Politics of Indonesia’s Soybean Policy Analysis on Roles and Interests Between Actors

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Abstract

Soybean is one of Indonesia’s most strategic foods. Thus, it’s really ironic than, that Indonesia’s local soybean production is never be able to suffice domestic demand. For decades, Indonesia has been depend on import, as the result, it threatens Indonesia food security and food sovereignty, especially when crisis happen on soybean world trade like in 2008, 2010 and 2012-2013. Ministry of agriculture always set new programs to increase the local production and achieve the goal to be self sufficient but on the other side, ministry of trade just stuck to the former program which is keep depending on import and lowering the tariff. This contradiction shows how pragmatic the soybean policy in Indonesia. The goal is only to settle the surface problem with the easiest and shortest term policy. This paper will give the analysis on how this policy happen, and why is it so difficult to change the pattern of this politic. The significance of influences and interests of each stakeholders appear to be the reason of why the policy remain incremental until today and the problem about self sufficiency and self sovereignty regarding soybean as one of the most strategic food remain unsolved.

Keywords: Import, Food Sovereignty, Incremental Policy, Interests of Stakeholders
A. Introduction

Food policy of the state will largely determine the food security conditions of the country. Ideally as engraved by FAO (FAO REPORT, 2011), one country has the right to have food sovereignty with full authority to either setting productivity, distribution, as well as determining the price or guarantee the equal access to the quantity and the quality for the whole society. This obviously refers to a nationalist outlook or mercantilism who see the state is indispensable in providing protection related to this vital sector. But in practice, then, in the era of globalization which is full of these forms of trade liberalization, excessive protection measures by one country is considered as a barrier to trade and is strictly prohibited.

This then raises a dilemma, especially for developing countries such as Indonesia. Eventhough, Indonesia is an agricultural country, but due to the lack of sovereignty over its food, the food crisis often happens, as of for the fulfillment of its food Indonesia has to rely on imports. One of the most strategic foods in Indonesia with the largest number of import is soybean. Soybean is one of the most needed commodity in Indonesia because Indonesia is one of the largest soybean consumer which is about 26 million tons each year, but unfortunately domestic farmers only capable to produce 700 thousands tons each year. This situation is very strange considering as the country’s largest soybean consumer, until now Indonesia has not been able to increase the resilience of food commodities for the fulfillment of the people needs, instead relying on other countries.

Even worse, back than Indonesia even participated in the trade liberalization by WTO known as the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) in 1995 and a Letter of Intent with the IMF in 1998 (Usman Sunyoto, 2004), making protection and subsidies as well as tariffs and non-tariff barriers must be eliminated, the result is Indonesia’s local soybean can’t be competitive and soybean farmers ironically chose to changed the commodities. This is the one that later became a vicious cycle. Local soybean productivity declined and imports increased which ultimately makes Indonesia face a dependency problem that still happening until today. The impact of advanced form of food crisis is the world’s soybean price became fluctuating in the uncertain world and may surged drastically like that ever felt in 2008, until 2012.

This phenomenon shows that the country is in such a deep fall into the snare of food trade conducted country and transnational company going forward. At this level, the country has already lost to the market. Will never be able to achieve self-sufficieny in food, even food sovereignty is no longer owned. BPS Data (Supervisory statistics) (Swastika, 2006) in 2011 implied that Indonesia annually issued foreign exchange up to Rp 50 trillion, which means 5 percent of the NATIONAL BUDGET to buy six commodities of food, namely, wheat, soy, beef, milk, sugar and salt. Food imported by Indonesia as the country’s agriculture is thus largely comes from industrialized countries such as the United States, Australia, Canada, China, and the European Union. Indonesia’s own imported soybeans to around Rp. 6 Trillion annually.

A number of policies to achieve self-sufficiency and food security of soybean over the long
term have been done, and recently issued to handle soy crisis in 2012, with a declining world soybean supplies and surging prices in the domestic market, the Government's plan to restore the functions of surveillance, buffer stock, price stabilizer and guarantor of local soybean market to the BULOG which were prohibited in respect of the 1998 LoI. A complete Program to encourage the achievement of self-sufficiency in 2014 has also been formed with expectations of domestic soybean production reaches 2.7 million tons with increasing rate in production reaching 1.5 tons/ha of the previous 1.3 tonnes/ha.

