

MINING ON SMALL ISLANDS

The struggle to protect Sangihe Island from gold mining
and the role of Canada's Baru Gold



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This report is based on fieldwork carried out by Catherine Coumans, Asia Pacific Program Coordinator at MiningWatch Canada, on Sangihe Island in November 2025.

The cover art is a mural by local artist Alfred Pontolondo, which shows Sangihe Island carried by a protector that is half human and half dog as dogs represent ancestral spirits.

Increased Mining in Vulnerable Ecosystems

Since 2000, global volumes of mined minerals have increased by 50%¹ and projections are for a further doubling between now and 2060.² These unprecedented increases in mining are driven by increased economic development and consumption, geo-political tensions leading to stockpiling of metals for military purposes, mining for metals needed for energy transition technology, and profit-seeking. Gold mining in particular is driven by investor demand for a safe haven during times of economic and geo-political uncertainty and by profit-seeking, leading prices to surge past \$4,000 USD per ounce in late 2025.

As mining exploration and exploitation pushes into ever more remote and ecologically sensitive regions such as deserts, peatlands, glaciers, mountain tops in high rainfall areas, the deep sea bed and small islands, vulnerable ecosystems are increasingly at risk. In 2019, 79% of mined metals came from “five of the six most species-rich biomes” and “half of global metal ore extraction took place at 20 km or less from protected territories” while “90% of all considered extraction sites correspond to below-average relative water availability, with particularly copper and gold mining occurring in areas with significant water scarcity.”³

Mining on Small Islands in Asia Pacific

Asia-Pacific is an exceptionally island-rich region. The archipelagos of the Philippines and Indonesia alone count some 8000 inhabited islands and more than double that number when including uninhabited islands. The Pacific regions of Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia contain some 2000 inhabited islands and up to an estimated 30,000 islands in total. Many of these islands are volcanic in nature. Volcanoes are associated with metals such as Copper, Gold, Silver, Zinc, Lead, Nickel, and Platinum, which are often in sulfide ore bodies. When mined, sulfide ore bodies are prone to producing wastes likely to generate environmentally toxic Acid Mine Drainage and Metal Leaching.⁴

Mining on small islands often has serious environmental and social consequences. Land needed for habitation and agriculture is commonly scarce, as is fresh water. Mining both depletes and contaminates fresh water through, among others, dewatering pits and underground workings and through processing ore. Mining produces very large amounts of waste in the form of overburden, waste rock and tailings. Average gold grades in 2022 meant that for every 1.31 grams of gold retrieved a metric ton of waste was produced.⁵ Because of its environmental toxicity, large portions of this waste need

1 A. K. Kirsanov, S-S. Sh. Saaya. 2024. Global mining in the 21st century: An overview. *Journal of Geography and-*

2 OECD, *Global Material Resources Outlook to 2060*. Paris, 2019, 10.1787/9789264307452-en

3 Sebastian Luckeneder, Stefan Giljum, Anke Schaffartzik, Victor Maus, Michael Tost. 2021. Surge in global metal mining threatens vulnerable ecosystems. *Global Environmental Change*. Volume 69, July, 102303. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2021.102303>

4 Earthworks. 2025. Acid Mine Drainage. <https://earthworks.org/issues/acid-mine-drainage/#:~:text=How%20Does%20Acid%20Mine%20Drainage,previously%20dissolved%20iron%20precipitates%20out>

5 Jason Holden. 2023. Gold mine stripping ratios rise on high prices, grades continue declining. S&P Global. December. <https://www.spglobal.com/market-intelligence/en/news-insights/research/gold-mine-stripping-ratios-rise-on-high-prices-grades-continue-declining>

to be stored in a way that keeps it separated from the surrounding environment, in so-called tailings impoundments. This storage needs to be managed in perpetuity.⁶ An industrial mine, its associated infrastructure such as roads and buildings, and waste disposal areas, form a large footprint. Most mines average between 1.3 km² to 7.2 km², which removes land, which is scarce on small islands, from use for habitation and agriculture.⁷

In response to the pressures of land scarcity on many islands, the mining industry in Asia-Pacific countries such as Indonesia and Papua New Guinea have promoted a particularly controversial mine waste solution known as Submarine Tailings Disposal (STD), which entails piping mine tailings into the surrounding sea.⁸ This practice degrades the marine environment, with repercussions for, among others, subsistence and commercial fisheries.⁹

Sangihe Island

Sangihe Island is the largest of the volcanic islands in the Sangihe Islands Regency of the Indonesia Province of North Sulawesi. It is located roughly half way between Sulawesi and the Philippine Island of Mindanao to the north. The total land area of all islands in the Sangihe Regency is 736.98 km². Sangihe itself is 597.26 km², classifying it as a “small island” under Indonesian law.¹⁰



Sangihe Island, North Sulawesi



Tahuna Town, Sangihe, Tahuna Bay. Credit Catherine Coumans, 2025

6 Werner, P., 2025. The party's over, now what? Mining Engineering, December 2025, pp. 20-24. <https://me.smen-et.org/the-partys-over-now-what/>

7 Liang Tang and Tim T. Werner. 2023. Global mining footprint mapped from high-resolution satellite imagery. *Commun Earth Environ* 4, 134. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s43247-023-00805-6>

8 Erlies Septiana Nurbani, 2020. Submarine Tailing Disposal System: Indonesia's Policy and Future Challenges. *Journal of Liberty and International Affairs*. 5 (3):83-95.

