



## The Role of The Palangka Raya City Government in Revitalizing Customary Law Values Based on The *Huma Betang* Philosophy

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**Abstract:** *This study aims to examine the role of the Palangka Raya City Government in preserving customary law based on the Huma Betang philosophy, which represents the cultural identity of the Dayak community in Central Kalimantan. The research employs a normative legal approach using statutory, conceptual, and historical methods. Constitutionally, the preservation of customary law is guaranteed by Article 18B paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which recognizes and respects indigenous law communities along with their traditional rights. At the regional level, the commitment to preserving local cultural values is affirmed through Central Kalimantan Provincial Regulation No. 1 of 2008 concerning Dayak Customary Institutions in Central Kalimantan, which serves as the legal foundation for involving customary institutions in regional development. The findings indicate that the Palangka Raya City Government has made efforts to integrate Huma Betang values into development policies and social life through support for customary institutions, cultural education programs, and preservation activities. However, challenges remain in terms of policy synchronization, comprehensive community involvement, and the internalization of cultural values amid the current of modernization. Strategic steps are needed through cross-sector collaboration and the strengthening of regional regulations to ensure the sustainability of customary legal values within an inclusive and sustainable development framework.*

**Keywords:** *Huma Betang, customary law, the 1945 Constitution, Central Kalimantan Regional Regulation No. 1 of 2008, local government, Palangka Raya.*

### Introduction

Palangka Raya City, as the capital of Central Kalimantan Province, is a region rich in local wisdom, particularly that which originates from the indigenous Dayak community. One of the deeply rooted philosophies in the lives of its people is *Huma*

*Batang*, which embodies the values of togetherness, tolerance, deliberation, and social justice. However, in today's social reality, these values are beginning to experience a shift and a decline in meaning, especially among the younger generation. Modernization, urbanization, and the massive influx of external cultural influences pose significant challenges to the existence of customary law and local values.<sup>1</sup>

A number of studies have revealed that customary law functions not only as a set of social norms for indigenous communities but also as a vital component of cultural identity and a source of values for building a pluralistic national legal system. Previous research shows that the *Huma Batang* philosophy is not merely a cultural symbol, but also embodies principles of social governance that align with democratic values and justice.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the preservation of customary law cannot be separated from efforts to preserve culture and to develop the character of local communities.<sup>3</sup>

Normatively, the recognition and protection of indigenous law communities have been affirmed in Article 18B paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which states that the state acknowledges and respects the unity of indigenous law communities along with their traditional rights. At the regional level, the Government of Central Kalimantan Province issued Regional Regulation No. 16 of 2008 on Dayak Customary Institutions, which was later revised through Regional Regulation No. 1 of 2010.<sup>4</sup> This amendment reflects the regional government's commitment to strengthening the legal status of customary institutions as strategic partners in development and the preservation of local cultural values, including the *Huma Batang* philosophy. However, in practice, the implementation of

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<sup>1</sup> Nila Riwut, *Maneser Panatau Tatu Hiang; Menyelami Kekayaan Leluhur*, 1st ed. (Palangka Raya: Pusaka Lima, 2003).

<sup>2</sup> Chris Apandie and Endang Danial Ar, "Huma Batang: Identitas Moral Kultural Suku Dayak Ngaju Kalimantan Tengah," *Journal of Moral and Civic Education* 3, no. 2 (2019): 76–91, <https://doi.org/10.24036/8851412322019185>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibnu Elmi Achmat Slamet Pelu and Jefry Tarantang, "Interkoneksi Nilai-Nilai Huma Batang Kalimantan Tengah Dengan Pancasila," *Jurnal Studi Agama Dan Masyarakat* 14, no. 2 (2018): 119, <https://doi.org/10.23971/jsam.v14i2.928>.

<sup>4</sup> Ibnu Elmi, A S Pelu, and Jefry Tarantang, "Interkoneksi Nilai-Nilai Huma Batang Kalimantan Tengah Dengan Pancasila," *Jurnal Studi Agama Dan Masyarakat* 14, no. 02 (2018): 119–26, <https://doi.org/10.23971/jsam.v14i2.928>.

this policy still faces various challenges, including regulatory enforcement, inter-institutional coordination, and the active participation of indigenous communities.<sup>5</sup>

Based on these conditions, it is important to conduct an in-depth study on the role of the Palangka Raya City Government in preserving customary law based on the *Huma Betang* philosophy.<sup>6</sup> This study is expected to provide an overview of the extent to which regional regulations and policies are able to accommodate the values of customary law, as well as how preservation strategies can be developed in a more systematic and sustainable manner.<sup>7</sup> The urgency of this research also lies in its contribution to strengthening local identity while supporting the development of a national legal system rooted in the cultural values of society.

