

DYNAMICS OF MINING CONFLICT IN KONAWA ISLANDS: RELIGIOUS MODERATION MOVEMENT IN NEGOTIATION OF CONFLICT

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Abstract: *This study explores the dynamics of mining conflicts in the Konawe Islands, with a focus on the role of the religious moderation movement in negotiating and resolving these conflicts. Mining activities in the region, particularly on Wawonii Island, have triggered significant social, environmental, and economic issues, leading to conflicts between the local community, mining companies, and government institutions. The aim of this study is to examine how religious moderation, defined as efforts to promote balance, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence among different religious groups, can be applied as a conflict resolution strategy in mining disputes. This research is qualitative, with data collected through participant observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis involves coding, categorization, and interpretation to understand the conflict and the conflict negotiation process. The findings of this study show that religious moderation has the potential to bridge the gap between opposing groups by fostering mutual understanding and tolerance. Religious leaders play an important role in disseminating peace and facilitating communication between conflicting parties. However, challenges such as economic interests and deeply rooted views on mining activities hinder the full effectiveness of religious moderation in resolving this conflict. This study contributes to the broader discourse on the role of religion in conflict resolution, particularly in regions experiencing resource extraction conflicts. It also highlights the need for more collaborative efforts from local governments, religious institutions, and civil society to ensure sustainable conflict resolution in mining-affected areas.*

Keywords: *Mining conflict; Religious Moderation; Conflict Negotiation; Konawe Islands*

Introduction

Nickel producing areas in Indonesia are mostly in the eastern and central regions, such as Sulawesi and Maluku.¹ Sulawesi is known as a major center of nickel production in Indonesia, with several districts having large-scale nickel mines.² Until now, mining companies still use Sulawesi, especially Southeast Sulawesi, as a place to gain profits through mining activities, one of the mining activity areas is in the Konawe Islands area.³

Konawe Islands is one of the regions in Indonesia rich in natural resources, particularly in the mining sector. Wawonii Island, spanning an area of 867.58 square kilometers, is home to abundant natural wealth. The livelihoods of the Wawonii people largely depend on crops such as cloves, pepper, nutmeg, cashews, and coconuts. However, since mining activities began, these crops have gradually disappeared from the agricultural lands of the Wawonii community.⁴ The large mining potential in this region, such as nickel and other minerals, has attracted the interest of many companies, both national and international, to carry out exploitation.⁵ However, behind these economic opportunities, conflicts often arise involving local communities, mining companies, and the government.

¹Miftahul Jannah Nasution et al., "The Impact of Increasing Nickel Production on Forest and Environment in Indonesia: A Review," *Jurnal Sylva Lestari* 12, no. 3 (July 1, 2024): 549–79, <https://doi.org/10.23960/jsl.v12i3.847>.

²Abdul Kadir, Eka Suaib, and La Husen Zuada, "Mining in Southeast Sulawesi and Central Sulawesi: Shadow Economy and Environmental Damage Regional Autonomy Era in Indonesia" (International Conference on Social Studies and Environmental Issues (ICOSSEI 2019), Atlantis Press, 2020), 20–27, <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.200214.004>.

³Anshariah, "Estimasi Sumberdaya Nikel Laterit Dengan Metode in Verse Distance Weight Pada Kabupaten Konawe Utara Provinsi Sulawesi Tenggara," *Jurnal Geomine* 4, no. 1 (April 17, 2016): 274139, <https://doi.org/10.33536/jg.v4i1.36>.

⁴Salsabila Khansha and Frency Siska, "Ketentuan Pemberian Izin Usaha Penambangan Nikel Berdasarkan Undang-Undang Tentang Perlindungan Dan Pengelolaan Lingkungan Hidup Dan Implementasinya Di Kabupaten Konawe Kepulauan Provinsi Sulawesi Tenggara," *Bandung Conference Series: Law Studies* 4, no. 1 (January 27, 2024): 286–90, <https://doi.org/10.29313/bcsls.v4i1.9831>.

⁵Manat Rahim, Madjiani Thahi, and Mohamat Rizal Doe, "Komonditi Export Mining Sector Analysis of Southeast Sulawesi," *The International Journal Of Engineering And Science (IJES)* 4, no. 2 (2015): 31–40.

These conflicts are not only about economic problems, but also touch on social, cultural, and environmental aspects.⁶

The mining conflict in the Konawe Islands region is not the first to occur but has existed since 2007 when a company called PT Bumi Konawe Maini (BKM) started its activities in the region. PT BKM, which has obtained a *Izin Usaha Pertambangan* (IUP), began exploration by conducting a series of activities such as drilling and geological research. The initial stage of mining exploitation was carried out in a small village located in Southeast Wawonii District, precisely in Roko-Roko Village.⁷

The exploration process marked the beginning of a series of conflicts between the company and the local community, who felt threatened by mining activities in their area. The company was rejected by most of the community. However, the company persisted, employing various means to continue mining on Wawonii Island, including forced efforts to evict community-owned lands for the construction of mining roads (hauling).⁸

The land evictions were carried out after the company failed to persuade the community to relinquish their lands in exchange for high compensation. The evictions took place in Roko-Roko Raya, Southeast Wawonii. The land in question had been owned by the community for generations over several decades. Residents had consistently paid Land and Building Tax annually and even held certificates as proof of ownership. These evictions enraged the community, leading to widespread resistance. They staged demonstrations, demanding that the government revoke the company's mining permit to free Wawonii Island from the devastating threat posed by mining.⁹

⁶Syafruddin Syafruddin, Prabowo Tjitropranoto, and Anna Fatchiya, "Dinamika Keberdayaan Masyarakat di Sekitar Pertambangan di Kabupaten Bombana Sulawesi Tenggara," *Sosio Konsepsia* 8, no. 3 (October 31, 2019): 255–66, <https://doi.org/10.33007/ska.v8i3.1623>.

