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Green Policy and Political Ecological Dynamics in Urban Environmental Management in Serang City

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A B S T R A C T

This study examines the implementation of green policy and the dynamics of political ecology in urban environmental management in Serang City. Rapid urbanization, population growth, and infrastructure development have created significant environmental challenges, including waste accumulation, flooding, land conversion, and declining green open spaces. In this context, green policy emerges as an important strategy to achieve sustainable urban development through environmentally oriented governance. The study aims to analyze how green policies are formulated and implemented, as well as to identify the political, social, and institutional factors influencing environmental management in Serang City. This research employs a qualitative descriptive method using a political ecology approach. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation from local government agencies, environmental communities, and residents affected by environmental issues. The findings reveal that the implementation of green policies in Serang City has shown progress through urban greening programs, waste management initiatives, and environmental awareness campaigns. However, several obstacles remain, such as limited public participation, overlapping institutional authority, weak law enforcement, and conflicts of interest between economic development and environmental sustainability. Political ecology analysis indicates that environmental issues are closely related to power relations, policy priorities, and unequal access to environmental resources among urban communities. The study concludes that effective urban environmental management requires stronger collaboration between government, private sectors, and civil society. Sustainable green policies should prioritize ecological justice, participatory governance, and long-term environmental protection to support resilient and environmentally friendly urban development in Serang City.

1. INTRODUCTION

Urban environmental issues have become one of the most significant global challenges in the twenty-first century. Rapid urbanization, industrial expansion, population growth, and infrastructure development have contributed to environmental degradation in many developing countries, including Indonesia. Cities are increasingly facing complex ecological problems such as flooding, waste accumulation, air pollution, land conversion, water scarcity, and the reduction of green open spaces(Sun et al., 2026). These environmental problems not only threaten ecological sustainability but also affect social welfare, public health, and economic stability. Consequently, the concept of sustainable urban development has gained increasing attention from governments, academics, and civil society organizations as an effort to balance economic growth with environmental preservation(Wang et al., 2025).

Indonesia, as one of the developing countries experiencing rapid urban growth, faces serious environmental management challenges in both metropolitan and medium-sized cities. Urban development policies often prioritize economic interests and physical infrastructure expansion without adequately considering ecological sustainability. As a result, environmental degradation

continues to intensify in many urban regions. The implementation of environmentally oriented public policies, commonly referred to as green policies, has therefore become an important strategy in promoting sustainable urban governance. Green policy emphasizes environmental protection, efficient natural resource management, climate resilience, and community participation in environmental conservation efforts. In practice, green policy aims to create environmentally friendly cities that are capable of maintaining ecological balance while supporting social and economic development(Yiu, 2025).

Serang City, the capital of Banten Province, represents one of the urban areas facing increasing environmental pressures due to rapid development and population growth. As an administrative and economic center, Serang City has experienced significant transformation in land use, urban infrastructure, and public service development over the past decade. However, urban expansion has also generated various environmental challenges, including inadequate waste management systems, flooding during the rainy season, traffic congestion, pollution, and the decreasing availability of green open spaces. These problems indicate that environmental management remains a critical issue requiring comprehensive and sustainable policy interventions.

The implementation of green policies in Serang City reflects the local government's commitment to addressing environmental problems and promoting sustainable urban development. Several programs related to environmental conservation have been introduced, including urban greening initiatives, waste reduction campaigns, river normalization projects, and public environmental awareness programs. The local government has also encouraged community participation through environmental campaigns, clean city movements, and collaboration with environmental organizations. Despite these efforts, the effectiveness of green policies in Serang City remains a subject of debate because environmental problems continue to occur in various parts of the city.

One important perspective for understanding environmental management issues is political ecology. Political ecology is an interdisciplinary approach that examines the relationship between political, economic, and social factors in environmental issues. This approach emphasizes that environmental problems are not merely ecological or technical matters but are also closely related to power relations, policy interests, institutional dynamics, and unequal access to natural resources. Political ecology argues that environmental degradation often results from unequal political and economic structures that prioritize certain interests over environmental sustainability and social justice(Wu et al., 2025).

