

The Influence of China in Environmental Security and Peace in Mongolia

Muhammad Fachrie

International Relations Department, Universitas Jakarta

Email: muhammadfachrie91@gmail.com

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengeksplanasi bagaimana Cina mempengaruhi keamanan lingkungan dan perdamaian di Mongolia. Di Mongolia, Cina melibatkan diri di beberapa sektor seperti ekosistem, energi, populasi, makanan dan ekonomi. Aktivitas-aktivitas ini menyebabkan kerusakan lingkungan seperti penggurunan, kepunahan hewan liar, deforestasi, kerusakan lingkungan yang disebabkan pembangkit listrik tenaga air, kesehatan makanan, dan polusi lingkungan yang disebabkan pertambangan. Peter Hough, seorang ahli keamanan lingkungan, dalam bukunya yang berjudul “Memahami Keamanan Global, Edisi Kedua”, menjelaskan bahwa permasalahan-permasalahan lingkungan bisa menjadi sebuah keamanan manusia. Ini berarti bahwa keamanan lingkungan adalah salah satu dari beberapa dimensi-dimensi dari keamanan manusia. Kerusakan lingkungan tidak hanya menjadi permasalahan lingkungan saja, akan tetapi ini juga menjadi permasalahan keamanan. Untuk mengeksplanasi hal tersebut, konsep dimensi keamanan lingkungan dan pendekatan konflik lingkungan digunakan, karena fenomena keamanan ini berfokus pada manusia dan bukan negara.

Kata Kunci: Cina, Lingkungan, Mongolia, Keamanan Tradisional, Perdamaian

ABSTRACT

This research explains how China influence environment security and peace in Mongolia. In Mongolia, China engages itself in several sectors such as ecosystem, energy, population, food, and economy. This activities caused environmental damage like desertification, wildlife extinction, deforestation, damage caused by water-powered plant, food health, and environmental polution caused by mining. Peter Hough, an environment security expert, explained on his book, “Understanding Global Securty, Second Edition”, that environmental problem could be an issue of human security. It means that environment security is a part of human security dimension. Environmental degradation is not just an environmental issue, but also become security issue. To explain this, the concept of environment security dimension and environtmental conflict approach were used, because this security phenomena is focused on men instead of state.

Keywords: China, Environment, Mongolia, Peace, Traditional Security

INTRODUCTION

Mongolia-China Relation and Mongolia's Non-Traditional Security

Jeffrey Reeves, in his research, "Sino-Mongolian relations and Mongolia's non-traditional security", explains that the dependence of Mongolian economy in its relations to China and also the weaknesses of its Politic cause China to easily builds the structural power in dominating Mongolia's domestic institutions, so that it influences the Mongolian people and environmental security (Reeves (a), 2013: 175). Although China maintaining good relations with Mongolia by using five principles of peace,

such as respect for sovereignty, non-interference, non-aggression, relations of mutual benefit, and peaceful co-existence, the negative effect of threats of non-traditional security in Mongolia appears from the structural power built by China in its relations to Mongolia.

In their relation, Mongolia and China have different views in viewing the existing of threat. For China, the threat is the inability of Beijing to pursue their interests in Mongolia through the rhetoric of non-interference, mutual relations and mutual respect relation, though the domestic problem which is risen from the domination

of the structural power of the domestic institutions in Mongolia is a real threat to Mongolia (Reeves (a), 2013:186). However, in the relation between these two countries, non-traditional security threat faced by Mongolia is obvious, because of China's structural power in influencing Mongolia domestic institutions.

Imbalance of powers in the relation between Mongolia and China occurs. Mongolia has a weakness in the political and law enforcement, so that China by its structural power can easily intervenes Mongolia domestic institutions. In its unbalanced relation, Mongolia becomes the country that is not strong in the control, management, and protection of its resources. It causes the arising of environmental problems. Deforestation, desertification, pasture damage and air pollution from the management of coal become some environmental problems in Mongolia (Jargalsaikhany, 2001:228). Briefly, the environmental problems relate to the environmental security in Mongolia, because the environment is the space for people's life and the place for carrying out their activities in their lives.

Mongolia and its Environmental Problems

Mongolia has a large enough territory and populous enough population, so that it needs the good maintenance of its environment to prevent environmental damages. As a country directly adjacent to China covering its area of 4,630 kilometers and Russia covering its area of 3.452 square kilometers, Mongolia has a total area of 1,564,116 square kilometers and a population of 2.953.190 in 2014 (CIA, 2018). The quite spacious area and high population become a real threat for Mongolia, because China, known as a large and powerful enough country in the world, can easily exploit the existing resources in Mongolia. It finally impacts on the environmental problems in Mongolia.