⁷Zakia Syarika Zulkifli et al., "Tinjauan Yuridis Atas Konflik Sengketa Tanah Antara PT. Gema Kreasi Perdana Dan Warga Roko-Roko Raya," *Journal Sains Student Research* 2, no. 6 (November 29, 2024): 438–46, <https://doi.org/10.61722/jssr.v2i6.2985>.

⁸Edi Anugrah, "Orang Wawonii Dan Ancaman Tambang Nikel," Mongabay, 2022, <https://www.mongabay.co.id/2022/07/10/orang-wawonii-dan-ancaman-tambang-nikel/>.

⁹Pujo Widodo, Arifuddin Uksan, and Achmed Sukendro, "Peace Sustainability in Mining Conflict Resolution in Southeast Sulawesi in Realizing National Security," *International Journal of Social Science* 2, no. 5 (February 25, 2023): 2303–10, <https://doi.org/10.53625/ijss.v2i5.5212>.

In the case of Wawonii, the community appears to be fighting alone, without support from the local government, from the lowest level, such as village chiefs, to the regent. The struggle of the Wawonii people for the future of their island continues. They refuse to give up. They realize that the future of their island is at grave risk if mining operations commence.

The exploitation of resources in the village raised concerns among residents about the environmental and social damage that mining activities could cause. This led to friction between the profit-driven company and the community, who were more focused on ensuring sustainability for future generations. Furthermore, it is suspected that unrest was triggered by certain individuals who sought to mobilize the masses to oppose the presence of the mining company in the area. This unrest was part of a series of conflicts that occurred throughout 2007. Protesters acted, expressing their disapproval and banning mining operations. The situation escalated when the base camp or headquarters of PT Gema Kreasi Perdana (GKP) was set on fire and vandalized.¹⁰ Mining equipment, including drills and other tools, were brought down from the mountain by demonstrators.¹¹ As a result of this incident, PT GKP finally withdrew and stopped all operational activities in the area¹².

It did not stop there, mining activities resumed operations in 2016, PT GKP started its activities in Roko-Roko Village, Southeast Wawonii District, Konawe Islands Regency, by clearing land for nickel mining.¹³ The company obtained a *Izin Pinjam Pakai Kawasan Hutan* (IPPKH) to carry out these activities. However, over time, some local people began to worry about these mining activities, especially regarding the potential for environmental damage and its impact on their livelihoods that depend on

¹⁰Ambo Upe, "Mining and Peasant Societies Resistance: Political Ecology Perspective," *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation* 24, no. 4 (April 30, 2020): 6609–19, <https://doi.org/10.37200/IJPR/V24I4/PR2020472>.

¹¹JATAM, "Pemerintah Didesak Cabut Izin Tambang Nikel Di Pulau Wawonii," JATAM, July 16, 2019, <https://jatam.org/tebet/lengkap.php?slug=pemerintah-didesak-cabut-izin-tambang-nikel-di-pulau-wawonii>.

¹²CNN Indonesia, "Aktivitas Berhenti, 300 Pekerja Tambang Di Wawonii Kena PHK," CNN, Indonesia, 2020, <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20200213202823-20-474449/aktivitas-berhenti-300-pekerja-tambang-di-wawonii-kena-phk>. Diakses 10 September 2024

¹³Tareq Elven, "Nestapa di Pulau Kecil Wawonii yang Kaya Raya," kumparan, 2023, <https://kumparan.com/tareq-muhammad-aziz-elven/nestapa-di-pulau-kecil-wawonii-yang-kaya-raya-20ddPZIHxXr>.

agriculture and fisheries. To prevent the expansion of the mining area, the community made various efforts, including protests and rejection of land acquisition carried out by PT GKP. They hope to be able to preserve the environment and maintain the natural resources that support their daily lives¹⁴.

Mining activities in Konawe Islands are still ongoing, dozens of clove trees have been cleared by mining companies, the community cannot do anything but complain and hope that mining activities will be stopped as soon as possible, not only destroying the environment that was previously cared for by the community as a livelihood, mining activities have damaged the social harmony of the Wawonii Islands community¹⁵. Some residents have even divorced their spouses, removed family members from their Family Cards, and refused to attend funerals of those supporting the mining operations.¹⁶

In addition, local communities, especially indigenous communities living in the area, feel marginalized and have lost their rights to their land and natural resources¹⁷. Mining activities often cause environmental damage that impacts local ecosystems, damages agricultural land, and disrupts community access to clean water sources. This triggers tensions between parties with different interests, especially when the economic welfare generated from mining is not felt evenly by local communities.¹⁸

¹⁴Adiwijaya Rachmat and Ibnu Azka, Initial Observation Results in the Konawe Islands, July 31, 2024.