Of this count, then in 2014, there is a surplus of 136 thousand tons. With the amount of the import is assumed to be no longer necessary. In addition, the Government has determined to purchase the Government Price or HPP Rp. 7000/kg in June 2013. However, government programs to self-sufficiency is often a fairly heavy opposition. Statistical Data showed that last year's production was only 850 thousand tons, which means there was a deficit in the production of up to 1.9 million tons to reach 1.7 million tons. With a simple matter then every year, production should be increased by an average of 1.4 million tons. This is obviously a difficult figure. In addition, the reactivated BULOG as buffer stock and price controls to cope with the surge in soybean prices internationally will also face some difficulties, as BULOG's capacity to maintain rice as the only commodity is still very lacking especially on fund sector so it cannot control the prices in the market. Evenmore, the 2013 crisis, where dollar exchange rate got soaring to Rp. 11,000, the price of soybeans also increased drastically to Rp 9,000/kg. It's clear than, that there is an ambiguity in the policy of Indonesia's soybean with no determined goal regarding food sovereignty and the very vogue blueprint of soybean policy, where the Government has always been issued with incremental policy, means it only concern the short-term and non sustain problem solving. Looking only for a domestic demand fulfillment solutions by continuing to do the import and follow the flow of free trade, in order to get a cheap price of imported without further consideration on multiplier effects.

This paper will explain how the political form of government policies regarding soybean and why it's always been incremental by analyzing the roles and interests of the associated actors (stakeholders).

B. Theoritical Framework

In case of Indonesia, what happens is the lack of clarity on policy blueprint so that food independency or self sufficiency has never been successfully achieved and there is no sovereignty over food. Government always target the fulfillment of an instant food needs by means of imports. A series of regulations to facilitate the flow of imports and lowering import duties continue to be made. It is then contradictory with mercantilism principle which should be applied in the food sector, especially the strategic food like soybean. the Government should have the power to control domestic soybean trade flows, and protects farmers by giving subsidies and restrict imports. Instead, what happens now is freedom of private parties in the trade of soy and the Government does not have the power
to act decisively. It shows how liberalization of food happens for years in Indonesia. Although self sufficiency policies have made, they never work because it always became contradictory with import policies that always be the first choice. It seems that was no some determination in government plans to succeed in self sufficiency and the policies made were always pragmatical that means the target projected only on a momentary problem solving policy without any long-term projection while maintaining the existing policy patterns with a little adjustment here and there.

This is in accordance with the concept of incrementalism which explain how the government policies actually does not really change through years, there is a tendency to retain the previous policies because it is considered as the easier way to do and just make a policy to resolve the problem on the surface. Do import to meet domestic needs that can never be met by local production, and when the crisis arises, just proclaimed the self-sufficiency target again. This pattern of incrementalism keeps going on because of the interaction between actors or stakeholders where trade Minister's priorities is tofu tempe industry with depends on the importers, yet the priority of the Ministry of agriculture is farmers with the help of soybean farmers association. What happen than is the imbalance of power sharing between them, ministry of agriculture cannot affect the policy made by ministry of trade and industry and soybean association is not that strong to take part in decision making process. So as long as the local production still unable to meet domestic demand, import will always be the first choice. But it later be vicious cycle that keep decline the local production because the local farmers feel left behind by government.

C. Research Methods

The collection of this data is purposive, intends to strengthen the argument. The paper was conducted using qualitative method because the arguments are built based on a rational basis. This paper seeks to understand social reality by understanding the rational relationship between one concept with another concept. The research method used is the method of case studies which focus on the analysis of the political economy behind Indonesia soybean import policy. To obtain the data, the data collection techniques are also used in literature review, by searching, collecting, and discuss secondary data that comes from a variety of literature such as the review of books, articles, journals, online data, newspapers, and magazines. While the primary data obtained from the interview or downloaded documents or blueprints that are obtained directly from the website of ministry of trade and industry, ministry of agriculture, and the Central Bureau of statistics (BPS).

