted with coffee (Kementerian Pertanian, 2020). Unfortunately, until now there has been no calculation of the annual coffee production capacity in Gandang Barat Village (Badan Restorasi Gambut, 2018).

In Gandang Barat village, coffee production can be managed individually or in groups. One of the coffee businesses groups that have received government support is "Kelompok Usaha Kopi Bersama Bisa", founded in 2018. This group consists of 7 women and is assisted by a farmer group facilitator from *Badan Restorasi Gambut* (Peat Restoration Agency).



Figure 3 Liberica Coffee, also known as "kopi besar"



Figure 4 From Left to Right: Ms. Kurnia (the facilitator), Mrs. Agnescia (the author), Mrs. Pur (the treasurer), Mrs. Iin (the leader of coffee business group)

This coffee business group accommodates around 30 coffee farmers with an average production of around 500 kg of green coffee beans annually. Because this coffee business group is well managed and offers a more reasonable price, most of the coffee farmers in Gandang village have no longer sell their coffee to middlemen. The main products of this business group are roasted coffee and ground coffee with the *Sahep Gadabar* brand name. *Sahep* means peatland in the local language, while *Gadabar* stands for Gandang Barat, their village.



Figure 5 Sahep Gadabar Roasted Bean and Ground Coffee

Over the past two years, this group has been supplying coffee beans to several cafes and small enterprises in the Central and South Kalimantan regions. Besides, loyal customers from Java, Sumatra, and Sulawesi also love the unique taste of peatland coffee. One of the small business owners who use this peat coffee raw material is Mrs. Heni. Mrs. Heni mixes peat coffee with native Dayak herbs, including *bawang Dayak* (*Eleutherine bulbosa*), *sintuk madu* (*Cinnamomum sintoc*), and *pasak bumi* / longjack (*Eurycoma longifolia*). These native herbs are believed to provide health benefits for their consumers (Yuanita, Sunarti, Wahyuni & Suthama, 2019; Hendrawan, Herdiningsih, Maharani & Hawa, 2019; Khanijo & Jiraungkoorskul, 2016). Those types of coffee produced by Mrs. Heni were branded as *Copasme*.



Figure 6 Mrs. Heni described her product (mixture of ground peatland coffee and longjack) to Mrs. Prisilia (the second author)

Apart from adding to the selling value, peat coffee which is innovated with local herbs is certainly a special attraction for consumers. This is actually a huge potential that can be explored more deeply and has the opportunity to become an export product. However, of course, further research is needed especially to provide health claims that may be offered from these local products. On top of that, the important thing in developing the potential of peatland coffee to become an export commodity is by building a sustainable certification system (Ibnu, Offermans & Glasbergen, 2018). Therefore, synergistic cooperation between the government, business owners, coffee farmers, investors, and related sectors is strongly needed.

Consent

The informants (identifiable) photographed have given their consent for their pictures to be used in the publication of this research.

Conflict of Interest

None.

Acknowledgments

The authors wish to thank Mrs. Heni (Ibu Arya), Mrs. Iin and Mrs. Pur (the Sahep farmer group), Ms. Kurnia (farmer group facilitator from Badan Restorasi Gambut / Peat Restoration Agency) and Mbah Sutrismi (one of the coffee farmers) for their hospitality and generosity in sharing their knowledge and experience when the authors visited the project site at Desa Gandang Barat, Pangkoh V, Pulang Pisau Regency, Central Kalimantan.

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Cite this article as:

Sera AC, Oktaviyani P. Peatland Coffee: Potential Export Commodity from Dayak's Land. GHMJ (Global Health Management Journal). 2022; 5(1):01-05. [doi:10.35898/ghmj-51590](https://doi.org/10.35898/ghmj-51590)