¹⁵Saiful Rijal Yunus, "Konflik Lahan Di Wawonii Terulang, Puluhan Pohon Cengkeh Warga Diterjang Perusahaan," Kompas.com, 2023, <https://www.kompas.id/baca/nusantara/2023/08/11/konflik-lahan-di-wawonii-kembali-terulang-puluhan-pohon-cengkeh-warga-diterjang-perusahaan>. Diakses 17 September 2024

¹⁶Fadli Aksar, "Akibat Tambang, Perceraian Hingga Tak Saling Melayat Terjadi Di Konkep," zonasultra.id, 2019, <https://zonasultra.id/akibat-tambang-perceraian-hingga-tak-saling-melayat-terjadi-di-konkep.html>. Diakses 10 September 2024

¹⁷Muhammad Sabaruddin Sinapoy and Susanti Djalante, "Protection of Rights of Community of Bajo Tribe from the Impacts of Climate Change," *Springer Climate*, 2021, 173–99, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-55536-8_9.

¹⁸Amanda Tho Seeth and Jafar Suryomenggolo, "Politics of Marginalisation in Indonesia: The Jokowi Era," *International Quarterly for Asian Studies* 55, no. 2 (September 25, 2024): 137-153 Pages, <https://doi.org/10.11588/IQAS.2024.2.27205>.

The principled negotiation approach introduced by Fisher¹⁹ emphasizes finding mutually beneficial solutions by prioritizing shared interests rather than merely focusing on the bargaining positions of conflicting parties. This approach aims to achieve effective and sustainable outcomes without compromising relationships between the parties involved.

In the context of the mining conflict in Wawonii Islands, religion serves as a crucial medium to ease tensions and facilitate dialogue between opposing groups. This role aligns with Max Weber's perspective, which views religion as a system of meaning capable of providing life orientation and shaping social behavior.²⁰ In Wawonii society, religion is not merely a pillar of values but also a tool for fostering harmonious relationships amidst divisions caused by mining issues.

Weber²¹ emphasized that religion could influence social actions by providing an ethical framework that guides individual and group behavior. In Wawonii, religious values such as justice, balance, and tolerance serve as the foundation for negotiating mining conflicts. Religious leaders in Wawonii play a crucial role in delivering messages of peace and mediating dialogues between pro-mining and anti-mining factions.²² Despite facing challenges, such as ridicule or indifference from communities with differing views, they remain steadfast in using religion to maintain unity and harmony.

Based on the conflict above, the religious moderation movement emerged as one of the potential approaches in negotiating the conflict that occurred. Religious moderation, which is based on the principles of tolerance, balance, and justice, can be a bridge to create a solution-oriented

¹⁹Jean-François Tremblay, "From Principled Negotiation to Interest-Based Bargaining," *Universal Journal of Industrial and Business Management* 4, no. 2 (2016): 71–79, <https://doi.org/10.13189/ujibm.2016.040205>.

²⁰Ahmad Putra, "Konsep Agama Dalam Perspektif Max Weber," *Al-Adyan: Journal of Religious Studies* 1, no. 1 (August 6, 2020): 39–51, <https://doi.org/10.15548/al-adyan.v1i1.1715>.

²¹Ahmad Putra and Sartika Suryadinata, "Menelaah Fenomena Klitih Di Yogyakarta Dalam Perspektif Tindakan Sosial Dan Perubahan Sosial Max Weber," *ASKETIK* 4, no. 1 (July 28, 2020): 1–21, <https://doi.org/10.30762/ask.v4i1.2123>.

²²Samrin Pairin, Syahrul, Badarwan, "The Integration of the Islamic and Customary Law in Tolaki Society, Southeast Sulawesi: Islamic History and Education Perspectives," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam* 8, no. 3 (2014): 1669–90, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v8i3.24055>.

dialogue space for all parties.²³ In areas such as Konawe Islands, where religion plays an important role in people's lives, this approach is considered relevant and concrete.²⁴

The principle of religious moderation can help reduce conflict by prioritizing the values of peace, social justice, and responsibility towards the environment.²⁵ In this regard, religious leaders and local religious communities can be central figures in facilitating inclusive dialogue and seeking sustainable solutions. *Forum Komunikasi Umat Beragama* (FKUB), which has played an active role in maintaining harmony between religious communities in Indonesia, can be further empowered to help mediate conflicts and negotiate conflicting interests.²⁶

As far as the author has observed, the concept of religious moderation has so far focused more on conflicts rooted in religion²⁷, ethnic group²⁸, or custom.²⁹ Previous experts have not studied much about how the religious moderation approach can be applied to negotiating

²³Mochammad Nginwanun Likullil Mahamid, "Moderasi Beragama: Pandangan Lukman Hakim Saifuddin Terhadap Kehidupan Beragama Di Indonesia," *Islamika: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 23, no. 1 (2023): 19–31, <https://doi.org/10.32939/islamika.v23i1.2375>.

²⁴Koodoh, Erens Elvianus, Heddy Shri Ahimsa Putra, and Setiadi Setiadi. "The Involvement of Religious Leaders in Conflict Resolution within Tolaki People of Konawe District." *Al-Albab* 7, no. 1 (2018): 75. <https://doi.org/10.24260/alalbab.v7i1.965>.