This research employs a normative legal research method, which is an approach based on the study of documents and literature to examine the applicable legal norms,<sup>8</sup> to examine the applicable legal norms, including both statutory regulations and principles of customary law.<sup>9</sup> The approaches used in this research include the statute approach, the conceptual approach, and the historical approach.<sup>10</sup> The primary legal materials in this study include the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, particularly Article 18B paragraph (2), as well as Central Kalimantan Provincial Regulation No. 16 of 2008 as amended by Provincial Regulation No. 1 of 2010 concerning Dayak Customary Institutions.<sup>11</sup> Secondary legal materials are

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<sup>5</sup> Desi Natalia et al., "Dinamika Budaya Belom Bahadat: Studi Kasus Masyarakat Dayak Di Palangka Raya Dalam Perspektif Max Weber Dan Talcott Parson," *Anterior Jurnal* 23, no. 2 (2024): 62–70, <https://doi.org/10.33084/anterior.v23i2.6923>.

<sup>6</sup> Desi Natalia, Jefry Tarantang, and Ni Nyoman Adi Astiti, "Makna Manuhir Dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat Dayak Ngaju Di Kota Palangka Raya," *Jurnal Studi Agama Dan Masyarakat* 16, no. 1 (2020): 24–34, <https://doi.org/10.23971/jsam.v16i1.2077>.

<sup>7</sup> "Perlindungan Hukum Atas Tanah Adat Kalimantan Tengah," *Jurnal Penelitian Hukum De Jure* 19, no. 4 (2019): 435, <https://doi.org/10.30641/dejure.2019.v19.435-454>.

<sup>8</sup> Jefry Tarantang and Ibnu Elmi A.S. Pelu, "Neo-Digitalism in the Legal System: Adapting Law to Technological Developments," *Jurnal Ilmu Hukum Tambun Bungai* 9, no. 2 (2023): 17–23, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.61394/jihtb.v9i2.495>.

<sup>9</sup> Jefry Tarantang, Ramdani Wahyu Sururie, and Idzam Fautanu, "Unification of Law in the Marriage and Divorce Processes of the Dayak Ngaju Muslim Communities in Central Kalimantan," *Mazahib Jurnal Pemikiran Hukum Islam* 23, no. 2 (2024): 529–54, <https://doi.org/10.21093/mj.v23i2.6940>.

<sup>10</sup> Ibnu Elmi Acmad Slamet Pelu et al., "The Combination of Legal System: Reconciliation of Divorce Cases in Dayak Ngaju Customary Law and Positive Law Systems," *Jurnal Akta* 9, no. 1 (2022): 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.30659/akta.v9i1.20427>.

<sup>11</sup> Yul Erniss, "Perlindungan Hukum Atas Tanah Adat Kalimantan Tengah," *Jurnal Penelitian Hukum De Jure* 19, no. 4 (2019): 435, <https://doi.org/10.30641/dejure.2019.v19.435-454>.

obtained from academic literature, legal textbooks, scholarly journals, articles, and policy documents related to cultural preservation and customary law. Data analysis is conducted qualitatively by interpreting the content of legal norms and linking them to the practices of customary law preservation in Palangka Raya City, in order to assess the alignment between legal norms and their implementation in the context of preserving the Huma Betang philosophy.

### **The Dynamics of Customary Law Preservation as a Reflection of the Role of the Palangka Raya City Government in Revitalizing the *Huma Betang* Philosophy**

The preservation of customary law in Palangka Raya City is part of a strategic effort to maintain the cultural identity of the Dayak people, the indigenous inhabitants of the region. The Palangka Raya City Government recognizes that customary law is not merely a cultural heritage, but a social system that regulates interpersonal relationships based on noble values such as justice, deliberation, and harmony with nature. In this context, the *Huma Betang* philosophy serves as an ideological foundation, reflecting the importance of togetherness, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence in diversity.<sup>12</sup>