9 Catherine Coumans. 2002. STD Toolkit: Mining's Problem with Waste. Project Underground and MiningWatch Canada. https://miningwatch.ca/sites/default/files/01.STDtoolkit.intr_.pdf

10 For the size of Sangihe Island see, <https://sulut.bps.go.id/en/statistics-table/2/NzA0IzI=/luas-wilayah-provinsi-sulawesi-utara--2023.html>

Sangihe Island is mountainous, more than half of the land in the regency has a slope steeper than 40%. Given regular high and intensive rainfall, erosion and landslides are only avoided through the dense vegetation that characterizes the island.



Mount Awu, a live volcano. Credit Catherine Coumans, 2025



Sangihe Landscape. Credit Catherine Coumans, 2025

The primary source of income for the Sangihe Regency's 142,000 inhabitants is fishery. Sangihe's fisheries rely on dense, healthy, mangroves and rich, biodiverse, coral reefs that, for now, draw mainly the most adventurous diving tourists given the island's remote location.



Fishing boat in Mangroves. Credit Catherine Coumans, 2025



Beached Fishing Boats. Credit Catherine Coumans, 2025

Agriculture also plays an important role in Sangihe's market economy. The island boasts a rich history of growing spices, such as nutmeg and clove.¹¹

¹¹ Irza Khurunin and Joko Purnomo. 2021. Measuring Sustainable Livelihood in The Border Areas: The Case Study of Sangihe Island, North Sulawesi. October. *Global Focus* 1(2):117-130. DOI: 10.21776/ub.jgf.2021.001.02.2



Drying nutmeg and its aril, mace. Credit Catherine Coumans, 2025 Clove tree. Credit Catherine Coumans, 2025

Indonesia: Mining and Small Islands

Indonesia is the world's largest archipelagic state, made up of some 17,508 islands with a coastline estimated at 108,000-km-long. This long tropical coastline provides the habitat for very rich marine biodiversity. During the World Ocean Conference, in 2009, the multilateral Coral Triangle Initiative was adopted in Manado, the capital of North Sulawesi, to protect coastal areas of Indonesia, as well as of Malaysia, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands, for future generations. The Coral Triangle Initiative focuses on biodiversity conservation, food security, and climate resilience across a region hosting over 76% of the world's coral species, sometimes referred to as the "Amazon of the Seas."

Indonesia stands out in Asia-Pacific for having established a definition of a small island and created a legal ban on mining on small islands.¹² In 2007, Indonesian law defined small islands as those with less than 2,000 km².¹³ The law was amended in 2014, but retained the size definition for a small island, as well as clauses most commonly referred to as prohibiting mining on islands smaller than 2,000 km²:

- Article 23 paragraph (2) specifies that the exploitation of coastal areas and small islands should be for the following purposes: conservation, education and training, research and development, mariculture, tourism, environmentally friendly fisheries and maritime business and fishery industry, organic agriculture, husbandry, state defense and security;¹⁴
- Article 35(k) of this law prohibits "mining of minerals which from the technical, ecological, social and/or cultural aspects resulting in the damage to the environment and/or causing pollution to the environment and/or detrimental to the local Community."¹⁵

¹² This section draws on an article in press: Catherine Coumans. Forthcoming. Communities and Indigenous Peoples in Asia Pacific Require Enforceable Measures to Prevent and Remedy Harm Caused by Multinational Mining. *Business and Human Rights Journal*.

¹³ Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 27, of 2007, On the Management of Coastal Zone and Small Islands. <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/ins107226.pdf>

¹⁴ Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1 of 2014 concerning Amendments to Law Number 27 of 2007 concerning Management of Coastal Areas and Small Islands. Article 23 paragraph (2). <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/ins139269.pdf>

¹⁵ *Ibid*, Article 35(k). Note, grammatical peculiarities are inherent in the quoted text.