D. Result and Discussion

Imports of soybeans in Indonesia according to the reports of Bokhuis and Von Libbenstein(Sinar Tani, 2012) has been going on since 1928, first came from Manchuria, even though the number was not much, around 63,000 tons/year. Soybean shortages started again in the early 1960s, so Orde Lama in its PERMESTA policy program announced to increased production of soybeans in 1964, on the results of the workshop on the formulation of soybean in Bogor in 1964. However,
imports of soybeans increased again following a series of the count beginning in 1975, until now. In 1975 to 1980 soybean imports was about 17,000 to 100,000 tons per year in 1980 to 1990 rose to 300,000 tons to 500,000 tons per year. Import from 1991 to 2000 increased to 600,000 tons to 1.2 million tons per year which was later kept on the numbers above one million tonnes until 2009 even until 2013 imports reach the figure of 2.6 million tons.

In terms of marketing, the bargaining position of farmers tend to remain weak. This is due to the lack of or limited access of farmers to the price information about how the product to be marketed. In addition to the nature of the market that tends to be oligopoly, it debilitating the farmers to negotiate. The presence of pressure to farmers to immediately sell its products because of the driven over pressure or household needs to pay debt and funding the farming activities thus their bargaining position remain in lowest chain of production and marketing like at following figure (sardayanto, swastika, 2007).

**Figure 1. Soybean Market linkage**

Soybean in Indonesia range from food production centre to the processing industry are marketed through merchants gatherers at the level of village, district, regency and province until it is delivered to consumer. Soybean circulating in the market is coming from the farmers, and also comes from soy imports. But the majority of the soy trade in the country dominated by soybeans coming from imports. Soybeans produced by local farmers sold to village traders, collecting from the town district. Soy that has been in the hand of trader gatherers then sold to wholesalers. Soybeans that have been at wholesale rates then sold to retailers as well as to the next sale and KOPTI sell them to consumers. But soybeans coming from imports are generally purchased by association of tofu and tempe (KOPTI), subsequently marketed to the craftsmen of tofu and tempe to get to consumers. It shows how the overall process of processing and marketing of local soybeans ranging from upstream to downstream is not very profitable for farmers.

Indonesia's soybean policies itself can be distinguished in two phases, namely the phase prior to the liberalization of food and after the liberalization phase. Phase before the the liberalization including:(Bustanul Arifin, 2005)

(a) the phase of the revolution (1945-1965) in this phase, the Government as a very strong contributor in improving the agricultural sector and make fulfillment of food independently as a top priority by forming BAMA (Yayasan Bahan Makananan) (b) consolidation Phase (1967-1983) in this phase, the Government is working to improve the productivity of food through the green revolution by forming BULOG (Badan Urusan Logistic) and BIMAS (Bimbingan Massal) program, INMAS (Intensifikasi Masal) and INMUM (
Intensifikasi Umum) are contained in

repelita 1-4 (c) phase of fast growing (1984-1992) little different with the data of food production overall where phase of fast-growing last from 1978-1986, and (d) phase of deconstruction, in case of soybean, this phase only started in 1984 when the government started doing soybean intensification program as successor of of rice sufficiency in 1984. Soybean productivity ever reached the height of production closer to two million tons in 1992.

Furthermore since 1995, with the creation of rules on the liberalization of food by the WTO in the Agreement on Agriculture and with the signing of the memorandum with the IMF to keep free trade in 1998, Indonesia entered a practical phase of liberalization where the top prior policies for self-sufficiency become difficult to achieve. The more decreasing the tariff and reach the lowest at 0%, the more decreasing the government power over controlling and determining production, marketing and distributing the soybean in domestic market. Limitation of subsidies, as well as the Elimination of BULOG’s role of soy, clearly shows how weak the government authority to create the optimal policy related to soybean. It could be said Indonesia has entered the phase of: (Bustanul Arifin, 2005)

(a) Enter the liberalization of food (1995-1998) phase in which Indonesia must accept the rules in the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) in 1995 and a Letter of Intent (LoI) in 1998 (b) phases of a crisis/transition (1998-2001) At this stage, Indonesia experienced a period of political and economic situation which is not in a stable condition. The turn of the Government through the coup as well as the economic crisis and the State debt makes plenty of food sectors neglected (c) ambiguous phase where soybean productivity continues to decline, resulting in dependency on import that lead to soybean crisis, making the Government once again like to focus on self-sufficiency but never been successful (2001-present)

