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Strengthening Blue Economy Law through the Role of Red and White Cooperatives in Sustainable Development

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Abstrak

Ekonomi biru merupakan paradigma pembangunan yang menekankan pemanfaatan sumber daya kelautan secara berkelanjutan dengan memperhatikan aspek ekologi, sosial, dan ekonomi. Indonesia sebagai negara maritim memiliki potensi besar untuk mengembangkan ekonomi biru, namun implementasinya masih menghadapi berbagai kendala, baik dari sisi regulasi maupun kelembagaan. Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis penguatan hukum ekonomi biru melalui peran Koperasi Desa/Kelurahan Merah Putih sebagai wadah ekonomi kerakyatan. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah pendekatan yuridis-normatif dengan menelaah peraturan perundang-undangan terkait, doktrin hukum, serta konstruksi kelembagaan koperasi. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa Koperasi Desa/Kelurahan Merah Putih secara normatif memiliki potensi sebagai instrumen kelembagaan dalam mendukung ekonomi biru melalui fungsi pengorganisasian usaha masyarakat, penguatan rantai nilai ekonomi kelautan, pemerataan manfaat ekonomi, dan pemberdayaan masyarakat pesisir. Namun, kerangka hukum yang mengatur hubungan antara hukum koperasi, hukum kelautan, dan prinsip keberlanjutan lingkungan masih menunjukkan adanya fragmentasi norma sehingga diperlukan harmonisasi regulasi dan penguatan kebijakan sektoral. Kesimpulan penelitian ini dibatasi pada analisis normatif mengenai desain hukum dan potensi kelembagaan koperasi, bukan pada pengukuran efektivitas aktual koperasi sebagai aktor ekonomi biru karena belum didukung oleh pengujian empiris terhadap kinerja kelembagaan, kapasitas tata kelola, maupun dampak ekonomi dan ekologis di tingkat masyarakat. Penelitian lanjutan perlu diarahkan pada kajian empiris mengenai efektivitas Koperasi Desa/Kelurahan Merah Putih dalam praktik ekonomi biru, termasuk aspek tata kelola, akses pembiayaan, rantai pasok, kepatuhan lingkungan, dan kontribusinya terhadap peningkatan kesejahteraan masyarakat pesisir.

Kata Kunci: *Ekonomi Biru; Koperasi; Hukum; Pembangunan Berkelanjutan; Indonesia.*

Abstract

The blue economy is a development paradigm that emphasizes the sustainable use of marine resources by paying attention to ecological, social and economic aspects. Indonesia as a maritime country has great potential to develop a blue economy, but its implementation still faces various obstacles, both from a regulatory and institutional perspective. This article aims to analyze the strengthening of the blue economy law *through the role of the Red and White Village/Subdistrict Cooperative as a forum for the people's economy. The research method used is a juridical-normative approach by examining related laws and regulations, legal doctrine, and cooperative institutional construction. The results of the analysis show that the Red and White Village/Subdistrict Cooperative normatively has the potential as an institutional instrument in supporting the blue economy through the function of organizing community businesses, strengthening the marine economic value chain, distributing economic benefits, and empowering coastal communities. However, the legal framework that regulates the relationship between cooperative law, maritime law and the principles of environmental sustainability still shows a fragmentation of norms so that harmonization of regulations and strengthening of sectoral policies is needed. The conclusions of this research are limited to a normative analysis of the legal design and institutional potential of cooperatives, not to measuring the actual effectiveness of cooperatives as blue economy actors because they have not been supported by empirical testing of institutional performance, governance capacity, or economic and ecological impacts at the community level. Further research needs to be directed at empirical studies regarding the effectiveness of the Red and White Village/Kelurahan Cooperatives in blue economy practices, including aspects of governance, access to financing, supply chains, environmental compliance, and their contribution to improving the welfare of coastal communities.*

Keywords: *Blue Economy; Cooperative; Law; Sustainable Development; Indonesia.*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known as a maritime country with vast sea areas and abundant natural resources.[1] This potential should be the main capital in national development, especially through the blue economy concept which emphasizes the use of marine resources in a sustainable, environmentally friendly manner, and is able to improve community welfare. The blue economy does not only talk about the exploitation of marine resources, but also concerns how laws, policies and institutions support fair and sustainable governance.

On the other hand, Indonesia's economic development still faces serious challenges in the form of social inequality, environmental damage and weak regulations in managing marine resources. This requires the presence of legal instruments that are able to provide certainty, justice and protection for the community, especially coastal communities who are at the forefront of marine use. Inequality drives pressure on natural resources (poor communities depend directly on fishing/mining to survive). Environmental damage reduces resource productivity (fish, tourism), exacerbating local poverty. Weak regulations allow destructive practices to continue, so that the negative cycle continues to repeat itself. The economy grows, but the accumulative social-ecological damage reduces the quality of sustainable development.[2]

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[1] Kementerian Kelautan dan Perikanan, *Kebijakan Ekonomi Biru Indonesia*. Jakarta: KKP; 2021. Hlm. 24

[2] Dahuri Rokhmin, *Pembangunan Kelautan dan Perikanan Berbasis Ekonomi Biru*, Jakarta: PT RajaGrafindo Persada; 2019. Hlm 102

From a legal perspective, the Merah Putih Cooperative refers to the Merah Putih Village/Urban Village Cooperative a cooperative legal entity established and developed as an economic institution for the community at the village or urban village level. Its purpose is to strengthen economic self reliance, improve member welfare, and optimize local economic potential based on cooperative principles.[3] The establishment of the Merah Putih Village/Urban Village Cooperative is part of the government's policy to strengthen the people's economy through cooperative institutions rooted in village and urban village communities. Legally, the status of the Merah Putih Village/Urban Village Cooperative is subject to the national cooperative legal regime specifically Law Number 25 of 1992 concerning Cooperatives, as amended by Law Number 4 of 2023 concerning the Development and Strengthening of the Financial Sector (UU P2SK) insofar as it relates to institutional arrangements, basic cooperative principles, membership, governance, and cooperative supervision. As a legal entity, the cooperative acquires legal status upon receiving government ratification in accordance with statutory regulations governing cooperatives. Operating within the administrative boundaries of a village or urban village, the Merah Putih Village/Urban Village Cooperative is not a new form of legal entity outside the national cooperative system; rather, it is a cooperative that conducts business activities based on cooperative principles, characterized specifically by the strengthening of the village and urban village community's economic base.[4] The cooperative functions as a private legal subject conducting economic activities for the benefit of its members, while also serving a social function as a vehicle for community empowerment, increased resident economic participation, and the equitable distribution of welfare. Institutionally, the Merah Putih Village/Urban Village Cooperative is subject to government guidance and supervision in accordance with the government's authority over cooperative affairs while maintaining the principle of cooperative autonomy: management by members, from members, and for members. The relationship between the government and the cooperative is not a structural one (as exists within government institutions) but rather one of facilitation, empowerment, development, and supervision, ensuring the cooperative can perform its economic functions in a healthy, democratic, and sustainable manner. The Merah Putih Village/Urban Village Cooperative can be understood as an embodiment of the people centered economic principle within the framework of Indonesian cooperative law specifically, as a legal business entity founded on the principles of kinship, economic democracy, and mutual cooperation (gotong royong). In the context of blue economy development, this cooperative can serve as an institutional vehicle for coastal and rural communities to manage marine-based economic resources collectively and sustainably, with a focus on enhancing member welfare while upholding principles of ecosystem protection and natural resource sustainability.[5]

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[3] Marina, Liza, Saiful Anam, Safri Haliding, Wahyu Nugroho, and Aris Yulia. 2025. "The Role Of Government In The Formation Of Local Wisdom Based Business Legal Regulations In Indonesia". *Cepalo* 9 (2):153-64.