Mongolia faces several problems that affect its environment security. First,

Mongolia faces the problems of its ecosystem, such as illegal trade of wild animal and desertification. Second, Mongolia faces energy problems, such as the problem of illegal logging and hydroelectric power. Third, Mongolia faces the problems of Mongolian population, such as uncontrolled migration, urbanization and housing. It also relates to the involvement of Chinese immigration to Mongolia. Fourth, Mongolia faces problems of food which are related to environmental security, such as domestic production and dependence on foreign food production and food security. Fifth, Mongolia also faces the economic problem, particularly the problem of its mining. In all of environmental problems faced by Mongolia, China has a significant involvement in it.

Ecosystem Problem

In the case of ecosystem, an illegal trade of wild animal in Mongolia involves China as an actor. Marmot illegal trade is dominated by China by buying its fur in Mongolia. China utilizes the existing supplies of marmot fur in Mongolia, sells it all back to the Russian market and takes the advantage of it. Chinese demand for Marmot fur reduces the population of the population of it in Mongolia. Hunting animals and illegal trade of it cause many species of animals to be extinct and nearly extinct over the last 20 years in Mongolia(Reeves (b), 2011: 445). The extinction of wild animal species become a threat to environmental security in Mongolia, because it surely affects the ecosystem in Mongolia.

Desertification is also a part of the problem of ecosystem in Mongolia. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in Mongolia estimates that 49 percent to 90 percent of the territory of the country experience desertification (Reeves (b), 2011:456). The increasing demand for goats becomes one of the factors which affects the desertification. The increasing demand for that animal from China leads to

an increase in the goat husbandry in Mongolia. In the process of it, goats destroy land, so it certainly damages the environment in Mongolia. In addition, the increasing goats population in Mongolia are caused by the demand of Chinese cashmere import. Briefly, China plays an important role in constructing the problems of desertification in Mongolia.

Another study conducted by Wayne Nelles also explains that desertification in Mongolia is caused by the exploitation of land as a result of the development of animal husbandry. Breeders in Mongolia increase goat husbandry to increase exports of cashmere to China. This activity only benefits breeders for short-term exports of cashmere, but the degradation of land and conflict between herder and farmers as a result of the seizure of land happen as the impact of one of the most environmental destructive activities (Nelles, 2001: 230). Briefly, the development of animals husbandry based on China's demand causes the environmental change in Mongolia, particularly on the pasture land.

Based on its Law on Land, Mongolian Land can be used by foreign business entities, organizations, and nationals for a specific purpose, time and condition (KMPG In Mongolia: 2016). The government can determine and approve the payment for the use of Mongolian Land based on its size and location. It gives opportunity to foreign entities to collaborate with Mongolian Government.

Energy Problem

The problems of energy contribute to environmental security in Mongolia. Illegal logging becomes one of the problems of energy in Mongolia. Chinese market controls the timber sales in Mongolia. It becomes the world's largest timber importer. The high of wood demand in China causes the deficit of wood for economic growth as much as 75 million cubic meters in every year (Jeffrey (b), 2011: 458). The request leads to the increase of illegal logging and eventually it causes environmental problems in Mongolia. In addition, problem of hydroelectricity

contributes to energy problem in Mongolia. Construction of hydroelectric power plants in Mongolia conducted by China gets opposition from local inhabitants and civil society. Opposition not only emerges from the local inhabitants and the civil societies, but the construction of this project gets a feud from international organization. This project is loudly commemorated by a conservation organization, research and restoration of the environment, namely the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

Population Problem

Population problems contribute to environmental problems in Mongolia (Jeffrey (b), ,2011: 460-465). Uncontrolled migration becomes one of the problems of the population in Mongolia. Without restriction and regulation, Mongolia's 1992 constitution gives people the freedom to move and live wherever they want. The loose of mongolian government authorities in regulating it causes uncontrolled migration happened in Mongolia. Another problem that arises as a result of uncontrolled migration is urbanization. The movement of people from rural to urban areas becomes easy, because migration becomes easier by the existing of rules. Another problem that arises is housing. Migration and urbanization cause the increase of housing demand and the increase price of housing. Between 2007 and 2008, an apartment in the capital city of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar, has a price of 350 US dollars to 650 US dollars per square meter. The increase in population and the price can lead to a shortage of housing and it is certainly causing environmental problems in Mongolia.

Beside of the threat of domestic immigrants, Chinese immigrants also become threats for environmental security in Mongolia. In Mongolia, reporters and politicians view that the number of outstanding Chinese immigrants as a real threat to Mongolia, because the corruption conducted by political leaders causes the

benefit got by China in relation to Mongolia (Jeffrey (a), 2013: 182). A large number of Chinese immigrants to Mongolia threatens the security of the environment in Mongolia. Employment, housing, and food needs become the responsibility to be fulfilled by the Mongolian government. Environmental problems will arise if those needs are not fulfilled and then it will ultimately threaten the security of the environment in Mongolia.