In the context of urban environmental management, political ecology highlights how government policies, economic development agendas, private sector interests, and community participation interact in shaping environmental outcomes. Urban environmental policies are frequently influenced by political priorities and economic considerations that may conflict with ecological preservation. For example, infrastructure development projects and land conversion for commercial purposes may contribute to environmental degradation when ecological considerations are neglected. At the same time, marginalized communities often become the most vulnerable groups affected by environmental problems such as flooding, pollution, and inadequate sanitation.

The dynamics of political ecology in Serang City can be observed through the interaction between local government institutions, private developers, environmental communities, and urban residents in managing environmental resources. Environmental policies implemented by the local government may face various challenges, including limited financial resources, overlapping institutional authority, weak law enforcement, and low public awareness regarding environmental conservation. In addition, conflicts of interest between economic development and environmental sustainability often emerge in urban planning and land management policies. These conditions demonstrate that environmental management is not only a technical issue but also a political process involving negotiation, power relations, and competing interests among various actors.

The concept of green policy has increasingly become part of urban governance discourse in Indonesia, especially after the growing awareness of climate change and sustainable development goals. Green policy is closely related to the principles of environmental governance, which emphasize transparency, accountability, participation, and sustainability in environmental decision-making processes. Effective green policies require collaboration among government institutions, private sectors, academics, non-governmental organizations, and local communities. Community participation is particularly important because environmental sustainability cannot be achieved solely through top-down government regulations without active public involvement(Ferreira et al., 2023).

In Serang City, community participation in environmental management has shown gradual improvement through various environmental initiatives. Community-based waste management programs, tree planting activities, river cleaning campaigns, and environmental education programs have contributed to raising public awareness regarding environmental issues. However, public participation remains inconsistent due to differences in environmental awareness, educational background, and socio-economic conditions among urban residents. Some communities actively support environmental programs, while others still demonstrate limited concern for environmental sustainability. This situation indicates the importance of strengthening environmental education and public engagement in urban environmental governance.

Another important issue in urban environmental management is institutional capacity. Effective implementation of green policy requires strong institutional coordination, adequate human resources, sufficient funding, and consistent policy enforcement. In many developing cities, environmental policies often encounter implementation barriers caused by bureaucratic inefficiency, limited budget allocation, and weak inter-agency coordination. Similar challenges can also be identified in Serang City, where environmental management programs may face obstacles related to institutional fragmentation and administrative limitations. As a result, environmental policies may not achieve their intended objectives effectively (He & Li, 2023).

Furthermore, urban environmental management is increasingly influenced by global environmental challenges such as climate

change, extreme weather events, and ecological vulnerability. Flooding has become one of the recurring environmental problems in Serang City, especially during periods of heavy rainfall. Poor drainage systems, river sedimentation, land conversion, and inadequate waste management contribute to increasing flood risks in several urban areas. Climate change has further intensified environmental vulnerability, making sustainable environmental management an urgent necessity for local governments. Therefore, green policies must not only address existing environmental problems but also strengthen urban resilience against future ecological challenges(Pietta & Tononi, 2021).

From a political ecology perspective, environmental management in urban areas often reflects unequal distribution of environmental benefits and risks. Certain groups may benefit more from urban development policies, while vulnerable communities bear the environmental consequences. For example, commercial development projects may increase economic growth but simultaneously reduce green open spaces and increase environmental risks for nearby communities. Political ecology therefore encourages critical analysis of how environmental decisions are made, whose interests are prioritized, and how environmental justice can be achieved in urban governance.