[4] Adijaya IGN, Suartha IN, *Hukum Kelautan dan Perikanan di Indonesia*, Denpasar: Udayana University Press; 2020. Hlm. 11

[5] United Nations, *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*, Montego Bay: United Nations; 1982. Hlm. 42

However, strengthening the blue economy legal framework through cooperative institutions still faces a normative challenge: the lack of integration among the various legal regimes governing the relationships between cooperatives, marine resource management, and sustainable development. On one hand, the legal regime for cooperatives established by Law No. 25 of 1992 concerning Cooperatives positions the cooperative as a member-based business entity oriented toward enhancing member welfare based on principles of kinship and economic democracy. Yet, this regulation fails to provide a specific institutional design for cooperatives operating in marine and coastal resource management based on blue economy principles. On the other hand, the legal regime for marine affairs comprising Law No. 32 of 2014 concerning Marine Affairs and Law No. 31 of 2004 concerning Fisheries (as amended, most recently by Law No. 6 of 2023) focuses primarily on marine resource governance, conservation, licensing, and fishery business activities, without comprehensively addressing the role of cooperatives as key actors in implementing a community-based blue economy. This fragmentation creates a gap between the normative mandate for sustainable development and the institutional instruments available to coastal communities. Cooperative regulations do not explicitly incorporate ecological sustainability principles into cooperative governance, while marine regulations fail to adequately strengthen collective economic institutional models such as cooperatives as vehicles for coastal community empowerment. Consequently, cooperatives operating in the marine and fisheries sectors continue to face institutional challenges, including limited access to financing, low governance capacity, weak member bargaining power, and the absence of legal mechanisms linking cooperative economic activities to obligations regarding marine ecosystem protection. Previous research on the blue economy has generally focused on sustainable development policies, marine resource conservation, and marine economic strategies, whereas studies on cooperatives have largely examined institutional aspects, member economic empowerment, and general cooperative governance.[6] These studies have not specifically analyzed the legal framework linking cooperatives as legal entities representing the people's economy with blue economy principles as a paradigm for sustainable marine resource management. Furthermore, limited research has explored how "Merah Putih" Village/Urban Village Cooperatives can be positioned within the national cooperative legal system as instruments for coastal community empowerment and as institutional actors in achieving blue economy goals. Addressing this gap, this article offers a novel analysis of an integrative legal framework that positions "Merah Putih" Village/Urban Village Cooperatives as institutional instruments of the people's economy within blue economy development. The article examines the cooperative not only from the perspective of cooperative law but also by establishing normative links between cooperative principles, marine resource governance, and sustainable development principles. Consequently, this research

[6] Muhammad Kandriana, *Filsafat Hukum Ekonomi Biru: Menuju Formulasi Ius Constituendum dalam Pengelolaan Sumber Daya Laut Indonesia*, Jurnal RechtsVinding: Media Pembinaan Hukum Nasional (2024). Aryo Sahid Sujiwo and Nurlaili, *Pengembangan Tata Kelola Ekonomi Biru untuk Memperkuat Blue Economy Development Index di Indonesia*, Jurnal Perikanan dan Kelautan (2024). Wahjudi Poerwanto, *Reorientasi Kebijakan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat dalam Pembangunan Kelautan dan Perikanan Berkelanjutan*, Jurnal Kebijakan Sosial Ekonomi Kelautan dan Perikanan (2023).

aims to formulate a legal strengthening model that enables cooperatives to function as economic agents capable of enhancing coastal community welfare while simultaneously preserving the sustainability of marine ecosystems.[7]

Strengthening the law of the Red and White Village/District Cooperative in supporting the blue economy has not been fully implemented consistently when analyzed through Lawrence M. Friedman's legal system theory[8] which includes aspects of structure, substance and legal culture.[9] From the legal structure aspect, the existence of cooperatives as legal entities already has a basis in the national cooperative system, however, institutional coordination between ministries in charge of cooperatives, maritime affairs, fisheries, and regional governments still needs strengthening so that cooperatives can play an effective role in the blue economy ecosystem. From the legal substance aspect, cooperative regulations do not specifically regulate the integration of environmental sustainability principles, coastal communities' access to the marine economic value chain, as well as the relationship mechanism between cooperatives and marine resource management policies. Meanwhile, from the aspect of legal culture, the success of cooperatives is very dependent on members' legal awareness, governance capacity, community participation, and understanding of the principles of sustainability in the use of marine resources. Therefore, strengthening the law of Red and White Village/Subdistrict Cooperatives in the context of a blue economy is not enough just through the formation of regulations, but must be carried out in an integrated manner through institutional improvements, perfecting legal norms, and building community legal culture so that cooperatives are able to become sustainable instruments of the people's economy.

Thus, it is hoped that the development of a cooperative-based blue economic law can be a strategic solution in responding to the challenges of sustainable development, realizing national economic sovereignty, and strengthening Indonesia's identity as a maritime country. It is hoped that the development of a cooperative-based blue economic law can be a strategic solution in responding to the challenges of sustainable development, realizing national economic sovereignty, and strengthening Indonesia's identity as a maritime country.[10] With a strong legal foundation, cooperatives can function as a collective instrument to manage marine potential in a fair, transparent and sustainable manner, while involving coastal communities as the main actors. This approach not only strengthens national competitiveness in the maritime sector, but also preserves marine ecosystems which are a long-term source of life. At the same time, cooperatives act as a mechanism for more equitable distribution of economic benefits, thus encouraging the creation of social justice. Thus, the cooperative-based blue economy law not only supports the green economic growth agenda, but also emphasizes Indonesia's identity as a maritime nation that is sovereign, competitive and just.

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[7] Achmad Sani Alhusain, Et. Al., *Kebijakan Pembangunan Ekonomi Kelautan Indonesia : Quo Vadis?*, Jakarta: Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia, 2020, Hlm. 37

[8] Lawrence M. Friedman, *The Legal System: A Social Science Perspective*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1975.

[9] Lawrence M. Friedman, "Legal Culture and Social Development," *Law & Society Review* 4, no. 1 (1969): 29–44.

[10] Ajeng Faizah Nijma Ilma, 2016, "*Blue Economy: Keseimbangan Perpektif Ekonomi Dan Lingkungan," Jurnal Ilmu Ekonomi dan Pembangunan*, vol 14, no. 1 (2016)

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a normative juridical approach[11], namely legal research that relies on the study of positive legal norms, legal principles and relevant legal doctrines. This approach was chosen because the issue of strengthening blue economic law through the role of the Red and White Cooperative is closely related to the normative foundations contained in statutory regulations, government policies and international legal instruments related to marine resource management and sustainable development.

This study employs a juridical-normative approach utilizing two primary methods: the statute approach and the conceptual approach. The statute approach is used to examine and analyze relevant positive law provisions concerning the strengthening of the blue economy through cooperative institutions, specifically the Merah Putih Village/Urban-Village Cooperatives. The analysis covers legislation governing cooperatives, maritime affairs, fisheries, environmental protection, and sustainable development policies to identify alignment, interconnections, fragmentation, or normative gaps that hinder the integration of cooperative law and the blue economy. Furthermore, the conceptual approach is applied to analyze the foundational legal concepts of the study, including the blue economy, cooperative principles as a form of people's economic legal entity, sustainable development, and legal system theory encompassing legal structure, legal substance, and legal culture. Through this approach, the study not only examines existing legal norms but also constructs a framework regarding the status and function of Merah Putih Village/Urban-Village Cooperatives as institutional instruments capable of supporting sustainable marine resource management. Thus, these two approaches are utilized to formulate a model for strengthening the blue economy through cooperatives a model aligned with the principles of the people's economy and Indonesia's sustainable development framework.