However, in 2011, the Indonesian mining advocacy network Jaringan Advokasi Tambang (JATAM) raised alarm about “seven small islands in Indonesia that are at risk of disappearing because of mining activities.”¹⁶ In 2018, JATAM published a report on the issue noting that the number of islands being mined for minerals and coal had risen: “55 small islands have been occupied by mining. Gee Island and Pakal Island have now become monuments of destruction by mining. Several other small islands, like Romang Island in Southwest Maluku, are also under threat.”¹⁷

Sangihe Island, at 597.26 km² is a small island that should be protected from mining under Indonesian law.

Baru Gold Corp. Seeks to Mine Gold on Sangihe

Baru Gold Corp. (Baru) is headquartered in British Columbia, Canada, and trades on the Toronto Stock Exchange Venture Exchange (TSX-V). Baru plans to mine and process gold using cyanide heap leach on Sangihe Island through its wholly-owned subsidiary Sangihe Gold Corporation, which owns 70% of PT Tambang Mas Sangihe (TMS).¹⁸ TMS received a Contract of Work (CoW) covering 42,000 hectares (420 km²) on Sangihe Island in 1997.¹⁹



TMS Concession Area on Sangihe Island. Credit: KOMPAS²⁰

16 The Jakarta Post, 2011. Small islands at risk of disappearing “due to mining”. 10 March. <https://www.minesand-communities.org/article.php?a=10791>

17 JATAM. 2018. Small Islands of Indonesia, The Land of Mines: Report on the Destruction of the Entire Bodies of Small Islands of Indonesia by Mineral and Coal Mines. Jakarta. <https://jatam.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Small-island-book.pdf>

18 The remaining 30-percent interest in TMS is held by Indonesian corporations.

19 PT Tambang Mas Sangihe (PT TMS) Contract Chronology – a legal analysis seen from ARTICLE 169 perspective of Law 4/2009 Jo. Law 3/2020 concerning Minerals and Coal. <https://cdn-ceo-ca.s3.amazonaws.com/1h45js0-legal%20analysis%20of%20the%20CoW%20held%20by%20PT%20Tambang%20Mas%20Sangihe.pdf>

20 KOMPAS. 2023. PT Tambang Mas Sangihe’s Production Operation Status Finally Canceled. September. <https://www.kompas.id/artikel/status-operasi-produksi-pt-tambang-mas-sangihe-akhirnya-dibatalkan>

In 2007, Baru, then-East Asia Minerals²¹ and local partners acquired TMS, received exploration permits from the Indonesia Government and were granted the Contract of Work (CoW) for Sangihe.²² The concession covers more than half of Sangihe Island. Baru expects 25,000 hectares (250 km²) of its concession to be gold bearing. According to Baru, the term of the CoW is for 30 years upon commencement of the production phase of the project.²³

Baru's initial focus is on deposits in the villages of Binebas, with surface exposed oxide gold, and Bowone, with shallow to surface sulphide gold with indicated and inferred resources of more than 266,000 grams of gold.²⁴ While Baru says it has established a cyanide heap leach pad, mining and processing has not yet commenced. The company's share price is trading around 7 cents (USD).²⁵ The company's CEO, Terrence Filbert, earned 225,084 USD in 2025.²⁶

Save Sangihe Island: The Struggle to Stop Mining on Sangihe

Save Sangihe Island (SSI) is a grassroots movement that seeks to halt all mining, whether industrial or small scale, on Sangihe Island. It was created in April 2021 by, among others, civil society organizations, academics, local people, students, faith based groups (Sangihe is predominantly protestant Christian) and members of the Sangihe diaspora. The impetus was that TMS had received a permit to advance to production and had started to seek land acquisition in Bowone Village, elevating concern about the potential imminent impacts of industrial mining. SSI is supported by national level NGOs, such as JATAM, Greenpeace Indonesia and KontraS.

Baru's 420 km² concession covers seven subdistricts of Sangihe, some 80 villages, and about 60,000 people. It also covers the Sahendaruman protected forest with its rich biodiversity, including 10 endemic bird species of Sangihe Island. Experts have noted that: "Remnant forests on the small Wallacean island of Sangihe north of Sulawesi hold the entire ranges of more critically endangered (CR) bird species than any other comparable area on earth."²⁷ Of particular concern are the Sangihe Whistler, Cerulean Flycatcher, Sangihe Golden Bulbul, and Sangihe White-eye, which are "entirely confined to remnant natural forest, judged recently to cover a mere 8 km², on a single mountain, Gunung Sahendaruman (...) and consequently categorized as critically endangered."²⁸

21 Previous to October 2020, Baru Gold Corp. was East Asia Minerals, also headquartered in British Columbia, Canada. <https://barugold.com/news-releases/east-asia-minerals-announces-name-change-to-baru-gold-corp/>