The *Huma Betang* philosophy, which literally means "longhouse," represents not only a physical architectural form but also a symbol of collective and egalitarian social life. The Palangka Raya City Government seeks to revitalize these values by positioning customary law as a social pillar in regional development. The involvement of traditional leaders in public policy planning and the provision of space for customary institutions in resolving social conflicts reflect the integration of customary values with modern governance. This demonstrates that the preservation of customary law is not a form of resistance to change, but rather a way to build a society deeply rooted in its cultural heritage.<sup>13</sup>

The dynamics of customary law preservation face various challenges, both from within the community and from external factors such as globalization and legal

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<sup>12</sup> Putu Wisnu Saputra and Ida Kade Suparta, "Festival Budaya Isen Mulang Sebagai Upaya Promosi Pariwisata Budaya Di Provinsi Kalimantan Tengah," *Paryatka Jurnal Pariwisata Budaya Dan Keagamaan* 1, no. 2 (2023): 100–107, <https://doi.org/10.53977/pyt.v1i2.735>.

<sup>13</sup> Pelu and Tarantang, "Interkoneksi Nilai-Nilai Huma Betang Kalimantan Tengah Dengan Pancasila."

modernization. Many young people lack understanding of, or even tend to disregard, the values of customary law, considering them irrelevant to contemporary life. In addition, formal state law often overlooks the role of customary law in resolving local community issues, leading to overlapping authority between state institutions and traditional institutions. To address these challenges, the Palangka Raya City Government has sought to revitalize customary law through various policies, such as strengthening customary institutions, providing training for traditional leaders, and integrating *Huma Betang* values into the local education curriculum. These programs function not only as tools for preservation, but also as means of education and value transformation, enabling customary law to meet the needs of contemporary society. Thus, customary law is not stagnant but continues to evolve and adapt without losing the essence of its values.<sup>14</sup>

The city government also collaborates with various stakeholders, such as academics, NGOs, and indigenous communities, to conduct research, documentation, and the development of written customary law guidelines. This step is crucial to ensure that customary law does not exist solely in oral practice but can also be accessed and understood by future generations. Such documentation also provides a solid legal foundation for the state's recognition of customary law as part of the national legal system. On the other hand, the preservation of customary law also plays an important role in environmental conservation, in line with the *Huma Betang* philosophy, which emphasizes harmony between humans and nature. Customary practices—from marriage arrangements to environmental regulations, such as restricting illegal logging, prohibiting waste disposal in rivers, and managing communal land (*tanah ulayat*)—reflect local wisdom in maintaining the sustainability of natural resources. In this regard, the Palangka Raya City Government promotes the integration of customary law into environmental policies as a form of culturally-based ecological preservation.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> “SEJARAH Pemerintah Kota Palangka Raya,” Palangkaraya.go.id, 2023, <https://palangkaraya.go.id/selayang-pandang/sejarah-palangka-raya/>.

<sup>15</sup> Imanuel Jaya, Febriomico Griando Rasan, and Edward Melio Bertho, “Peran Damang Kepala Adat Dalam Perkawinan Adat Dayak Ngaju Di Kecamatan Jekan Raya Kota Palangka Raya Provinsi Kalimantan Tengah,” *Edusociata Jurnal Pendidikan Sosiologi* 7, no. 1 (2024): 977–84.

In addition to serving as a social and environmental system, customary law also plays a vital role in maintaining interreligious and interethnic harmony in the multicultural city of Palangka Raya. The *Huma Betang* philosophy provides a foundation of social ethics for fostering tolerance and solidarity. The city government emphasizes the importance of cross-cultural and interfaith forums involving traditional leaders to strengthen social cohesion within a diverse society.<sup>16</sup> This demonstrates that customary law is not exclusive to the Dayak community, but rather inclusive and capable of serving as an effective social adhesive. The dynamics of customary law preservation in Palangka Raya reflect both political and cultural awareness in safeguarding local identity amid the currents of global change. The Palangka Raya City Government plays a crucial role in facilitating the continuity of customary law through participatory, educational, and integrative approaches. Strengthening *Huma Betang* values through customary law is not only a means of preserving culture, but also of reinforcing the social foundation of a harmonious, just, and sustainable Palangka Raya society. The success of this endeavor will greatly depend on consistent policies, community support, and cross-sectoral commitment in preserving this living cultural heritage.