Legal materials obtained through a statutory approach and a conceptual approach are analyzed using descriptive-analytical and prescriptive methods through several stages.[12] First, an inventory of legal materials is carried out by identifying and grouping laws and regulations relating to cooperatives, maritime affairs, fisheries, the environment and sustainable development, including principles, norms, authority and institutional mechanisms that are relevant to the development of the blue economy through cooperatives. Second, a classification and comparison of norms is carried out to see the relationship between regulations, regulatory harmony, potential for overlapping authority, as well as legal gaps related to the position of cooperatives as blue economy instruments. Third, legal interpretation of these norms is carried out through grammatical, systematic and conceptual interpretation to understand the meaning, objectives and interrelationships between legal provisions within the framework of sustainable development. Fourth, a juridical evaluation was carried out by testing the conformity of existing norms to cooperative principles, principles of social justice, principles of environmental sustainability, as well as the need to strengthen coastal community institutions. Based on the results of this evaluation, prescriptive analysis

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[11] Soerjono Soekanto dan Sri Mamudji, *Penelitian Hukum Normatif*, Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2011, Hlm. 7

[12] Abdulkhadir Muhammad, *Hukum dan Penelitian Hukum*, Bandung: Citra Aditya Bakti, Hlm. 34

is used to formulate recommendations in the form of a legal strengthening model that places the Red and White Village/Subdistrict Cooperative as an instrument of the people's economy in supporting the blue economy, without eliminating the limits of government authority in managing marine resources.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The urgency of strengthening the blue economy through "Merah Putih" Village/Urban Village Cooperatives requires analysis based on the prevailing legal framework. Within the cooperative legal regime, Articles 3 and 4 of Law Number 25 of 1992 concerning Cooperatives affirm that cooperatives aim to enhance the welfare of members and the community while functioning to build the national economy based on the principles of kinship and economic democracy. While these provisions establish cooperatives as instruments of the people's economy, they do not explicitly regulate the role of cooperatives in managing sustainability-based strategic sectors, including the marine economy. Meanwhile, Law Number 32 of 2014 concerning Marine Affairs mandates that the management of marine space and resources be conducted sustainably for the greatest prosperity of the people; however, these regulations focus primarily on government authority, planning, marine space utilization, and ecosystem protection, without specifically addressing mechanisms to empower cooperatives as economic actors within coastal communities. This normative gap reveals a legal issue: the lack of integration between the function of cooperatives as member-based business entities and the objectives of blue economy development, which prioritizes ecological sustainability within economic governance. Consequently, coastal communities who are effectively the primary actors in marine resource utilization lack a clear institutional framework defining how cooperatives can participate in the marine economy value chain, access financing, handle product processing and marketing, and adopt sustainable business practices. Based on a systematic interpretation of these two legal regimes, "Merah Putih" Village/Urban Village Cooperatives can serve as an institutional intermediary linking blue economy policies with community empowerment, provided they operate within the limits of applicable legal authority. Regulatory strengthening is not required to grant cooperatives the authority to manage marine resources as such authority remains vested in the government and sectoral bodies but rather to clarify the status of cooperatives as economic actors entitled to access, protection, and institutional support in developing sustainable marine-based businesses.[13] Therefore, the necessary legal recommendation is the harmonization of cooperative and maritime regulations through technical provisions that integrate sustainability principles, financing mechanisms, business partnerships, and the strengthening of cooperative governance capacity to support the implementation of a community-based blue economy.

In addition, cooperative regulations within the blue economy framework are important to ensure a more equitable distribution of benefits. So far, coastal communities and traditional fishermen have often been marginalized by economic practices controlled by large corporations and foreign parties. By strengthening the

[13] Dhani Akbar, Ryan Anggria Pratama, Yudhyo, Riama Lisnawati Sianturi, & Nadya Triyana. (2022). *Strategi Pengembangan Blue Economy Wilayah Perbatasan Indonesia: Tata Kelola Ekonomi Maritim Pesisir Kepulauan Riau*. NeoRespublica : Jurnal Ilmu Pemerintahan, 4(1), 166–177.

law, the Red and White Cooperative can gain legitimacy in managing marine potential, gain access to financing and protect adequate prices. This not only improves the welfare of cooperative members, but also creates a more inclusive system and reduces social inequality.

Another urgency lies in the sustainability aspect. Without a clear legal framework, exploitation of marine resources has the potential to cause environmental damage that has long-lasting impacts on future generations.[14] Cooperative regulations in the context of the blue economy can establish environmentally friendly operational standards, transparent governance, and community-based participatory monitoring mechanisms.[15] In this way, the Red and White Cooperative not only functions as an economic motor, but also protects the preservation of the marine ecosystem which supports the nation's life.

Finally, strengthening the blue economy through cooperative regulations also has strategic significance in strengthening national economic sovereignty and Indonesia's identity as a maritime country. The Red and White Cooperative, which is based on the values of mutual cooperation and social justice, can be a symbol and instrument of economic sovereignty, so that the management of marine resources does not fall into the hands of outsiders alone. With the right regulations, a cooperative-based blue economy can become a main pillar in sustainable development, strengthen global competitiveness, and strengthen Indonesia's position as the world's maritime axis.

The Strategic Role of the Red and White Cooperative in Utilizing the Blue Economy

The Red and White Cooperative has a strategic role as the main driver of the blue economy which is oriented towards the welfare of coastal communities while maintaining the sustainability of the marine ecosystem. As a community economic forum, this cooperative is able to gather the collective potential of fishermen, cultivators and coastal business actors to access marine resources more fairly. By prioritizing the principle of mutual cooperation, the Red and White Cooperative can create transparent governance, reduce the domination of outside parties, and ensure a more even distribution of economic benefits for all members.[16]

Apart from being a means of strengthening the economy, the Red and White Cooperative also plays a role in integrating sustainability principles into the practice of utilizing marine resources. Through internal regulations and community-based control mechanisms, cooperatives can encourage their members to implement environmentally friendly fishing methods, conservation-based coastal management, and the development of maritime ecotourism. In this way, cooperatives are not only

[14] Sihombing, Y. H. (2017). *Optimalisasi Hukum Laut Nasional untuk Pengembangan Potensi Sumber Daya Perikanan di Indonesia*. Jurnal Hukum Lingkungan Indonesia, 3(2), 97–123.

[15] Syabrinildi, S. (2023). *Analisis Kerangka Hukum dan Peraturan Yang Mempengaruhi Manajemen Koperasi*. Jurnal Sosial Dan Sains, 3(12), 1228–1234.

[16] Afgani, R., & Wanusmawatie, I. (2025). *Kebijakan Koperasi Merah Putih dalam Perspektif Ekonomi Politik Pembangunan: Pendekatan State-Centered dan Teori Ketergantungan*. Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai, 9(2), 22375–22383.

economic instruments[17], but also guardians of marine sustainability which is the main capital for long-term development.

Furthermore, the Red and White Cooperative functions as a bridge between coastal communities with access to capital, technology and markets. In the context of the blue economy, cooperatives can facilitate financing for sustainable fisheries businesses, expand access to distribution of marine products, and open up export opportunities based on global sustainability standards. This is important to increase the competitiveness of Indonesian maritime products in the international market, as well as strengthening national economic sovereignty.