²⁵Yofiendi Indah Indainanto et al., "Islamic Communication in Voicing Religious Moderation as an Effort to Prevent Conflicts of Differences in Beliefs," *Pharos Journal of Theology* 104, no. 4 (2023): 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.104.415>.

²⁶Ahmad Faqih, "The Role of Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama (FKUB) for Religious Harmony and the Rights of Freedom of Religion or Belief (Forb)," *Religio: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama* 11, no. 1 (March 12, 2021): 75–93, <https://doi.org/10.15642/religio.v11i1.1662>.

²⁷Nensia Nensia, Subandri Simbolon, and Israpil Israpil, "The Expression of Religious in Lombok as Negotiation Strategy in Interfaith Engagement Through The Topat War," *Al-Qalam* 30, no. 1 (June 4, 2024): 176–86, <https://doi.org/10.31969/alq.v30i1.1456>.

²⁸Maringan Sinambela et al., "Religious Moderation: Religious Conversion in The Christian Region of Tanah Batak (Case Study of Pahae Julu District)," *Journal of International Crisis and Risk Communication Research*, December 5, 2024, 844–54.

²⁹Hamdani Khairul Fikri and Andri Warseto, "Religious Moderation as a Mechanisme of Social Stability in an Multicultural Context: Study of The of The Sasak Community," *Tahiro: Journal of Peace and Religious Mederation* 1, no. 2 (December 27, 2024): 83–100, <https://doi.org/10.20414/tahiro.v1i2.11780>.

conflicts in dispute-prone areas, such as mining areas. Therefore, the author is interested in studying more deeply the principles of religious moderation that emerged amidst mining conflicts and social tensions in Konawe Islands.

In this context, research on the Dynamics of Mining Conflicts in Konawe Islands with a focus on the Religious Moderation Movement in Negotiating Conflicts is very important. This research is expected to examine the role of religious moderation values in reducing prolonged conflicts, as well as offering strategies that can strengthen the role of religious moderation in negotiating mining conflicts, so that a balance is created between economic growth, local community welfare, and environmental sustainability.

Method

This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach to examine the dynamics of mining conflicts in Konawe Islands and how religious moderation movements play a role in negotiating and reducing the conflict. This method was chosen because the focus of the study is on an in-depth understanding of the role of religion in the conflict negotiation process that occurs in society. Data was collected through three main techniques, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. The observation technique was used to directly observe the interaction of the community, religious leaders, and other parties involved in the mining conflict. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with several key informants to explore their views on mining conflicts and religious moderation efforts in reducing tensions. Meanwhile, documentation was used to collect data from archives, reports, media articles, and related literature.

In this study, data analysis was carried out descriptively qualitatively. The analysis process began with coding data obtained from interviews and observations, followed by categorizing information based on themes that emerged related to mining conflicts, the role of religious moderation, and dynamics that occurred in the field. The results of this analysis are expected to provide a clear picture of conflict patterns, approaches used in negotiations, and the contribution of religious moderation movements in conflict resolution efforts.

The selection of informants in this study was based on the criteria of groups that have a position or direct involvement in the mining conflict.

The main informants consisted of three groups: pro-mining groups, anti-mining groups, and religious figures. The pro-mining group was chosen because they have views that support the sustainability of mining activities, which need to be analyzed to understand the perspectives that drive the growth of the mining industry. The anti-mining group, on the other hand, was chosen to obtain views on the social and environmental impacts that they are concerned about due to mining activities. Meanwhile, religious figures were chosen because of their very important role in the negotiation and mediation process of the conflict, as well as their ability to influence public opinion with the religious and moral values that they teach. The sampling technique was carried out purposively, by selecting informants who have knowledge, experience, and a central role in the mining conflict. Through this approach, researchers can dig up information from those who have a direct connection to the problem being studied. The reason for choosing this group is to understand more deeply the role of each party in exacerbating or reducing the conflict, as well as how religious moderation can be applied to achieve a peaceful resolution in this very complex context.

Result and Discussion

Dynamics of Mining Conflict in Mosolo Raya Village

The number of people in Konawe Islands, especially in Mosolo Raya Village, is currently around 500 families, 187 families have firmly stated their position by signing a statement not to sell their land to investors. In the process of signing the statement of position, it was also attended and witnessed directly by the Head of *Kerukunan Keluarga Sehati* (KKS), in 2024 land release increased again, where there were 24 families who reopened their land, even though they had signed a statement of position, this again triggered a conflict between the pro-mining and anti-mining communities. The community, which calls itself the Mining Rejection Community Forum, again held a demonstration.

The government has granted a *Izin Pinjam Pakai Kawasan Hutan* (IPPKH) to a mining company with a total area of 700 hectares. Of that amount, the company has succeeded in freeing 600 hectares of land, leaving 100 hectares that are still not controlled.³⁰ The company's plan to

³⁰Ahmad Akbar Fua, "Izin Pinjam Lahan Dibatalkan, Perusahaan di Wawonii Masih Ngotot Menambang," *Liputan6.com*, 2023, <https://www.liputan6.com/regional/read/5400878/i>

Mustamin Giling; Khaerul Asy'ary Ulama'i; Ibnu Azka; Rachmat Adiwijaya; Fathur Baldan Haramain

clear the remaining land has rekindled tensions among the local community. This is because the land has been planted with various economically valuable plants such as cloves, pepper, nutmeg, cashew nuts, and coconuts, which are sources of livelihood for the community. Losing this land will have a serious impact on the economic life of the residents. However, currently the remaining 100 hectares of land are still in the negotiation stage between the community groups opposing the mine and the company, with the hope of reaching an agreement that does not harm the parties involved.