### **Harmonization Between the State and Customary Systems as an Exploration of the Role of the Palangka Raya City Government in Interpreting and Preserving *Huma Betang* Values**

The harmonization between the state and customary systems has become a central theme in strengthening local values amid the dynamics of modern governance. In the city of Palangka Raya, this harmonization is reflected in the city government's commitment to positioning customary law and Dayak cultural values-particularly the *Huma Betang* philosophy-as strategic partners in governance. The government acts not only as an enforcer of formal regulations but also as a facilitator

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<sup>16</sup> Suwarno Suwarno, "Budaya Huma Betang Masyarakat Dayak Kalimantan Tengah Dalam Globalisasi: Telaah Konstruksi Sosial," *LINGUA: Journal of Language, Literature and Teaching* 14, no. 1 (2017): 89, <https://doi.org/10.30957/lingua.v14i1.237>.

in preserving local wisdom that has long served as the social foundation of Dayak community life.<sup>17</sup>

The values of *Huma Betang* emphasize the importance of living together in diversity, with a spirit of mutual cooperation, tolerance, and deliberation at the core of community life. The Palangka Raya City Government seeks to interpret these values as a foundation for forming inclusive policies rooted in local identity. For example, in regional development processes, the government involves traditional leaders and local communities to ensure that development aligns with cultural values and does not disrupt the long-established social order.<sup>18</sup>

In practice, the harmonization between state and customary systems does not always run smoothly. Challenges arise from differing perspectives between the positive legal system-which tends to be legalistic-and the customary legal system, which is based on communal values and consensus. To bridge this gap, the Palangka Raya City Government adopts a collaborative approach by establishing joint deliberation forums between traditional institutions and government agencies. These forums serve as spaces for dialogue to align perspectives and build a shared framework for addressing social issues.

The government's efforts to explore its role in preserving the values of *Huma Betang* are also evident in the strengthening of customary institutions at the village and sub-district levels. The city government provides administrative and budgetary support to traditional institutions to ensure they can function optimally. Moreover, it promotes the integration of the *damang* (customary leaders) into the community's social structure, recognizing them as a legitimate part of the local governance system. This step enhances the legitimacy of customary law in the eyes of the public and clarifies the role of traditional institutions within the framework of regional governance.

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<sup>17</sup> Anggia Amanda Lukman, "Pewarisan Nilai Sebagai Pembentuk Kepribadian Berkarakter Melalui Falsafah Huma Betang Suku Dayak Kalimantan" 8, no. 1 (2018), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.17509/sosietas.v8i1.12498>.

<sup>18</sup> Dakir, "Pengelolaan Budaya Inklusif Berbasis Nilai Belom Bahadat Pada Huma Betang Dan Transformasi Sosial Masyarakat Dayak Kalimantan Tengah," *Religió: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama* 7, no. 1 (2017): 28–54, <https://doi.org/10.15642/religio.v7i1.707>.

The Palangka Raya City Government also capitalizes on modernization by digitizing and documenting customary values and laws, which have traditionally been passed down orally. This digitalization is crucial to ensure that younger generations can access, learn, and appreciate traditional values in the digital age. In addition, the documentation serves as tangible evidence of the existence of customary law and can be used as a reference in formulating policies based on local wisdom.

The educational aspect has also not been overlooked by the government in maintaining the harmony between state and customary systems. The city government incorporates *Huma Betang* values into local content curricula in schools. In doing so, students are introduced early on to the importance of harmonious living in diversity and the preservation of local culture. This education not only shapes the character of the younger generation but also strengthens cultural identity as a safeguard against the negative impacts of globalization.<sup>19</sup>

The values of *Huma Betang* are also interpreted within the context of a multicultural urban life. The Palangka Raya City Government adopts this philosophy as a foundational principle in building an inclusive socio-political environment. Interfaith dialogues, cross-cultural events, and community forums are integral strategies for grounding *Huma Betang* values in the urban setting. Through this approach, the government is not only preserving cultural heritage but also fostering a resilient and cohesive social structure capable of withstanding social conflict. The harmonization between state and customary systems in Palangka Raya reflects the government's active efforts to interpret and preserve *Huma Betang* values. Through participatory, educational, and collaborative approaches, the city government has successfully built a bridge between traditional values and the demands of modern governance. This harmonization not only strengthens local cultural identity but also serves as a foundation for sustainable, inclusive development grounded in universal human values.