With this strategic role, the Red and White Cooperative can be positioned as the main pillar in utilizing the blue economy. Its presence not only strengthens the position of coastal communities in the maritime economic value chain, but also ensures that sea-based economic development runs in harmony with the principles of social justice, environmental sustainability and Indonesia's identity as a maritime country.

The Red and White Cooperative can be placed as the main pillar in utilizing the blue economy because this cooperative reflects the spirit of togetherness, social justice and independence which is an important foundation for sustainable maritime development. In the context of the blue economy, cooperatives are able to become a collective forum for coastal communities—fishermen, cultivators, and marine tourism businesses—to access marine resources more equally. Through the principle of mutual cooperation, this cooperative can reduce the domination of large actors or outside parties, while ensuring that the distribution of economic benefits takes place more fairly among its members.

The Merah Putih Village/Urban Village Cooperative can serve as an institutional instrument for blue economy development—not as a substitute for state authority in marine resource management, but as a community-based economic legal entity that performs functions of empowerment, business organization, and the strengthening of community-based economic access. The cooperative's strategic role in the blue economy lies in its ability to establish collective mechanisms that grant coastal communities stronger bargaining power regarding the sustainable utilization of marine resources. From a legal perspective, the cooperative's concrete function within the blue economy can be realized through several roles. First, the cooperative can act as an institution for aggregating community economic activities by providing collective access to supply chains, fishery product processing, distribution, and the marketing of marine products, thereby enabling members to secure greater added value than they would achieve by operating individually. Second, the cooperative can facilitate access to financing and business partnerships for fishers, aquaculture farmers, and coastal economic actors through collaborations with financial institutions, the government, and the private sector, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Third, the cooperative can play a role in supporting conservation efforts and the sustainable use of marine resources by implementing business standards that respect environmental carrying capacity and responsible production practices, while

[17] Sugiartiningsih, S., Harjono, I., Erfiansyah, E., Sugihyanto, T., Kodariah, S., Nurhalimah, H., & Farhan, Y. M. . (2025). *Penguatan Aspek Legalitas dalam Pembentukan Koperasi Syariah di Desa Rancatungku*. I-Com: Indonesian Community Journal, 5(1), 591–604.

fostering member participation in coastal ecosystem preservation. However, the cooperative's position within the blue economy entails limits on authority that must be legally defined. Cooperatives do not possess the attributed authority to issue marine spatial use permits, designate conservation areas, regulate fish resources, or exercise supervisory functions; these remain the prerogatives of the government and sectoral agencies under the prevailing legal regime for marine affairs and fisheries. Cooperatives may only conduct business activities based on applicable permits and regulations, acting as economic agents and community partners in the implementation of sustainable marine policies. Thus, the position of the Merah Putih Village/Urban Village Cooperative in the blue economy is not that of a marine management authority, but rather that of an intermediary institution linking the interests of coastal communities, market mechanisms, and sustainable development goals. In this context, strengthening the legal standing of cooperatives is aimed at ensuring secure access to business opportunities, bolstering institutional capacity, integrating marine economic value chains, and enhancing community participation in safeguarding the sustainability of marine resources.

The Red and White Cooperative also has the potential to become a bridge between coastal communities and the industrial world, government and global markets.[18] With strong legal legitimacy, cooperatives can facilitate access to financing, technology training, and open marketing networks for marine products produced by their members. More than that, cooperatives can be a filter that ensures that Indonesian marine products meet international sustainability standards[19], thereby increasing the nation's competitiveness and positive image in the global market.

Placing the Red and White Cooperative as the main pillar also means making it an instrument of maritime economic sovereignty. Through cooperatives, coastal communities are not only objects of development, but the main actors who manage and directly experience the results of marine use. This is in line with the spirit of sustainable development which places humans, the environment and the economy as one unit.[20] Thus, strengthening cooperatives in the blue economy is not just an economic strategy, but also a strategic step to strengthen Indonesia's identity as a sovereign, just and sustainable maritime country.

One of the main problems in strengthening the role of the Red and White Cooperative in utilizing the blue economy is the weakness of regulations that specifically regulate the position of cooperatives in the maritime sector. So far, cooperative regulations have been more general in nature and have not clearly integrated blue economy principles which focus on the sustainability of marine resources. As a result, cooperatives operating in the marine sector often face legal obstacles, such as overlapping permits, minimal legal protection for environmentally friendly business practices, and a lack of legal incentives to encourage conservation-based innovation.

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[18] Irawansyah, D., Ridwan, & Amin, M. (2025). *Hukum Penguatan Kesadaran Hukum Masyarakat Pesisir Terhadap Pengelolaan Sargassum Berkelanjutan Berbasis Partisipatif Di Teluk Waworada Kabupaten Bima*: Hukum. Journal of Excellence Humanities and Religiosity, 2(2), 91-101.

[19] Sultan, D., & Ramadhan, M. F. (2024). *Peran Kebijakan Pemerintah Dalam Mengelola Sumber Daya Laut Indonesia*. Riset Sains Dan Teknologi Kelautan, 7(1), 34–40.

[20] Fatimah, I. (2021). *Aspek Hukum Dalam Pelestarian Sumber Daya Genetik Laut: Kebutuhan Dan Tantangan*. Jurnal Hukum Lingkungan Indonesia, 2(2), 110–146.

Apart from that, limited institutional capacity and cooperative governance at the local level are also serious obstacles. Many coastal cooperatives do not yet have strong legal-based operational standards, making it difficult to control excessive or unsustainable marine exploitation practices. The lack of clarity in regulations also opens up space for domination by outsiders, both large corporations and illegal practices, which harm small fishermen and reduce the role of cooperatives as community economic actors.[21]

To answer this problem, the solution needed is strengthening regulations that specifically position cooperatives as strategic actors in managing the blue economy. The government can formulate derivative regulations that integrate maritime, environmental and cooperative law, so that there is legal certainty for the Red and White Cooperative in accessing, managing and utilizing marine resources sustainably. Legal incentives, such as ease of licensing, access to green financing, and legal protection for environmentally friendly business practices, also need to be provided to strengthen the position of cooperatives in this sector.

From a philosophical perspective, strengthening regulations that place cooperatives as strategic actors in managing the blue economy is rooted in the view that economic development should not solely pursue growth, but should also reflect human values, justice and sustainability.[22] Regulation is not just a technical legal device, but a manifestation of the nation's collective ideals about how marine resources, as a gift of nature, are managed for the greatest prosperity of the people. In this framework, cooperatives—with the principles of mutual cooperation, equality and economic democracy—embody the values of Pancasila which place common interests above the interests of a few parties.

The philosophy of blue economic law demands a balance between humans and nature. The sea is not seen simply as an object of exploitation, but as a living space whose sustainability must be maintained for present and future generations. Placing cooperatives as strategic actors means providing space for coastal communities to be present not only as policy recipients, but as moral and political subjects who have rights[23], obligations and responsibilities in protecting the sea. Strong regulations become a "normative shield" so that ecological and social interests are not defeated by market logic alone.

In addition, philosophically, cooperatives reflect the idea of distributive justice taught by Aristotle, namely that the benefits of shared resources must be allocated proportionally to those who contribute and are directly affected. In the Indonesian context, distributive justice is in line with the constitutional mandate of Article 33 of the 1945 Constitution, which emphasizes that the earth, water and natural resources are controlled by the state and used as much as possible for the prosperity of the people. Thus, strengthening cooperative regulations in the blue economy is

[21] Sugiyanto, S. (2025). *Tata Kelola Koperasi dengan Pendekatan Stewardship atau Agency Theory*. J-Coop : Journal of Co-Operative, 1(2), 189–198.