Food Problem

Mongolia faces food problems that affect environmental problems. It becomes a food importer, so that it becomes a market for food products from other countries. China has become a big exporter of food for Mongolia. The percentage of food instead of meat from China reached 90 percent and partly comes from Russia, such as cereals and breads (Jeffrey (b), 2011: 465). Other foods are not produced in Mongolia, such as poultry, fish, vegetables, fruit, tea, rice, wheat flour, fast drinks and beer. It surely makes Mongolia dependence on foreign food production. As the result, China dominates the Mongolian food imports. It becomes a security threat to Mongolia. Containers which take food from China do not use the proper standard of good health at the time they bring the food, so that it threatens the security of health. It becomes a health threat to the population of Mongolia as consumers and eventually it becomes a threat to the security environment in Mongolia.

Economic Problem

Economic problems in the mining sector affect the security environment in Mongolia. The mining sector becomes economic activity that has an impact on the environment. The consequence of mining in Mongolia is acute, because all rural areas in Mongolia become uninhabitable. The problems which arise as a result of mining are water pollution, air, encroachment of protected areas, poisoning of mercury, land degradation, loss of biological diversity, soil erosion and other environmental destruction (Jeffrey (b), 2011: 467). In the mining sector, as investors, China

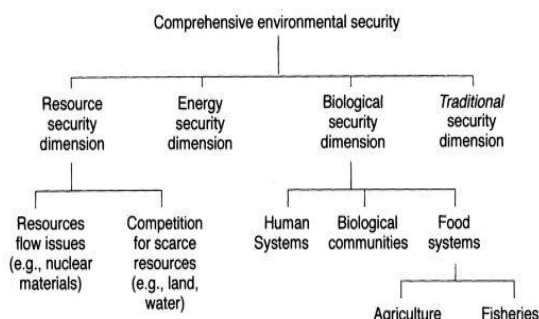
takes an important role for the majority of small and medium-sized mining in Mongolia. The poor track record of environmental protection problem is obtained by Chinese-owned firms operating in Mongolia. Violations are attributed to two main of Chinese firms, Da Chin Firm in Dormod and Ten Khun in Jargalant, because both of them cause environmental damages in Mongolia. Illegal disposal of polluted water, illegal excavation and exploitation without liability cause the environmental damage. In maintaining the mining, Mongolia does not have official legal framework on mining and exploration permits. The level of exploitation is only governed by some rules in the legislation. It finally results in the inequivalent between domestic and foreign firms in the mining sector in Mongolia. Beside of that, without a license, a mining exploration by the State is allowed to do, while exploration conducted by an individual requires a license.

The coal industry becomes one of the mining industry which is developed in Mongolia and is related to the Chinese industry. The demand from the Chinese steel industry secures the market of Mongolia coal supplies which are expected to require 20 million tons of coal imports in a period of more than 5 to 10 years (CEE Bankwatch Network, 2011). China sees Mongolia as an ideal country to dominate the import market. The demand for coal from China certainly improves exploitation of coal in Mongolia. In the process of exploitation, the coal mining industry impacts on environmental degradation, since excavation of coal causes the existing of environmental damage. Soil degradation becomes one of environmental damages caused by the exploitation of coal in mining industry in Mongolia.

THEORITICAL ANALYSIS

The influence of China in Mongolia Environmental Security

Figure.1 (Allenby, 2000: 15)



To answer about how China influences the environmental security in Mongolia, concept of environmental security dimension and environmental conflict approach are used to analyze that question. Comprehensively (based on figure.1), the environmental security has four dimensions of security, namely the security dimension of resources, energy, biology and traditional security (Allenby, 2000: 14-15). In the security dimension of resources, the flow of resource problems such as nuclear material and competition over resources such as land and water become two of important part in its development. In biological dimension, there are three parts of the building dimensions, such as human systems, human communities and systems of food such as agriculture and fisheries. In this context, the environmental security has multiple dimensions that became an important part in realizing human security. Human security in the environmental dimension is strongly influenced resource security, energy, biological and traditional security in supporting human life as good, peaceful, harmonious and fulfilled all the requirements.

Four dimensions above make security become a tangible thing, which becomes a reflection of the need in building of science and technology in supporting development of energy and environmental components of national security (Allenby, 2000: 15-16). Science and technology not only become

support in developing military weapons or support traditional security problems, but science and technology can support to realize security in the environment of human life. For example, the knowledge about the causes and prevention of global warming make the world wiser and more preventive in preventing the use of chemicals which can increase the temperature of the earth.