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<sup>19</sup> Anggia Amanda Lukman, "Pewarisan Nilai Sebagai Pembentuk Kepribadian Berkarakter Melalui Falsafah Huma Betang Suku Dayak Kalimantan," *Sosietas* 8, no. 1 (2018): 1–5.



## **Synergy between Formal Law and Customary Law as a Perspective of the Palangka Raya City Government in Preserving the Huma Betang Philosophy**

In a pluralistic and dynamic society, synergy between formal law and customary law has become an urgent necessity. The Palangka Raya City Government recognizes the importance of creating harmony between these two legal systems to ensure social stability and justice rooted in local values. As a city that represents Dayak culture, Palangka Raya bears a moral and political responsibility to elevate customary law as a vital pillar of regional development, while simultaneously preserving the Huma Betang philosophy, which serves as the foundation of communal life for the Dayak people.<sup>20</sup>

State law, or formal law, is characterized by its legalistic nature, universal applicability, and reliance on written, rational regulations. In contrast, customary law is flexible, contextual, and rooted in social norms that have been internalized within communities over generations. The synergy between the two becomes crucial when social issues arise that cannot be fully addressed through formal legal channels. The Palangka Raya City Government views customary law as a complementary mechanism that brings a humanistic touch and local wisdom to the resolution of social problems.<sup>21</sup>

The *Huma Betang* philosophy, which emphasizes values of solidarity, tolerance, and collective justice, serves as a fundamental guide in designing the synergy between formal law and customary law. The city government adopts these values as the foundation for policies that uphold not only state law but also social and cultural justice. In certain cases-such as disputes over customary land, domestic conflicts, and violations of social norms-customary institutions are given the space to resolve issues through deliberation and consensus-building.

To support this synergy, the Palangka Raya City Government has initiated policies that recognize the role of *damang* (customary leaders) and customary

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<sup>20</sup> Jurnal Ilmu and Hukum Tambun, "Belom Bahadat as Legal Culture of the Dayak Community in Palangka Raya: The Perspective of Max Weber and Talcott Parsons Desi Natalia 1 , Alfonso Munte 2 IAKN Palangka Raya" 9, no. 1 (2024): 386–406.

<sup>21</sup> Ibnu Elmi Achmat Slamet Pelu, Ahmad Syaikh, and Jefry Tarantang, "Tradisi Penyelesaian Sengketa Kewarisan Masyarakat Kalimantan Tengah (Studi Pada Kabupaten Katingan Dan Kota Palangka Raya)," *Al-Manahij: Jurnal Kajian Hukum Islam* 13, no. 2 (2019): 203–16, <https://doi.org/10.24090/mnh.v13i2.2027>.

institutions within the local governance system. The government provides training, capacity building, and administrative assistance to these institutions to ensure their functions are carried out professionally and in alignment with the state legal system. This approach seeks to foster harmony, rather than conflict, between the two coexisting legal systems in society. Moreover, the government promotes the establishment of coordination forums involving law enforcement agencies—such as the police and prosecutors—and customary institutions in handling specific cases. This collaborative model ensures that conflict resolution processes are not solely reliant on formal legal provisions, but also reflect the living values of customary law. It has proven effective in preventing conflict escalation and in producing solutions that are socially accepted by all parties involved.<sup>22</sup>

Efforts to foster synergy are also realized through the formulation of regional regulations (*Peraturan Daerah*, or *Perda*) that accommodate the values of customary law. For instance, local regulations on the management of customary territories, protection of customary forests, or the resolution of disputes through traditional deliberative mechanisms (*musyawarah adat*). Through these legal frameworks, the government provides legitimacy to the role of customary law in decision-making processes and conflict resolution, while also ensuring its continuity amidst the evolution of modern legal systems. In the fields of education and public outreach, the Palangka Raya City Government integrates an understanding of customary law into the local school curriculum and community legal education initiatives. The younger generation is introduced to the importance of customary law as a core identity and an intellectual heritage of Dayak culture. In doing so, the government not only creates legal synergy but also cultivates future generations' awareness of the importance of preserving the values of *Huma Betang* through a contextual legal approach.<sup>23</sup>