[22] Norbertus Jegalus, *Koperasi Membangun Karakter Bangsa (Sebuah Kajian Filosofis)*. Lumen Veritatis: Jurnal Filsafat dan Teologi 11, no. 1 (Oktober 1, 2020): 89–106.

[23] Anam, Saiful, Cakra Heru Santosa, Fahririn Fahririn, Muhammad Fachrul Hudallah, and Regita Widya Prameswari. 2026. "Political Intervention in Post-Reform State Official Recruitment". *Fiat Justisia: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* 20 (2):207-26.

not only a technocratic step, but also the embodiment of the state's philosophical ideals to bring social justice to all Indonesian people.[24]

Furthermore, regulations that position cooperatives as strategic actors are also based on the philosophy of popular sovereignty. The sea is the living space of maritime nations, and sovereignty over the sea cannot only be determined by the interests of capital or foreign powers. Through cooperatives, sovereignty is realized in the form of collective participation, where coastal communities consciously regulate, manage and preserve the sea with the principle of shared responsibility. Regulations in favor of cooperatives, therefore, become a symbol of the state's courage in asserting that economic sovereignty must start from the people, for the people, and with the people.[25]

On the other hand, there is a need for regulations that require cooperative participation in coastal and marine governance. For example, cooperatives could be given the mandate to monitor sustainable fisheries, manage community-based conservation areas, and develop maritime ecotourism. In this way, cooperatives not only function as economic institutions, but also as legal instruments that support monitoring, conservation and fair distribution of benefits.

In the end, strengthening regulations that favor the Red and White Cooperative in utilizing the blue economy will create synergy between economic, social and environmental interests. Clear and firm regulations can ensure that cooperatives truly become the backbone of sustainable maritime development, strengthen national economic sovereignty, while maintaining Indonesia's identity as a maritime country.

Strengthening Blue Economic Laws through Red and White Cooperatives

Strengthening blue economic laws through the Red and White Cooperative opens up great opportunities for Indonesia to realize inclusive, sustainable and sovereign maritime development. Cooperatives based on the spirit of mutual cooperation and social justice can be an effective instrument to ensure that the benefits of marine management are not only enjoyed by a few large actors, but also by coastal communities who have been dependent on marine resources for their daily lives.[26] With strong regulations, cooperatives are able to gain legal legitimacy in accessing financing, expanding marketing networks, and strengthening the bargaining power of small fishermen and cultivators.[27] This has the potential to create equal distribution of economic benefits while increasing the contribution of the maritime sector to national Gross Domestic Product.

Another opportunity that arises is the creation of synergy between economy and ecology. Regulations that position cooperatives as strategic actors can encourage environmentally friendly maritime business practices, such as

[24] Sepia Ngadi Wulandari, Helina Dewi Septiani, Marhamah Izat Rodliyah, & Rony Edward Utama. (2024). *Analisis Prinsip-Prinsip Koperasi Untuk Kesejahteraan Anggota*. Musytari : Jurnal Manajemen, Akuntansi, Dan Ekonomi, 3(7), 11–20.

[25] Simorangkir, D. J., Sinaga, P., & Setyowati, R. K. (2025). *Kewenangan dan Pengawasan Pemerintah dalam Regulasi Pembentukan Koperasi Desa Merah Putih*. Jurnal Riset Rumpun Ilmu Sosial, Politik Dan Humaniora, 4(4), 677–692.

[26] Ari Wibowo, Moh. Abdi Suhufan dan Bellicia A., *Rambu-rambu Kebijakan Ekonomi Biru di Indonesia*, Jakarta : Transparency Internasional Indonesia, 2022, Hlm. 42

[27] Pusat Pendidikan Kelautan Dan Perikanan, *Blue Economy Goes To Campus*, Jakarta: Pusat Pendidikan KP, 2014, Hlm. 71

sustainable fisheries, conservation-based mariculture, or the development of marine ecotourism. Cooperatives function as a community-based monitoring mechanism, so that excessive exploitation can be minimized. In this way, strengthening the law not only supports economic growth, but also strengthens the resilience of marine ecosystems which are the foundation for the lives of future generations.

However, this great opportunity is also accompanied by a number of challenges that cannot be ignored. One of them is regulatory fragmentation and overlapping authority between institutions. Cooperatives operating in the maritime sector often face multiple layers of licensing and complicated legal procedures, making it difficult for them to develop. Another challenge is the weak institutional capacity of cooperatives, especially at the local level, which still faces limitations in terms of management, transparency and access to information. This condition is exacerbated by the continued strong dominance of large corporations and illegal exploitation practices which often escape legal supervision.

Another philosophical and practical challenge is how to ensure regulations are truly in the interests of the people, not just a legal formality. Without the political courage to enforce the rules, cooperatives have the potential to only become an accessory in the narrative of blue economic development, not the main actor. Therefore, apart from strengthening legal aspects, human resource capacity development, participatory monitoring mechanisms, and synergy between government, community and cooperatives are also needed.[28] In this way, the great opportunity to strengthen blue economic laws through the Red and White Cooperative can be realized, although the challenges remain complex.[29]

Strengthening blue economic law through the Red and White Cooperative has a strong constitutional basis, especially in Article 33 of the 1945 Constitution. This article emphasizes that the earth, water and natural resources contained therein are controlled by the state and used as much as possible for the prosperity of the people.[30] In this context, the sea as a living space and strategic economic resource is part of natural wealth that must be managed not only for the sake of economic growth, but also for the welfare of society, especially coastal communities. Placing cooperatives as strategic actors is a form of direct implementation of the constitutional mandate which emphasizes economic democracy and social justice.[31]

The constitutionality of the role of cooperatives is also reflected in the assertion that the Indonesian economy is structured as a joint venture based on the principle of kinship. This principle is in line with the identity of cooperatives, including the Red and White Cooperative, which places the values of mutual cooperation and togetherness as the basis for operations. By strengthening regulations that integrate cooperatives into the blue economy framework, the state is actually reviving the spirit of Article 33 of the 1945 Constitution, namely ensuring

[28] Lutfiyanti. (2025). *Peran Koperasi Merah Putih Sebagai Mitra Pemerintah Desa Dalam Meningkatkan Ekonomi Lokal*. Journal Central Publisher, 2(9), 2563–2569.

[29] Hilda, H. H. S., Muflih Munazih, & Siti Kunarti. (2025). *Tinjauan Hukum Administrasi Negara Terhadap Pembentukan Koperasi Desa Merah Putih Melalui Instruksi Presiden*. JURNAL USM LAW REVIEW, 8(2), 901-922.

[30] Aminuddin Ilmar, *Hak Menguasai Negara Dalam Privatisasi BUMN*, PenerbitKencana Prenada Media Group, Jakarta, 2012, Hlm. 23

[31] Saiful Anam, *Konstitusi in Hukum Tata Negara*, Sukabumi: CV. Haura Utama, 2023, Hlm. 70

that the people are not only the object of development, but the main subject in managing and experiencing the benefits of Indonesia's marine wealth.

Furthermore, strengthening blue economic laws through cooperatives also supports the constitutional principle of social justice for all Indonesian people. Social justice is not only realized in economic distribution, but also in equal access to natural resources.[32] Regulations that provide space and protection for cooperatives mean providing a fairer opportunity for small communities to be involved in marine management. Thus, the constitutionality of strengthening this law is not only normative, but also practical: bringing substantive justice to coastal communities who have been at the forefront, but are often marginalized in the flow of development.