Based on the four dimensions in figure.1, three-dimensions, such as dimension of resource security, energy security, and biological safety are related to environmental problems happened in Mongolia. Desertification, extinction of wild animals, deforestation, environmental damage caused by hydroelectricity, health food, and environmental pollution caused by mining become part of the three-dimensional. It proves that the environmental damages which are occurred in Mongolia are not only environmental problems, but it has become environmental security because its environmental problem included in several security dimensions.

Before using one approach to explain the influence of China on the security of environment in Mongolia, the author describes three approaches that can be used in analyzing environmental security phenomenon. Erika Cudworth and Stephen Hobden in their research, "Beyond Environmental Security: Complex Systems, Multiple Inequalities and Environmental Risks", explain that there are three approaches in understanding environmental security, namely environmental conflict, environmental security, and ecological security (Cudworth and Hobden, 2011: 43-45). First, in understanding environmental conflict approach, the research may use the level of analysis in the form of individual. Source of insecurity of this approach is environmental change or resource depletion. Control and possession of economic goods such as resources contribute to the future of war.

Subsequently, environmental security approach usually uses the level of analysis of individual or a small part of the community of nations and liberal perspectives in understanding human security in context of environment. It approaches the environmental source of insecurity from the change or degrade of the environment or the depletion of resources. But, it is not suitable to this research because it focuses on individual analysis. Third, the last approach is ecological security. In this approach, the source of human security is human activity which damages the environment, such as forest fires, illegal logging, hazardous waste disposal in the river, and other destructive activities.

From the three approaches used in understanding environmental security, environmental conflicts approach becomes a relevant approach in analyzing China influence in environmental security in Mongolia. To understand the case by environmental conflict approach, the level of analysis in the form of individual with the perspective of liberalism. Source of insecurity environmental conflict is environmental change or resource depletion. The control and possession of China in economic goods such as natural resources influences the human security in Mongolia. China domination in the various sectors of life in Mongolia, such as problem of ecosystem, food, energy, and mining, make itself as the actor that influence the environmental changes in Mongolia. In the case of the construction of hydroelectric power plants in Mongolia, China gets opposition from local residents and civil society, because the environmental damage rises from the development of it. It can surely lead to the conflict and even war, because the environmental changes which occur in Mongolia get the response from the individual and society.

China is involved in several environmental problems that occur in Mongolia. It contributes to the environmental problems, such as distributions of

ecosystems, energy, food and economy. As a legal sovereign country in the world, Mongolia does not enforce strict law against illegal activities that impact on China environment, especially in matters of natural resources. It becomes crucial because a sovereign state should have a law that can prevent China's involvement in Mongolia, but in the reality Mongolia is unable to prevent the involvement of China. Briefly, the China influence in environmental security in Mongolia is as an actor which poses a threat to environmental change, because Mongolia does not have a strong enough political force to face the structural power of China domination over domestic institutions.

The influence of China in Mongolia Peace

Environmental security relates to the peace. In the case of Mongolia, China has become a crucial actor in influencing peace in Mongolian society. China contributes to environmental degradation such as desertification, extinction of wild animals, deforestation, environmental damage caused by hydroelectricity, food safety, environmental pollution caused of mining and other environmental destructions. It surely threatens the peace between the two countries. In the case of population and energy in Mongolia, politicians, reporters, locals and civil society protest against China's involvement, because it threatens the environment in Mongolia. Based on the guardian news article, the protest of China's domination to Mongolia's land for business comes from individual and group in Mongolia in 2011, because it causes environmental damages (The Guardian, 2011). It means that Mongolian society gets bad impact from economic cooperation between Mongolian government and China. Briefly, China has become an influential actor in creating peace from the threat of environment destruction in Mongolia, since China contributes in a variety of activities that can harm the environment in Mongolia. Exploitation of resources which is

conducted by China cause damage or destruction to the environment in Mongolia and then it obviously becomes a source of conflict between these two countries.

CONCLUSION

Based on the theoretical analysis above, the answer of how China influences environmental security and peace in Mongolia is as an actor which affects environmental change, because Mongolia does not have a strong enough political force to face the structural power of China in its domination over Mongolian domestic institutions, so that individual and society are being insecure in their life. It contributes to desertification, deforestation and other environmental damages. The waves of

protest come from Mongolian people. Local inhabitants, civil societies, reporters, and politicians give protest to the destructive activities in Mongolia where China is involved in. Briefly, China is seen as an influential actor in creating peace in Mongolia because it involves on various activities in Mongolia. In relation to Mongolia, China involvement in exploitation of resources causes environmental damage and threatens security. Environmental damages are an obvious threat in Mongolia. It possibly creates the higher conflict escalation in Mongolian society if the exploitation of natural resources in Mongolia does not pay attention to human interest.

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