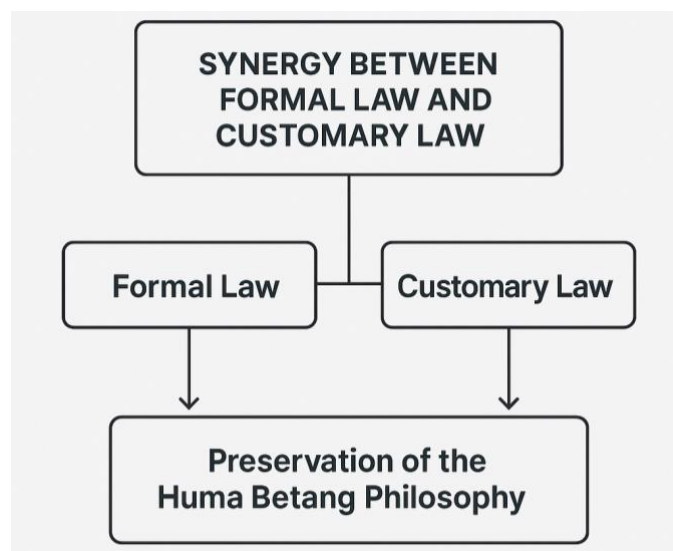
The strengthening of this synergy also has a positive impact on environmental sustainability. Dayak customary law contains strict regulations regarding natural resource management, such as prohibitions against indiscriminate logging and

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<sup>22</sup> Ajahari Ajahari, "Aktualisasi Kerukunan Masyarakat Beda Agama Di Kelurahan Pager Kecamatan Rakumpit Kota Palangka Raya," *Jurnal Studi Agama Dan Masyarakat* 14, no. 2 (2018): 72, <https://doi.org/10.23971/jsam.v14i2.936>.

<sup>23</sup> Maria Lidya Wenas Sabda Budiman, Yelicia, "Filosofi Huma Betang Suku Dayak Ngaju Sebagai Upaya Pembinaan Gereja Secara Kontekstual Berdasarkan Kisah Para Rasul 2:42-47," 2021, 3–4.

polluting rivers. By recognizing customary law within environmental policies, the city government can implement conservation programs more effectively, as they gain support and legitimacy from local communities. This demonstrates that preserving the *Huma Betang* philosophy is not only a matter of cultural heritage, but also of ecological sustainability.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, challenges remain in realizing this synergy, such as the limited understanding of customary law among law enforcement officers, the potential overlap of authorities, and the absence of clear regulations that define the boundaries of cooperation between state law and customary law.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, the Palangka Raya City Government needs to continuously evaluate its policies, foster inter-institutional dialogue, and strengthen legal literacy among both the public and law enforcement officials.



The idea of synergy between formal law and customary law represents a progressive step by the Palangka Raya City Government in preserving the noble values of *Huma Betang*. This synergy serves as a bridge between the past and the future, linking traditional values with the demands of modernity. When managed effectively, such an approach not only strengthens a legal system that is just and

<sup>24</sup> David Ricardo, "Penerapan Esensi Dasar Filosofi Huma Betang Pada Desain Interior Perpustakaan Universitas Palangkaraya," *SINEKTIKA Jurnal Arsitektur* 18, no. 1 (2021).

<sup>25</sup> Pelu et al., "The Combination of Legal System: Reconciliation of Divorce Cases in Dayak Ngaju Customary Law and Positive Law Systems."

culturally rooted, but also provides a model for other regions in managing legal pluralism in a constructive and sustainable manner.

## **Conclusion**

The preservation of customary law in Palangka Raya reflects the local government's commitment to revitalizing the *Huma Betang* philosophy as a cultural legacy imbued with the values of solidarity, deliberation, and social justice. This preservation is not merely about safeguarding tradition, but about revitalizing noble values that reinforce the identity and social cohesion of the Dayak community amid the pressures of modernization. Harmonizing formal state legal norms with the dynamic and living customary laws is a crucial element of this effort. The Palangka Raya City Government acts as a facilitator, reinterpreting and preserving the values of *Huma Betang* so that customary law remains relevant both as a legal source and as a sociocultural foundation that ensures justice and security for the community. Moreover, the synergy between formal and customary law requires deeper recognition of the flexible nature of customary law within the national legal system and a genuine commitment by the government to integrate customary values into policy and administrative practices. Thus, the preservation of customary law is not only a form of respect for cultural heritage but also a vital foundation for building an inclusive, just, and sustainable legal and social order in Palangka Raya.

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