Bentrok Warga dan Pekerja Tambang di Konawe Kepulauan, Sulawesi Tenggara - BI...

Figure 1. Clashes between companies and communities in Konawe Islands
Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WUN1GrXnIMI>

According to La Jila as the Village Imam³¹, when interviewed he said:

“The mining conflict in the Wawonii Islands is caused by several things, the first of course because the community does not agree with mining activities on

zin-pinjam-lahan-dibatalkan-perusahaan-di-wawonii-masih-ngotot-menambang. Diakses 10 September 2024

³¹In Rural Areas or Villages, Where Modern Institutions And Governance May Be Less Accessible, The Imam Often Holds Highly Influential Position. They Act As A Bridge Between Religious Teachings And Daily Life, Ensuring That Community Practices Align With Spiritual and Ethical Principles While Also Promoting Social Cohesion.

*Dynamics of Mining Conflict in Konawe Islands:
Religious Moderation Movement in Negotiation of Conflict*

*this island. Moreover, the company uses anarchic methods, directly grabbing the residents' land, who would accept that?"*³²

He further explained:

*"In addition, we are disappointed with the attitude of the local community, because at the beginning they rejected mining activities, in fact we all made an agreement not to provide land, but there are people who violated the agreement themselves, even the local government agreed to mining activities, these are the things that caused the conflict to not be resolved until today"*³³

The interview results revealed that initially, the local community firmly opposed the presence of mining companies, leading to conflict between residents and the companies. To ease tensions and protect Wawonii Island from mining activities, the community collectively agreed on a pact as a form of communal commitment. This initiative was undertaken solely by the local community without government involvement, aiming to safeguard the island from the negative impacts of resource exploitation. The agreement was made without external intervention.

However, over time, the situation shifted. Some members of the community violated the agreement, driven by economic pressures, changing attitudes, or other factors. This breach of the pact complicated the situation, escalating tensions between the community and the mining companies and ultimately making the resolution of the conflict increasingly difficult.

The agreement stated the following: First, anyone who supports mining activities will face social consequences, including the absence of community participation in events such as funerals, weddings, circumcisions, and other social gatherings. Second, anyone working for the mining company operating on community-owned land will be subject to the same sanctions outlined in the first point. Third, anyone who sells their land will be denied religious services or rituals by local religious leaders, both during their lifetime and after their death.³⁴

³²(Interview With La Jila, Konawe Islands, August 23, 2024)

³³(Interview With La Jila, Konawe Islands, August 23, 2024)

³⁴ Adiwijaya Rachmat, Results of Field Observations in Konawe Islands, August 3, 2024.

Even though there is an agreement as stated above, over time, the agreement began to be ignored by some members of society, religious figures and the government were unable to mediate appropriately, which ultimately resulted in the emergence of pro and contra groups within society itself.³⁵ The pro-mining community group initiated the *Kerukunan Keluarga Sehati* (KKS) community, while the group that was against mining activities also helped create the *Forum Masyarakat Penolak Tambang* (FMPT) community. This also triggered the birth of prolonged conflict polarization, community vs community, community vs mining companies and community with the local government.³⁶

Basri, a religious figure in South Wawonii, said the same thing. He said:

*"Initially, the entire community unanimously rejected the existence of mining in their area and even made a joint agreement not to sell land to investors. This agreement aims to protect their land from mining exploitation. As a form of commitment, they set sanctions for anyone who violates it, including investors who are trying to enter the Konawe Islands area. If anyone violates the agreement, including people who sell their land, the sanction is exiled from public attention, without exception. This sanction is intended to maintain community solidarity and maintain common interests in protecting their land from mining activities".*³⁷

Aliadin when interviewed said that:

*"There are several conflicts that occur in Konawe Islands. Between the pro and anti-mining community. In fact, there are divorces due to conflict, 1 couple in Roko-roko village, and 2 couples in Mosolo village due to different opinions about land. There is also a conflict between a nephew and an uncle because of differences of opinion about land to the point of not greeting each other".*³⁸

Aliadin added:

"Now, what is worse is the conflict between the community and the mining company, because the company encroached on the land without a clear sale and purchase agreement. There was a kind of intimidation by the company to the community and students at that time who fought back to defend the land with

³⁵Anugrah, "Orang Wawonii Dan Ancaman Tambang Nikel." Diakses 15 September 2024

³⁶ Ibnu Azka, Initial Observation Results in Konawe Islands, August 3, 2024

³⁷ (Interview With Basri, Konawe Islands, August 24, 2024)

³⁸ (Interview With Aliadin, Konawe Islands, September 1, 2024)

*Dynamics of Mining Conflict in Konawe Islands:
Religious Moderation Movement in Negotiation of Conflict*

*the threat of being put in prison, more than that, the community was furious with the company's actions in carrying out land sale and purchase transactions without being accompanied by witnesses of the land boundaries. Finally, a conflict also occurred between students and the government due to student protests for mediation, but the local government was indifferent, and the conflict got longer, to the point that students demonstrated directly at the mining site”.*³⁹

The results of the interview above confirm that initially there was indeed a rejection of mining activities, but some of the community gave in and were willing to sell their land to be used for mining operations. Because of the violation of the agreement, the community that violated it must accept the consequences of not receiving socio-religious services. For example, the community that is pro-mining does not will be visited by parties who are against mining when someone dies to pay their respects, or to be bathed according to Islamic religious procedures.