From a constitutional perspective, strengthening Red and White Cooperative regulations in the blue economy also contains the meaning of sovereignty. The constitution places the people as the holder of supreme sovereignty, and the sea is part of economic sovereignty which must be managed in the national interest.[33] By making cooperatives the main actor, the state not only carries out control and regulatory functions as mandated by Article 33, but also emphasizes Indonesia's identity as a sovereign maritime country. This means that strengthening this law is a direct manifestation of the constitution's commitment to people's prosperity, economic sovereignty and environmental sustainability.

Strengthening Blue Economy Laws through Red and White Cooperatives can be analyzed using Lawrence M. Friedman's legal system theory which includes three main elements: legal structure, legal substance, and legal culture. In terms of structure, cooperatives need solid state institutional support, including ministries, supervisory agencies and law enforcement officials so that blue economy regulations can be implemented consistently. In terms of substance, clear legal rules are needed that support cooperatives as strategic actors in managing marine resources, thereby providing certainty and legal protection for sustainable economic practices. Meanwhile, legal culture demands the internalization of the values of mutual cooperation, social justice, and environmental awareness within members of cooperatives and coastal communities, so that the law is not only obeyed formally, but is truly lived in daily practice. By applying Friedman's framework, strengthening blue economic law through the Red and White Cooperative does not only stop at creating regulations, but also ensures harmony between institutions, norms and culture that support sustainable maritime development.

Linking Lawrence Friedman's theory[34] with Strengthening Blue Economic Laws through Red and White Cooperatives in the context of the Prabowo government opens up an interesting analytical space, because Friedman's theory emphasizes three fundamental elements in the functioning of law: legal structure,

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[32] M. Faisal dkk, *Evaluasi Kebijakan Koperasi dan Tantangan Ekonomi Desa*. Jakarta: CORE Indonesia, 2025, Hlm. 31

[33] M Sofyan Pulungan, *Sistem Ekonomi Berdasarkan Koperasi Dalam Konstitusi: Menggali Pemikiran Koperasi Hatta*. (2019). Arena Hukum, 12(1), 23-42.

[34] Friedman Lawrence M, *Law and Society An Introduction*, Prentice Hall Inc, New. Jersey, 1977, Hlm. 57

legal substance, and legal culture.[35] These three can be a lens for seeing the opportunities and challenges of implementing the blue economy vision which is currently being mainstreamed as part of sustainable development in the Prabowo government era.

In terms of legal structure, the Prabowo government has full authority to form, strengthen and synergize institutions that play a role in maritime governance and cooperatives. The Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, and law enforcement officials need to be consolidated so that regulations related to cooperatives in the maritime sector do not run partially. This is where the Red and White Cooperative can be positioned institutionally as a strategic partner for the government in supporting inclusive and sustainable marine management.

In terms of legal substance, the Prabowo government is faced with the need to introduce regulations that are firmer, more comprehensive and pro-coastal for coastal communities. The required legal substance includes derivative regulations that guarantee cooperative access to marine resources, protection of environmentally friendly business practices, as well as fiscal and non-fiscal incentives for cooperatives involved in the blue economy. Thus, regulation not only functions as an administrative instrument, but also as a social engineering tool capable of shifting the dominance of large corporations and strengthening the economic position of the people.

Meanwhile, legal culture is the most crucial and challenging factor. Prabowo's government is required to encourage legal awareness among coastal communities and cooperative members so that the values of mutual cooperation, sustainability and social justice truly become guidelines in marine management. This legal culture must grow through education, mentoring and community empowerment, so that regulations are not only obeyed due to formal coercion, but are internalized as part of the collective identity of the maritime community.

Using Friedman's framework, it can be concluded that strengthening the blue economy law through the Red and White Cooperative in the Prabowo government is not just a technical agenda, but a holistic effort. The legal structure needs to be strengthened with institutional synergy, the legal substance needs to be enriched with inclusive and sustainability-oriented regulations, and a legal culture must be developed so that coastal communities become active actors in protecting and utilizing the sea. If these three elements can work in harmony, then Indonesia's vision as a sovereign, just and sustainable maritime country can be realized in reality.[36]

Currently, strengthening blue economic laws through the Red and White Cooperative requires valuable input that emphasizes aspects of regulatory consistency and institutional synergy. Many existing regulations relate to maritime affairs, the environment and cooperatives, but they still operate independently

[35] Razak, A. (2023). *Mewujudkan Pemilu Adil dan Bermartabat: Suatu Tinjauan Sistem Hukum Lawrence M. Friedman*. Fundamental: Jurnal Ilmiah Hukum, 12(2), 471-488.

[36] Subhan Purwadinata. (2022). *Menelisik Strategi Kelembagaan Desa Dalam Penggunaan Dana Desa Untuk Pengembangan Agroindustri Pertanian Di Kawasan Tertinggal*. Jurnal Pengembangan Masyarakat Lokal, 2(1), 1–10.

without a clear integration framework.[37] An important input is that the government needs to formulate derivative policies that make cooperatives, especially the Red and White Cooperative, as official actors in managing maritime resources. This will provide legal certainty while strengthening the position of coastal communities in the blue economy value chain.

In the short term, a relevant input is to strengthen cooperative access to financing, markets and technology through regulations that favor small and medium enterprises. Cooperatives need to be facilitated to obtain price protection, sustainability certification, and access to export marine products. Another input is the establishment of incentive regulations, such as light taxes or environmentally friendly subsidies, for cooperatives that carry out sustainable business practices. With this step, the law will not only become a regulator, but also a driver of inclusive blue economic transformation.[38]

In the future, valuable input that needs to be considered is building regulations that are visionary and adaptive to global challenges.[39] Climate change, international market dynamics and geopolitical competition in the maritime sector require laws that are not static. The Red and White Cooperative must be positioned as a long-term instrument to ensure that the benefits of marine resources remain in the hands of the people. Future regulations should integrate strategic issues such as the blue energy transition, marine conservation, and digitalization of cooperatives so that they are able to face an increasingly complex global economic era.

Thus, valuable input that can be underlined is that strengthening the blue economy law through the Red and White Cooperative is not only about strict rules, but also regulations that are progressive, inclusive and sustainable. The law must be able to protect the interests of the people today, while preparing them to face the challenges of the future. With this approach, the Red and White Cooperative will truly become the main pillar in realizing Indonesia as a just, sovereign and sustainable maritime country.

Strengthening blue economic laws through the Red and White Cooperative cannot be done partially, but requires the involvement of various actors. The government is the main actor who plays a role in forming clear, firm and consistent regulations. The Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, as well as law enforcement agencies have the responsibility to provide a legal framework that makes cooperatives strategic actors. In addition, regional governments also have an important role in integrating national regulations with the specific needs of coastal communities in their respective regions.

Apart from the government, coastal communities as members of cooperatives are the spearhead that determines the effectiveness of the blue economy law.[40] They are not only beneficiaries, but also the main implementers who must carry out

[37] A. Wijanarko, *Duplikasi Fungsi Antara Koperasi dan BUMDes: Sebuah Kajian*, Jakarta: Progressive Institute Paramadina, 2025, Hlm. 12

[38] Zahrah, F., & Rahayu, S. (2024). *Hambatan dan Peluang Pembangunan Ekonomi Inklusif dan Berkelanjutan di Kawasan Kepulauan: Tinjauan Literatur Kritis*. Jurnal Archipelago, 3(01), 67–81.

[39] W. Silalahi, "*Penataan Regulasi Berkualitas Dalam Rangka Terjaminnya Supremasi Hukum*," Jurnal Hukum Progresif, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 56-66, Apr. 2020.