In 2000 the Government issued an action program “GEMA PALAGUNG”(Swastika 2007) (Independent Movement of rice, soybeans, and corn) which aims at tackling the food crisis caused by dryness, pests and diseases, as well as a decrease in crop productivity. In 2006, the Government again initiated programs “BANGKIT KEDELAI”(Swastika 2007), stand for Special and intensive Development. The Program aims to arouse passion in developing soybean farmers through the efforts of increasing productivity, expanding the planting acreage, partnership, and others.

Furthermore, according to the Directorate General of food crop production(Didik Rachbini 2008) self-sufficiency rate of soy, the Government set up the (five-yearly) Long-term National Development Plan (RPNJP) 2006-2009, 2010-2014, 2015-2019, 2020-2024 realizing food crop productivity and sustainability. The Government also formed a Board of national soybean or DEKANAS in 2009 and renew food policy ACT No. 7 of 1996 food into ACT No 18 of 2012 with emphasis on self-reliance and food sovereignty not just resilience and security. But in stead the policy to increase import activities by lowering the tariff became more intense. The following table regarding an increase of the volume of imports and the decrease in rates (Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2013)
Current opportunities to import soybeans increasingly opened widely by the Government by changing the regulation of registered importers into General importers, which the company has quite a number of special principal importers (NPIK). That, the government policies are so inconsistent and contradictory between ministry of agriculture and ministry of trade and industry.

To understand this political policy of soybean in Indonesia the author refers to the writings of Budi Winarno (Budi Winarno 2009) related model of political system that is predicated on the theory system of David Easton who consider public policy in response to a political system against the forces of the input environment (input pressure or support related actors, the influence of social conditions, political, economic, cultural, geographical, etc). In the end the soybean policies tend to be pragmatic or incremental.

This paper uses the Group’s approach with a focus on important actors related policy making of soybeans and the Government as policymakers (Ministry of trade and industry or kemendag, the Ministry of agriculture or kementan, the Ministry of finance or kemenkeu); Dewan Kedelai Nasional or DEKANAS, the State Logistics Agency, or BULOG; Association of Indonesia soy farmers (APKIKI), Indonesia soybean Association (AKINDO), Koperasi Produsen Tofu tempe (KOFTI), as well as three giant soybean importer in Indonesia namely PT FKS Agra Multi PT Cargill, PT Gerbang Cahaya Utama. The role and interaction as well as the interests between these actors will determine the policy taken.

Ministry of trade and industry often issue the regulation that encourage the smooth import practices with consideration to meet the domestic needs that cannot be done by local farmers, a row of regulation as decreasing tariff entrance which also a verdict readmitted finance, and change the requirement of imports from importers special and registered into common importer. On the other hand, ministry of agriculture only released a row of improvement program on local productivity which often made only for the sake of the “proper program to be taken” without effective implementation.

Both ministries issued a policy opposing each other, by increasing imports along with a cheap price, the self-sufficiency program by ministry of agriculture can not run effectively because of the passion of farmers being reduced, and on the other hand

<table>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Tariff (%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>5 April 1994</td>
<td>General agreement on Tariff and Trade</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1998</td>
<td>Kepmenkeu No 543 1997</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>9 September 1998</td>
<td>Kepmenkeu No 444 1998</td>
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<td>January 2005</td>
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<td>8 January 2008</td>
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<td>1 January 2012</td>
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with the failure of this program then domestic needs will continue the demand for imports, it has become a vicious cycle that is difficult to cut off. National soybean Council which is the newly formed in 2009 up until now only acts as a giver of input and response of any policy issued by either ministry of trade and industry and ministry of agriculture, but has no authority to go directly in policy making.