Figure 2. Protest action by residents when their land was forcibly seized

Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zN_uvzacD10

This was confirmed by Aderman, a Koran teacher in Roko-roko Village, who said that:

“Since the beginning, the community has made a commitment not to sell their land for mining activities, but because there are those who violate it, according to the agreement in point three of the agreement, those who sell their land will

³⁹(Interview With Aliadin, Konawe Islands, September 1, 2024)

Mustamin Giling; Khaerul Asy'ary Ulama'i; Ibnu Azka; Rachmat Adimwijaya; Fathur Baldan Haramain

*be given social sanctions, their life and death will not be served by religious figures in the village”.*⁴⁰



Figure 3. Condition of Mosolo Raya Due to Mining Activities⁴¹

The Principle of Religious Moderation in Negotiating Conflict

The prolonged conflict in the Wawonii Islands has not only had an impact on the preservation of nature but has also eroded social harmony in the community. The prolonged conflict was then attempted to be negotiated with a religious moderation approach. Religious moderation is basically present as an alternative to encourage the importance of tolerance, openness, and dialogue between different groups in resolving conflicts.⁴² This approach aims to reduce the potential for violence by encouraging better understanding between communities involved in conflict, as well as building bridges of peaceful and tolerant communication.

This principle is in line with the Interest-Based Negotiation theory, an approach developed by Roger Fisher, William Ury, and Bruce Patton.

⁴⁰(Interview With Aderman, Konawe Islands, August 29, 2024)

⁴¹Image of the atmosphere of the Greater Mosolo area after being polluted by mining activities, personal documentation, taken by Ibnu Azka, August 3, 2024.

⁴²Zakiyuddin Baidhaw, “Building Harmony and Peace Through Multiculturalist Theology-Based Religious Education: An Alternative for Contemporary Indonesia,” *British Journal of Religious Education* 29, no. 1 (January 2007): 15–30, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200601037478>.

⁴³ This theory aims to help conflicting parties reach a mutually beneficial solution by focusing on their fundamental interests, not just on the positions taken in the negotiations. This approach is quite relevant if used to reduce existing conflicts because it emphasizes balance, in this case this theory offers the principle of understanding the interests of each party. The author illustrates by dividing per sub as follows.

- a. Pro-Mining Community: they are pro because of economic opportunities and job opportunities
- b. Anti-Mining Community: Do not want to damage nature and want to preserve the socio-cultural heritage that has been built for decades from generation to generation
- c. Mining Company: Maximizing the economic potential from the results of natural resource exploration
- d. Government: Seeking a balance between economic development and community welfare.

Based on this principle, the interests and solutions of each desire can be mapped. This theory encourages the parties to seek innovative solutions that can benefit all parties involved, such as environmental management, fair and sustainable employment opportunities, fair compensation for affected communities, and rules agreed upon by all parties in a transparent and fair manner. This also requires the central role of religious figures or the FKUB as mediators in mediating conflicts and providing an objective perspective so that all parties can reach an egalitarian consensus. This is also in line with the principle of balance of religious moderation, namely *Tawazun*, which literally means balance.⁴⁴ This principle emphasizes the importance of maintaining harmony between the interests of individuals, society, and the environment. In conflicts such as mining, the balance between economic needs, environmental preservation, and social welfare is the main key.

However, despite having strong principles in negotiating conflict, the dynamics that occur in Konawe Islands cannot simply be eliminated,

⁴³M. Masad Masrur, "Political Conflict and Compromise in the Job Creation Bill Discussion," *International Journal of Social Science* 3, no. 6 (2024): 739–50, <https://doi.org/10.53625/ijss.v3i6.7637>.

⁴⁴M. Keanu Zimran Edlyn et al., "Characteristics of Moderate *Da'wah* in The View of Abdul Mun'im," *TATHO: International Journal of Islamic Thought and Sciences* 1, no. 3 (August 30, 2024): 153–66, <https://doi.org/10.70512/tathov1i3.23>.

because there are many challenges that follow that must be resolved in a structured manner.



Figure 4. Royani, a resident of Mosolo Village, poses on her bare land. As many as 300 of her clove trees were uprooted. Royani is still defending her land so that the company will not dig.

Source: <https://projectmultatuli.org/tambang-nikel-harita-di-pela-wawonii-memkill-kami-dengan-halus/>

There are several challenges faced in the conflict negotiation process through a religious moderation approach. The results of an interview with Aderman as a Koran teacher, when interviewed he said:

*“There are many challenges faced when trying to convey peaceful messages in the midst of a society that is against it, one of which is because people who are pro-mining are prohibited from becoming preachers in mosques, they are also prohibited from becoming imams, just being a congregation, even religious figures who are pro-mining are prohibited from attending celebrations. Yesterday there was an uncle who was prohibited from attending his own nephew's celebration”.*⁴⁵

Aderman added:

“Although this conflict is still happening, religious leaders in Mosolo Raya Village and Roko-Roko Raya Village always try to make religion the main medium to re-establish social cohesion, religion is presented collaboratively by religious leaders and community leaders. They continue to try to improve relations between residents despite facing various challenges. These religious leaders consistently greet residents when they meet, even though they often do not get a

⁴⁵(Interview With Aderman, Konawe Islands, August 29, 2024)

*Dynamics of Mining Conflict in Konawe Islands:
Religious Moderation Movement in Negotiation of Conflict*

*response. Not a few also face ridicule and indifference from some people, they remain committed to improving relations between residents, making religion a means to maintain harmony and unity during diverse communities”.*⁴⁶

The results of an interview with Aderman, a religious teacher, revealed the challenges faced in conveying messages of peace amidst the mining conflict. One of the biggest challenges is the prohibition on promoting communities from carrying out religious roles, such as becoming preachers or imams in mosques. In fact, they are also prohibited from attending social events such as hajatan, which creates acute social segregation, even within the family. This also causes friction between pro and anti-mining communities, thus worsening social cohesion in the village.

Nevertheless, Aderman emphasized that religious leaders in Mosolo Raya Village and Roko-Roko Raya Village remain committed to making religion the main medium for improving social relations. They actively and consistently try to rekindle friendships between residents, even though they often face indifference and ridicule. These religious leaders continue to greet residents even though they do not receive a response, which shows their dedication to maintaining harmony and unity in a society divided by conflict. Religion, in this context, serves as an important tool for rebuilding peace amidst complex social challenges.

Interview with Basri as a religious figure in Wawonii, he said:
*“Since the mining conflict, the community has been divided into 2 groups. There are those who are pro and cons, this has made the community's relationship with each other not run well. However, even though the conflict occurred, there was no physical contact between the community. Except for the mining party, there was tension using sharp weapons in the form of machetes and wood”.*⁴⁷

⁴⁶(Interview With Aderman, Konawe Islands, August 29, 2024)

⁴⁷(Interview With Basri, Konawe Islands, August 24, 2024)



Ratusan Emak-emak di Konawe Kepulauan Deklarasi Tolak Tambang, THR dan Sembak...

Figure 5. Action by Hundreds of Mothers to Reject Mining
Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eNL6RYuIF9>

In the early stages, the religious moderation movement in the Wawonii Islands area has not been able to function as an effective solution in resolving conflicts and strengthening relations between residents as before. This effort requires a broader and more massive movement to achieve the desired results. More intense involvement from the FKUB is highly expected, especially by going directly to the field. To reduce the conflict in the Wawonii Islands, FKUB can play an active role by facilitating open dialogue involving all parties, including pro and anti-mining communities, the government, and companies. Through its role as a neutral mediator, FKUB must ensure that all voices are heard and respected. They can also strengthen the capacity of religious and community leaders as agents of peace by providing religious moderation training. In addition, FKUB needs to educate the community about the importance of religious moderation, draft joint agreements regarding resource management, and monitor the implementation of these agreements.

This is in line with the transformative mediation model popularized by Baruch Bush and Folger, this mediation model focuses on empowering parties involved in a conflict to communicate and collaborate in ways that transform their relationships, rather than simply reaching a

resolution.⁴⁸ In the case of mining conflicts, the role of religious leaders and organizations such as the FKUB is very important in facilitating constructive dialogue. Through transformative mediation, both parties pro and anti-mining can gain a deeper understanding of each other's perspectives, leading to changes in their attitudes and behaviors. This process can contribute to long-term peacebuilding and reconciliation in society, as it encourages both parties to actively engage with each other and find solutions that respect each other's rights and values.

In the context of religious moderation, this term is called the principle of *tasamuh*,⁴⁹ namely an attitude of tolerance, namely respecting the views and needs of others even though they are different. In conflict, this principle encourages the parties involved to listen to each other's views without prejudice. Basically, the value of religious moderation has been implemented by religious leaders, mining activities are encouraged to be carried out fairly, meaning that land use is in accordance with the permitted land boundaries. The principle of balance is also applied, where companies and communities share profits in the context of empowering communities to work in mining.

The results of the interview with Samaga as the village head, he said:

*“Actually, it is too narrow if we look at this mining activity with one eye, don't be mistaken. There are many positive impacts that are actually felt by the community, including the number of unemployed, especially young people, decreasing, clean water is also always attempted to be distributed to the community evenly. Trees that have been cut down will be replanted, even unused community land can be resold”.*⁵⁰

He further said:

“Although relations between some communities are not as good as they used to be, religious leaders who are pro always try to mediate by continuing to

⁴⁸Robert A. Baruch Bush and Dan Berstein, “Orienting Toward Party Choice: A Simple Self-Determination Tool for Mediators,” *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2022, 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4058748>.

⁴⁹Baso Sulaiman and M. Suyuti Yusuf, “Religious Moderation In An Islamic Perspective: A Review of Islamic Education,” *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 12, no. 04 (November 30, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.30868/ei.v12i04.6987>.

⁵⁰Interview With Samaga, Konawe Islands, August 29, 2024)

communicate well with the people who are against it, but our hope for the future is that these things can be woven back together so that we can live in harmony”⁵¹

The results of the interview have two main points that can be concluded, first; Samaga emphasized that although mining is often viewed negatively, mining activities provide a number of benefits to the community. Some of the positive impacts he mentioned include reduced unemployment among young people, more equitable distribution of clean water, and a reforestation program to replace trees that have been cut down. In addition, previously unused community land can now be resold, thus increasing economic benefits for the community.