Research on green policy and political ecology is important because it provides a broader understanding of the complexity of urban environmental governance. Previous studies on environmental management in Indonesia have generally focused on technical solutions, environmental regulations, or community participation. However, limited research has specifically examined the interaction between green policy implementation and political ecological dynamics in medium-sized cities such as Serang City. This study seeks to fill this gap by analyzing how environmental policies are implemented and how political, social, and institutional factors influence urban environmental management processes.

This research also contributes to the broader discussion on sustainable urban governance in developing countries. Understanding the political ecology of urban environmental management can help policymakers identify structural challenges that hinder effective environmental governance. Moreover, this study may provide recommendations for improving policy coordination, strengthening public participation, enhancing institutional capacity, and promoting ecological justice in urban development planning(Herman & Drozda, 2021).

The significance of this study lies in its potential to support the development of more sustainable and inclusive environmental policies in Serang City. Sustainable urban environmental management requires not only technical interventions but also political commitment, institutional reform, and collaborative governance involving multiple stakeholders. Green policies should be integrated into urban planning processes to ensure that economic development does not undermine ecological sustainability and social welfare. In addition, environmental governance should prioritize the interests of vulnerable communities that are disproportionately affected by environmental degradation.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze the implementation of green policies and the dynamics of political ecology in urban environmental management in Serang City. Specifically, the study seeks to examine the effectiveness of environmental policies, identify the main challenges in policy implementation, and explore the relationship between political power, institutional dynamics, and environmental governance. Through a political ecology approach, this research is expected to provide deeper insights into the complexity of urban environmental management and contribute to the formulation of more effective and sustainable green policies in Serang City and other urban areas in Indonesia(Almalla et al., 2025).

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design using a political ecology approach to analyze the implementation of green policy and urban environmental management in Serang City. The qualitative method was selected because it allows an in-depth understanding of environmental governance, institutional dynamics, and the interaction among stakeholders involved in environmental management. The political ecology approach was used to examine how political, economic, and social factors influence environmental policies and their implementation in urban areas. The research focused on environmental issues such as waste management, urban flooding, green open space development, and community participation in environmental conservation programs. Data were collected through field observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation studies. Informants consisted of officials from local government agencies, environmental activists, community leaders, and residents affected by environmental problems in Serang City. Secondary data were obtained from government reports, environmental policy documents, statistical publications, and relevant scientific literature related to sustainable urban development and political ecology.

The collected data were analyzed using qualitative interactive analysis techniques consisting of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The analysis process was conducted continuously throughout the research to identify patterns, relationships, and key findings regarding the implementation of green policies in Serang City. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation, where information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation was compared to enhance research reliability and accuracy. Ethical considerations were also applied by maintaining the confidentiality of informants and ensuring that all participants voluntarily contributed to the study. Through this methodological approach, the research aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of political ecology and the effectiveness of green policy implementation in urban environmental management in Serang City(T. Ge et al., 2025).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of green policy in Serang City has become an important component of urban environmental management, particularly in addressing environmental degradation caused by rapid urbanization and

infrastructure development. The local government has introduced several environmental programs aimed at improving ecological sustainability, including waste reduction initiatives, urban greening projects, drainage improvement, river normalization, and public environmental awareness campaigns. These programs reflect the increasing commitment of the local government to integrate environmental considerations into urban governance. However, the effectiveness of these policies remains influenced by various political, institutional, social, and economic factors that shape environmental management practices in the city(Hou, 2025).

One of the most visible environmental issues in Serang City is waste management. Rapid population growth and urban expansion have significantly increased the volume of household and commercial waste. The study found that the local government has attempted to improve waste management through waste collection services, recycling campaigns, and community-based waste bank programs. Waste banks have encouraged residents to separate recyclable materials and participate in environmental conservation activities. Several communities have actively participated in reducing plastic waste and promoting environmental awareness among local residents. These initiatives indicate that community participation can contribute positively to sustainable environmental management(Y. Y. Li et al., 2022).