On the other hand the Association of Indonesia soybean or Akindo focuses more on the availability of national soybean food which means imports isn’t a problem as long as no harm. In fact, the founder of that association, Ir Yusan is also taking big role as importer (PT FAS Multi Agro) and former vice of BKPM (Investing Coordinating Board). This surely give ambiguous impression on this association. On the other hand is a cooperative formed kopti to assist bulog in the distribution of imported soybean along with the Government in the new order era. Kopti simply has a strong influence in any policies related to soy because kopti accommodate the aspirations of tofu and tempe producers who outnumbered the needs that often cannot be met by local farmers. The main target of kopti is only the fulfillment of soybean stocks at low prices, without focusing on whether local or imported ones are from, but in practice it is the imported ones that was often taken because of large possibilities to perform imports and low tariffs, besides local production quality never came in par with the imported ones and the prices are much more expensive than the imported. Moreover KOPTI has much closer ties with importers compared with farmers and with degradation of the strength of the BULOG to control soybean in 1998, the pace of imports getting harder to control.

Soybean Commerce itself is build in oligopoly system where imports are only controlled by three large companies namely PT Cargill, PT Gerbang Cahaya Utama and PT Multi FKS Agra with the quota reaches 70% of the total imports. (Opini Jalan Satu 2013). Cargill is a multinational company that originated in the US as the largest exporter of reaching 80% of the total imports, PT Gerbang Cahaya Utama is the veteran that been taking part as one of the big importers who also receive export subsidies by the US program in 2001, while PT Multi FKS Agra, although a new importer yet has the largest quota by as much as 50%, if we analysis it further, there was the name of Ir Yusan independent Commissioner is a former Deputy Head of the capital investment Coordination Board (BKPM) that directly accompany Gita Wirjawan, mendag, who was formerly the head of BKPM.

Relationships between actors like this where no strong soybean association and the magnitude of the importer’s role in meeting the needs of soy make the Government keep making incremental policies which tend to solve the problem on the surface only about how to keep the supply of food security and tends to just follow policies that already exist with some improvements here and there according to the conditions (pragmatic). When the price of imported soybeans are low government will open the gate to importer as loose as possible and the rate will be decreased to 0%, however in the event of a crisis, a program to reach self-sufficiency by encouraging the improvement of local
production independently, but it doesn’t mean the import is terminated. The result is food sovereignty which the firmness in making policies that give protection to farmers so it can boost productivity and guarantee the supply of soybeans as well as national space within the decision making independently would never be succeed. It is also because there is no figure of leaders who are prioritizing food like in the era of the old order and new order.

E. Conclusion

Interests and roles and interactions between actors in policy formulation was the deciding factor. The actors here are Government which is ministry of trade and industry with cheap soy food compliance policies for imports and ministry of agriculture which issued local production improvement program to achieve self-sufficiency. On the other hand the soy farmers association that should have a major role in providing input to the Government regarding soy policy has no significant power. Kopti as motor for aspiration of tofu tempe industry is more focus on the fulfillment of a need for cheaper soybean without demanding specifically of where the soybeans come from. Importers on the other hand certainly want the leeway in conducting import with such a low rate.

There is the attraction of interests and different roles here, ministry of trade and industry is more focused on the fulfillment of the aspirations of kopti because 70% utilization of soy is for manufacturing tofu and tempe as it is a strategic food of Indonesian People. Also given the discretion to import because nearly 100% soybean that is used in the industry of tofu tempe is imported soybean. Kopti which does not have the power to perform import itself has a closer relationship with importers compared to farmers because the price they offer is much lower and the associated collateral supply is always there. The importer also has a significantly power especially large importers because of the absence of Bulog, besides the local production is always not sufficient, thus importing is the only way to meet domestic needs.

On the other hand ministry of agriculture with its self sufficiency programs often stagnated with the Board of the National Association of soy (Dekanas) and soy farmers do not have significant strength in their soybean farmers local position in domestic trade that often compete with soybean imports, even worse there is no protection or subsidies in order to increase the productivity of local soybeans. The absence of this synchronization between these two main ministries and pull and draw action of important actors in the realm of program resulting the government policy is always pragmatic in nature or incremental. Imports will be continued and whenever the crisis occurs the self-sufficiency program will be reformulated. The result is food sovereignty can not be achieved nor does food self-sufficiency, and by the time a crisis occurs, even the food endurance became threatened.

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