Second, although relations between residents are not as harmonious as before due to mining conflicts, religious leaders who support mining continue to try to bridge communication with communities that reject mining. The hope is that in the future, social relations that have been eroded can be repaired and the community can live in harmony again.



Figure 6. Students hold a demonstration in front of the Southeast Sulawesi Governor's Office regarding mining activities in Konawe Islands.

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IV1sIf2eX4Y>

⁵¹ (Interview With Samaga, Konawe Islands, August 29, 2024)

*Dynamics of Mining Conflict in Konawe Islands:
Religious Moderation Movement in Negotiation of Conflict*

Table 1. Conclusion of the Dynamics of Mining Conflicts in the Wawonii Islands

Aspect	Conclusion
Causes of Conflict	The community rejects mining activities on plantation land. The company is considered anarchic because it encroached on land without clear information. Violation of the agreement by the community not to sell the land.
Group Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pro-mining group formed the <i>Kerukunan Keluarga Sehati</i> (KKS) • The anti-mining group formed the <i>Forum Masyarakat Penolak Tambang</i> (FMPT) community.
Conflict Typology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pros vs cons of mining in society. • Society vs mining companies. • Students vs local government.
Environmental Impact of Mining Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The environment is polluted. • The water becomes cloudy. • Many people lose their plantation land.
Social Impact of Mining Conflicts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking up of ties in society. - Divorce is increasing. • People are excluded from Family Cards. • Prohibition on becoming imams or preachers for those who are pro-mining.

Aspect	Conclusion
Religious Moderation Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The religious moderation approach has not been effective. • Religious figures who are promoting continue to maintain good relations with communities who are against it. • A more massive movement is needed with synergy between FKUB, local governments, and security forces to accommodate community aspirations. • Dialogue approach and land use agreement to minimize conflict.

Policy Recommendations for Integrating Religious Moderation Approaches in Conflict Management

Firstly, the use of land for mining in the Wawonii Islands should be carried out through a mediation process with clear and well-defined procedures. It is essential that any new land to be used by mining companies is transparently approved by all parties involved, with witnesses present to ensure the land's legitimacy for use. This aims to prevent any future conflicts or controversies that could arise from the taking of community land without clear consent.

Secondly, the active role of the FKUB of Konawe Kepulauan is crucial in supporting this process. The FKUB should take the initiative to facilitate open discussions among all parties involved, including the community and the mining companies. These dialogues should focus on the governance of natural resources in mining areas and ensure that the mining activities are carried out in line with religious moderation principles, such as justice, balance, and tolerance.

Thirdly, the regulations related to the management of mining areas must be enforced firmly and consistently. This will ensure that the mining situation in the Konawe Kepulauan district remains conducive and minimize the potential conflicts related to land use. The strict application of these regulations is vital for maintaining social order and transparency in the mining process.

Lastly, areas impacted by mining activities need to undergo environmental reforestation efforts. It is important to restore the ecological function of land damaged by human activities, such as mining, deforestation, or forest fires. The government, along with the mining companies, should implement comprehensive rehabilitation and reclamation programs for the affected land. Concrete steps, such as tree planting and ecosystem restoration, should be taken to restore the soil fertility and make the land suitable for agricultural or plantation use by the local community.

Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussions above, this study reveals that while religious moderation offers promising conceptual principles to foster dialogue and reduce conflict, its implementation has not yet achieved the desired level of effectiveness. Regional leaders and religious figures need to take more proactive measures to resolve ongoing conflicts—not merely at the discursive level but through practical efforts to disseminate tolerance, encourage communication, and advocate for peaceful resolutions. However, structural challenges, such as entrenched economic interests and fragmented societal responses, continue to hinder the broader impact of these efforts.

To enhance and institutionalize religious moderation as a conflict resolution strategy, it is crucial to strengthen its framework and operational mechanisms. Religious moderation must move beyond passive advocacy to active engagement with all stakeholders, including government bodies, mining companies, and affected communities. Institutional support, such as formal roles for religious leaders and a framework for collaboration, can amplify its influence.

Strengthening the role of the *Forum Komunikasi Umat Beragama* (FKUB) as a neutral mediator is essential in resolving mining conflicts in Konawe Islands. FKUB could organize structured dialogue forums involving various stakeholders, including community members, religious leaders, and corporations. Additionally, ongoing dialogue mechanisms, such as town hall meetings and focus groups, should be developed to ensure all voices, particularly those of marginalized groups, are heard.

Enhancing community education on religious moderation, sustainable development, and environmental preservation can also help align divergent interests. This approach should be formalized in local

governance, for example, through policies requiring FKUB involvement in decision-making processes related to resource management. To ensure effectiveness, regular monitoring and evaluation systems are needed to assess the impact of religious moderation initiatives and adapt them to the evolving dynamics of the conflict.

These measures aim to position religious moderation as a practical solution that contributes to conflict resolution, social cohesion, and sustainable development in the Konawe Islands. This study, however, is limited in scope to the Wawonii Islands. Future research should expand the scope to include comparative studies of other regions affected by mining activities to gain a more comprehensive understanding.

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*Dynamics of Mining Conflict in Konawe Islands:
Religious Moderation Movement in Negotiation of Conflict*

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