Despite these improvements, waste management in Serang City still faces significant challenges. Limited waste processing facilities, insufficient transportation infrastructure, and low public discipline in waste disposal continue to hinder effective waste management. Illegal dumping practices remain common in several urban areas, particularly near rivers and vacant land. In addition, some residents still lack awareness regarding proper waste management practices, leading to environmental pollution and drainage blockages. The study also found that coordination between local government agencies responsible for sanitation and environmental management is not always effective, resulting in overlapping responsibilities and administrative inefficiencies.

Flooding is another major environmental problem identified in this study. Several areas in Serang City experience seasonal flooding during periods of heavy rainfall. The causes of flooding include poor drainage systems, river sedimentation, land conversion, and the reduction of green open spaces. Urban development projects, including residential and commercial construction, have contributed to the loss of water absorption areas. From a political ecology perspective, these environmental issues are closely related to urban planning decisions and development priorities that often prioritize economic growth over ecological sustainability(Wu et al., 2025).

The local government has implemented several flood mitigation measures, including drainage rehabilitation, river normalization, and flood control infrastructure development. However, the study revealed that these efforts have not fully addressed the root causes of flooding. Infrastructure-based solutions alone are insufficient without stricter land-use regulation and environmental protection policies. In some cases, development permits were issued for projects located in environmentally vulnerable areas, reflecting the influence of economic and political interests in urban planning processes. Political ecology analysis suggests that environmental degradation is often linked to unequal power relations in decision-making processes, where economic actors may have greater influence than environmental considerations(Gu & Liu, 2025).

The issue of green open space also emerged as an important concern in urban environmental management. Green open spaces play a crucial role in maintaining ecological balance, reducing air pollution, improving urban aesthetics, and mitigating climate-related risks. The study found that Serang City has initiated urban greening programs through tree planting campaigns, public park development, and environmental beautification projects. These initiatives have contributed to improving environmental quality in several urban areas and increasing public awareness of environmental sustainability.

However, the availability of green open spaces in Serang City remains limited compared to the increasing rate of urban development. Commercial expansion and housing development continue to reduce open land areas that could function as ecological buffers. Some public green spaces are poorly maintained due to limited financial resources and inadequate management capacity. Furthermore, environmental policies related to land-use planning are not always implemented consistently. This situation reflects the tension between economic development interests and environmental sustainability goals, which is a central issue in political ecology studies(Boyalı & Baykan, 2024).

Community participation was identified as an important factor influencing the success of green policy implementation. Environmental programs involving local communities tend to achieve better outcomes because residents directly contribute to environmental conservation activities. The study found that environmental organizations, youth groups, schools, and neighborhood associations have actively participated in tree planting, waste management campaigns, and river-cleaning activities. Educational institutions have also contributed by promoting environmental education and encouraging students to engage in environmental awareness programs(J. Ge & Shi, 2024).

Nevertheless, the level of public participation varies among different communities. Some residents demonstrate strong environmental awareness, while others show limited concern regarding environmental sustainability. Socio-economic conditions, educational background, and access to environmental information significantly influence public participation levels. Communities with better access to environmental education and stronger social organization tend to be more active in supporting environmental programs. This finding indicates the importance of strengthening environmental education and public engagement strategies to create a more environmentally responsible society(Foo, 2021).

Institutional capacity represents another critical issue in the implementation of green policy in Serang City. Effective environmental governance requires strong institutional coordination, adequate funding, competent human resources, and consistent law enforcement. The study revealed that local environmental agencies face several limitations, including budget constraints, limited technical expertise, and insufficient monitoring mechanisms. These limitations affect the ability of government institutions to implement environmental programs effectively and consistently(L. Li et al., 2025).

Inter-agency coordination also remains a challenge in environmental management. Environmental issues often involve multiple sectors, including public works, urban planning, sanitation, transportation, and disaster management agencies. However, coordination among these institutions is sometimes fragmented, leading to policy inconsistencies and implementation delays. Political ecology analysis emphasizes that institutional fragmentation can weaken environmental governance because environmental problems require integrated and collaborative approaches involving multiple stakeholders(Ramdhani et al., 2025).