[40] Khoiriyah, A. (2024). *Implementasi Ekonomi Biru Di Indonesia*. Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen, Ekonomi, & Akuntansi (MEA), 8(2), 1331-1356.

environmentally friendly business practices, comply with cooperative governance, and protect the sea as a source of collective life. The active participation of coastal communities strengthens the legitimacy of regulations, while creating a vibrant legal culture at the community level.

Other actors who are no less important are academics and research institutions. They play a role in providing input based on scientific studies, testing the effectiveness of regulations, and developing technological innovation to support cooperatives in the maritime sector. Support for legal research and education will also strengthen the institutional capacity of cooperatives so that they are able to adapt to global dynamics.

The private sector and business world can also play a role through healthy partnerships with cooperatives. With appropriate regulations, the private sector can collaborate in the maritime value chain, for example through marine product processing, product distribution, or cooperative-based ecotourism promotion. This will create a more inclusive and competitive blue economy ecosystem.[41]

In addition, civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) act as independent monitors and community advocates. They can help ensure regulations are implemented according to the principles of social justice and sustainability, as well as provide legal and environmental education to cooperative members. This role is important so that legal strengthening does not stop at regulatory texts, but is actually realized in real practice.

With synergy between government, society, academics, the private sector and civil organizations, strengthening blue economic laws through the Red and White Cooperative can be effective. This multi-actor collaboration will ensure that regulations do not only exist as formal norms, but also become living instruments that safeguard maritime sovereignty, improve community welfare, and ensure the sustainability of maritime development.

Cooperative law reform to support the blue economy needs to be based on identifying gaps (legal gap analysis) between applicable norms, normative problems found, legal impacts caused, and the choice of instruments for improvement. This analysis can be formulated as follows:

Table 1. Legal Gap Analysis

No.	Existing Regulations	Normative Weakness	Legal/Institutional Consequences	Repair Options
1.	Law Number 25 of 1992 concerning Cooperatives as the general legal basis for cooperatives	Cooperative arrangements are still general in nature and do not explicitly accommodate cooperatives that carry out activities based on sustainable	There is no certainty regarding the position of cooperatives as an instrument for empowering coastal communities in the marine economic value chain, including business access,	Strengthening norms through changes to regulations or implementing regulations that regulate the characteristics of strategic sector-based cooperatives,

[41] Virna Febryaningrum, Sindi Mayangsari, & Maria Yovita R. Pandin. (2024). *Peran Ekonomi Biru Dalam Memperkuat Ketahanan Ekonomi : Studi Kasus Kawasan Wisata Mangrove di Surabaya*. Jurnal Manajemen Dan Ekonomi Kreatif, 2(3), 67–84.

		strategic sectors, including the marine economy and blue economy principles.	partnerships and sustainable financing.	including the principles of environmental sustainability in cooperative governance.
2.	Undang-Undang Nomor 32 Tahun 2014 tentang Kelautan	Regulations emphasize aspects of marine space management, resource utilization, conservation and government authority, but do not specifically regulate mechanisms for empowering cooperatives as community economic actors.	There is a disconnect between marine resource management policies and community economic institutions that carry out coastal economic activities	Establish a cross-sector coordination mechanism that links marine policy with strengthening coastal community cooperative institutions
3.	Law Number 31 of 2004 concerning Fisheries as most recently amended by Law Number 6 of 2023	Fisheries regulations have regulated fisheries businesses and empowered fishermen, but have not provided specific designs regarding cooperatives as business aggregators, product processors and strengthening fishermen's bargaining position.	Fishermen and small coastal businesses continue to face limited market access, capital, technology and distribution chains	Strengthening cooperative-based empowerment policies through developing fisheries value chains, business partnerships and integrated access to financing
4.	Environmental regulations regarding environmental protection and management	The principle of sustainability has been recognized, but has not been specifically linked to the governance of cooperatives as natural resource-based economic actors	Cooperative economic activities have the potential to only be oriented towards production aspects without indicators of ecological sustainability	Integrating environmental sustainability principles into governance standards and business activities of maritime sector cooperatives

Source: Legal Gap Analysis

Based on this matrix, the main problem does not lie in the absence of a legal basis for cooperatives, but rather in the lack of integration of cooperative norms with the maritime, fisheries and environmental legal regimes. Therefore, legal reform is not precisely aimed at replacing all existing cooperative regimes, but rather at strengthening relations between regimes through harmonization of regulations, drafting implementing regulations and cross-sector policies. Apart from that, it needs to be emphasized that the use of Law Number 17 of 2012 concerning Cooperatives as a basis for reform is no longer appropriate because this law has been declared to have no binding legal force based on Constitutional Court Decision Number 28/PUU-XI/2013. Thus, reform recommendations must rely on Law Number 25 of 1992 concerning Cooperatives as a positive legal basis, by strengthening norms so that cooperatives can function as people's economic instruments in supporting the blue economy in a sustainable manner.

To strengthen the blue economy legal framework through "Merah Putih" Village/Urban Village Cooperatives, the initial step involves restructuring and harmonizing cooperative regulations to address sustainable economic needs, including community-based marine resource management. Law Number 17 of 2012 concerning Cooperatives must be used cautiously as a basis for analysis, given that it was declared unconstitutional inconsistent with the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia and stripped of binding legal force by Constitutional Court Decision Number 28/PUU-XI/2013. Consequently, the prevailing legal regime for cooperatives has reverted to Law Number 25 of 1992 concerning Cooperatives and its still-valid implementing regulations. Within the blue economy context, these regulations require strengthening to accommodate the evolution of cooperatives as instruments for community-based economic activity in the marine sector; this includes enhancing access to financing, developing marine business value chains, protecting member interests, and integrating environmental sustainability principles. Such legal reform does not aim to grant cooperatives authority over marine resource management itself, but rather to clarify their status as grassroots economic legal entities capable of serving as strategic partners to the government and the community in achieving inclusive and sustainable marine development.

Apart from that, regulations in the maritime and fisheries sector also require reform. Law Number 45 of 2009 concerning Fisheries and Law Number 32 of 2014 concerning Maritime Affairs must be strengthened with articles that integrate cooperatives into marine resource governance. This is important so that cooperatives have a clear legal position in obtaining rights to manage fisheries, manage marine conservation areas, and develop community-based marine ecotourism. Without this reform, cooperatives will remain peripheral actors who will find it difficult to compete with large business actors.

Reform is also needed in environmental regulations, especially Law Number 32 of 2009 concerning Environmental Protection and Management. This regulation should be more in favor of cooperative-based collective business schemes that are committed to preserving marine sustainability.[42] For example, through providing environmental incentives, tax breaks, or access to conservation funds for cooperatives that adopt sustainable blue economy practices. Thus, environmental protection is not only an obligation, but also an economic opportunity for cooperative communities.

[42] Kome, E. E., Yusnaldi, Y., Yulianto, B. A., Widodo, P., & Suwarno, P. (2024). *Peran Pemerintah Dalam Menjaga Kelestarian Maritim*. Indonesian Journal of Public Administration Review, 1(4), 5.

In addition to substantive laws, technical and licensing regulations also need to be reformed. The licensing process which is currently layered between the center and the regions often becomes an obstacle for cooperatives to develop. Licensing reforms that are simpler, more transparent and digitally based will strengthen cooperative access to marine resources and reduce opportunities for corrupt practices or illegal levies.