Another important finding of this study is the influence of political and economic interests on environmental policymaking. Urban development projects in Serang City are frequently associated with economic growth objectives, investment expansion, and infrastructure modernization. While development is necessary for improving economic conditions and public services, environmental considerations are not always prioritized equally. In some cases, environmental impact assessments are treated as administrative requirements rather than substantive mechanisms for ecological protection. This situation demonstrates how political and economic power relations shape environmental decision-making processes(Galmarini & Chiesi, 2024).

The study also found that marginalized communities are often the most vulnerable groups affected by environmental degradation. Residents living near rivers, lowland areas, or densely populated settlements are more exposed to flooding, pollution, and inadequate sanitation. These communities generally have limited access to environmental resources and public services, making them more vulnerable to environmental risks. Political ecology perspectives highlight that environmental problems are closely connected to issues of social inequality and environmental justice. Therefore, sustainable environmental governance should prioritize equitable access to environmental protection and public participation for all social groups(Romero-Muñoz et al., 2024).

Climate change further intensifies urban environmental challenges in Serang City. Increasing rainfall intensity, unpredictable weather patterns, and rising environmental vulnerability require adaptive environmental policies and resilient urban planning. The study found that climate adaptation strategies in Serang City are still relatively limited and mainly focused on short-term infrastructure solutions. Long-term environmental sustainability requires more comprehensive approaches, including ecosystem-based adaptation, sustainable land management, and climate-resilient urban development planning(Liu & Zhou, 2022).

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that the implementation of green policy in Serang City has shown positive progress but still faces substantial challenges related to institutional capacity, public participation, political interests, and environmental governance. The political ecology approach demonstrates that environmental management is not solely a technical matter but also involves complex interactions between power, policy, economic interests, and social dynamics. Sustainable urban environmental management therefore requires stronger collaboration between government institutions, private sectors, civil society organizations, and local communities(Gray, 2026).

To improve the effectiveness of green policy implementation, several strategies are necessary. First, the local government should strengthen environmental law enforcement and ensure consistent implementation of land-use regulations. Second, institutional coordination among government agencies should be improved to support integrated environmental governance. Third, environmental education and public awareness programs should be expanded to encourage greater community participation. Finally, environmental policymaking should prioritize ecological sustainability and social justice to ensure that urban development benefits all members of society without compromising environmental integrity. Through these efforts, Serang City can develop a more resilient, sustainable, and environmentally friendly urban governance system(Yiran et al., 2025).

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of green policy in Serang City has become an important effort in supporting sustainable urban environmental management amid rapid urbanization and increasing environmental challenges. Various environmental programs, such as waste management initiatives, urban greening activities, flood mitigation projects, and public awareness campaigns, demonstrate the commitment of the local government to improving environmental quality. However, the effectiveness of these policies remains constrained by several factors, including limited institutional capacity, weak inter-agency coordination, inconsistent law enforcement, and varying levels of community participation. Environmental problems such as flooding, waste accumulation, and the reduction of green open spaces continue to indicate that urban environmental governance in Serang City still requires significant improvement. From the perspective of political ecology, environmental management in Serang City is strongly influenced by the interaction between political interests, economic development priorities, institutional dynamics, and social inequality. Environmental issues are not merely technical problems but also reflect power relations and competing interests in urban development processes. Marginalized communities are often the most vulnerable to environmental degradation, highlighting the importance of ecological justice and inclusive governance. Therefore, sustainable urban environmental management requires stronger collaboration among government institutions, private sectors, civil society organizations, and local communities. Future green policies should prioritize participatory governance, environmental sustainability, and long-term ecological resilience to create a more environmentally friendly and socially equitable urban development model in Serang City.

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