The formation of special regulations regarding a cooperative-based blue economy needs to be based on identifying legal gaps that cannot be completely resolved only through harmonization of existing regulations. Currently, regulations regarding cooperatives, maritime affairs, fisheries, the environment and trade are still running in a sectoral regime with their respective regulatory objectives. The cooperative regime regulates the institutional, membership and governance aspects of cooperatives, while marine and fisheries regulations focus more on resource utilization, licensing, conservation and supervision of marine activities. This condition creates a legal gap in the form of the absence of norms that specifically regulate the position of cooperatives as institutional actors in the blue economy value chain, inter-agency coordination mechanisms in empowering maritime sector cooperatives, as well as integration between the principles of ecological sustainability and cooperative business governance. Therefore, before forming new regulations, it is necessary to harmonize and strengthen the applicable implementing regulations. However, if these instruments are not able to overcome the fragmentation of authority, the absence of norms regarding cooperative-based blue economy institutional models, and incentive mechanisms for coastal communities, then the formation of umbrella regulations can be considered as an integrative instrument to provide legal certainty. Thus, the need for new regulations is not based on the desire to increase regulations, but rather as a response to normative gaps that cannot be resolved systemically through existing sectoral approaches.

In the short term, the best input is to strengthen the legal foundation and institutional capacity of the Red and White Cooperative so that it can immediately play an active role in blue economy governance. The government needs to harmonize overlapping regulations in the maritime, fisheries, environmental and cooperative sectors. Apart from that, practical steps in the form of simplifying licensing, providing inclusive access to financing, as well as cooperative management training for coastal communities must be implemented immediately. This input is important so that cooperatives are not only present formally, but can actually carry out their function as drivers of the people's economy in coastal areas.[43]

In the medium term, the best input focus is to strengthen the integration of cooperatives into the blue economy value chain nationally. The government together with the Red and White Cooperative can build a clear collaboration scheme with the private sector, BUMN and research institutions. Sustainability-based incentive regulations must also be implemented, for example through environmentally friendly subsidy schemes, support for cooperative-based seafood

[43] Wahyuningsih, S. ., Haviana, E. ., Pratiwi, I. W. ., Utomo, B. ., & Ramdhani, R. . (2024). *Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Pesisir Melalui Kegiatan Kesadaran Melek Berwirausaha*. Community Development Journal : Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat, 5(3),

exports, or international certification facilities for cooperative products. At this stage, the law functions not only as a regulator, but also as an engine of growth that encourages cooperatives to move up in class and be competitive at regional and global levels.

Meanwhile, in the long term, the best input is to create comprehensive umbrella regulations to make cooperatives permanent strategic actors in managing the blue economy. This could take the form of establishing a Cooperative-Based Blue Economy Law that integrates all interests: protection of the marine environment, welfare of coastal communities, and national economic sovereignty. In addition, the development of a legal culture oriented towards sustainability and mutual cooperation must be instilled consistently through legal education, environmental awareness and empowerment of coastal youth. In this way, strengthening the blue economy law is not only pragmatic in the short term, but becomes the ideological and constitutional foundation for Indonesia as a sovereign and just maritime country.[44]

The great hope of strengthening the blue economy law through the Red and White Cooperative is the creation of marine resource governance that is fair, sustainable and pro-people. With clear and impartial regulations, cooperatives can be at the forefront in ensuring that the benefits of the blue economy are not only enjoyed by large corporations or foreign investors, but also coastal communities who have depended on the sea as a source of life. The hope is that strengthening this law will be able to reduce social inequality, improve the welfare of cooperative members, and provide a more even distribution of economic benefits.

Furthermore, it is hoped that strengthening this law will be able to create a harmonious synergy between economic, ecological and social aspects. The Red and White Cooperative, with its mutual cooperation basis, can be a driving force for environmentally friendly business practices, so that the sea remains sustainable while providing added economic value. With regulatory support, cooperatives are also expected to be able to enter the global value chain, bringing Indonesian marine products to international markets with high sustainability standards. This hope will strengthen Indonesia's position as a sovereign and competitive maritime country.

Another hope is the formation of a new legal culture based on family values, mutual cooperation and social justice. Strong regulations not only create legal certainty, but also build collective awareness that marine management is not just an economic activity, but a constitutional mandate and a generational responsibility to safeguard the nation's heritage. By positioning cooperatives as strategic actors, the hope is that the law will truly become a tool for realizing the ideals of Article 33 of the 1945 Constitution: fair and sustainable prosperity for the people.

In the end, strengthening blue economic laws through the Red and White Cooperative is not just a technical regulatory agenda, but a big effort to put the people at the center of Indonesia's maritime development. The hope is that this step will not only answer short-term challenges, but will also become the foundation for future generations to live in prosperity, sovereignty and sustainability. With the support of progressive regulations, multi-actor synergy and collective awareness,

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[44] C. Chrystofer, "*Penguatan Hubungan Politik Internasional Indonesia dalam Mewujudkan Kedaulatan Poros Maritim yang Ideal*," Gema Keadilan, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 24-31, Oct. 2017.

Indonesia has a great opportunity to truly become a just, prosperous and sustainable maritime country.

CONCLUSION

Strengthening the blue economy legal framework through "Merah Putih" Village/Urban-Village Cooperatives reveals a normative gap between the cooperative legal regime and the maritime legal regime; these regimes are not yet fully integrated regarding the role of cooperatives as instruments for the sustainable empowerment of coastal communities. Research findings indicate that current cooperative laws provide an institutional foundation for cooperatives as member-based business entities but do not specifically regulate their functions in supporting blue economy principles—such as strengthening maritime value chains, ensuring access to sustainable financing, facilitating conservation participation, and managing businesses based on environmental carrying capacity. Conversely, while marine and fisheries regulations govern the utilization and protection of marine resources, they lack a clear institutional design regarding the role of cooperatives as community economic actors in implementing these policies. The required legal integration model involves a harmonization approach linking cooperative, maritime, fisheries, and environmental laws by positioning "Merah Putih" Village/Urban-Village Cooperatives as intermediary institutions that bridge the interests of coastal communities, economic mechanisms, and environmental sustainability goals.

This integration would not transfer state authority regarding licensing, marine spatial planning, or marine resource oversight; rather, it would strengthen cooperative functions in business organization, market access, financing, product processing, and community participation in conservation. Recommended legal instruments include: first, strengthening cooperative regulations through more explicit provisions regarding cooperatives based on strategic sectors and sustainability principles; second, drafting implementing regulations or cross-sectoral policies to govern coordination mechanisms among relevant ministries/agencies, local governments, and cooperatives in blue economy development; and third, establishing specific regulations on the cooperative-based blue economy only if the harmonization of existing regulations fails to bridge legal gaps concerning institutional arrangements, financing, and sustainability integration. Thus, "Merah Putih" Village/Urban-Village Cooperatives can serve as a legal instrument for the people's economy, bolstering the welfare of coastal communities while simultaneously supporting the sustainable management of marine resources.

Strengthening this law requires comprehensive regulatory reform, starting from cooperative, fisheries, maritime and environmental laws. Without these reforms, cooperatives will continue to be in a marginal position and find it difficult to compete with large actors. In addition, legal implementation must pay attention to three dimensions according to Lawrence Friedman: a strong and consistent legal structure, legal substance that favors the people, and a legal culture based on community awareness and participation. In this way, the law does not only live on paper, but actually functions in fair and sustainable ocean management practices. The role of the Red and White Cooperative in strengthening the blue economy law is an important pillar for realizing sustainable development while strengthening

Indonesia's identity as a maritime country. The hope for the future is to create synergy between government, cooperatives, society, academics and the private sector in building sovereign and inclusive maritime governance. With appropriate regulations and consistent implementation, the Red and White Cooperative is able to become a driving force for economic democracy, preserve the marine environment, and provide equal prosperity for all Indonesian people.

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