22 Baru. Sangihe Gold Project. n.d. <https://barugold.com/projects/sangihe-gold-project/>

23 Ibid.

24 Baru. Sangihe Gold Project. n.d. <https://barugold.com/projects/sangihe-gold-project/>; see also Caracle Creek International Consulting Inc. Michelle Stone, Ph.D., P.Geo. 2010. Independent Technical Report, Sangihe Property, Sangihe Island, North Sulawesi, Indonesia. <https://barugold.com/site/assets/files/5629/east-asia-sangihe-gold-project-43-101-report.pdf>

25 Accessed January 27, 2026.

26 Baru Gold Corp. Information Circular. November 17, 2025.

27 Robert W. Martin, Nigel J. Collar, Panji Fauzen, Hanom Bashari, Adi Widyanto, John S. Tasirin, Stuart J. Marsden. 2022. On the edge: habitat restoration priorities for three critically endangered bird species on Sangihe, Indonesia. 30 July. *Restoration Ecology*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/rec.13770>

28 Ibid.

Baru's concession also covers protected mangrove forest areas stretching from Central Tabukan District on the east coast to Tamako District on the west coast, as well as thousands of springs and hundreds of rivers and tributaries providing clean water sources for communities.

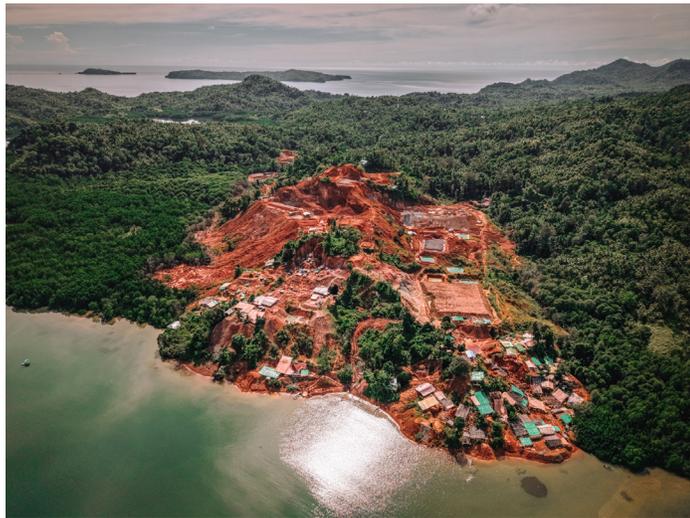
There are currently at least six small scale (also described as informal) gold mining sites on Sangihe, all within Baru's 420 km² concession. These operations use both cyanide and mercury in processing the ore to extract gold. A recent Greenpeace report provides data from sampling off the coast of these small scale mining sites that detected contamination of the marine environment.²⁹ The report notes an increase in levels of heavy metals, such as arsenic and lead, between 2017 and 2025. In Binebas Bay, affected by a small scale mining site in Bowone village, the report found arsenic and lead levels exceeding allowable limits. The deposits being mined by small scale miners in the villages of Binebas and Bowone are those that Baru says it will prioritize when it starts its own operations.



Informal mining in Bowone Village on Binebas Bay. Credit Catherine Coumans 2025



Prof. Dr. Ir. Frans Gruber Ijong discussing the Greenpeace report. Credit Catherine Coumans 2025



Aerial overview of informal mining in Bowone Village on Binebas Bay. Credit Mike Graeme 2025

29 Prof. Dr. Ir. Frans Gruber Ijong, et al. 2025. "Tampungang Lawo' Seng Mawuluse" (Sangihe Akan Tenggelam). Greenpeace Indonesia. <https://indomgb.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/17143509/Hasil-riset-Greenpeace-bersama-Polnustar.pdf>



SSI members of Bowone Village. Credit Catherine Coumans 2025



Visiting with SSI members in Bowone Village, holding coffee plants. Credit Catherine Coumans 2025

In addition to toxicity related to processing agents such as cyanide and mercury, and Acid Mine Drainage and Metal Leaching related to sulfide ore deposits, mining leads to soil erosion and siltation of surface water as it strips away the natural vegetation. This is particularly acute in steep topographies in areas with high rainfall, such as on Sangihe Island. This siltation is toxic to many fresh water and marine species.

In the Sangihe village of Laine, small scale mining operations in the mountains above the town, along a major river, has led to heavy siltation of the water way and regular flooding of the village. Villagers attempt to remove silt from the river to stop the flooding and use the bags they fill to try to stop floodwaters from entering their homes, churches and shops.



*Pastor shows the level flood waters reach in his church in Laine Village.
Credit Catherine Coumans 2025*



*Youth fills bags with silt derived from small scale mining operations upriver in Laine.
Credit Catherine Coumans 2025*

Small scale mining on Sangihe Island requires the permission of the owner of the land and of the elected village head. The elected leader of the village of Kaluwatu, near Laine, has said he will never give his permission given the harmful downstream impacts caused by small scale mining in Laine.



*Ignatius Pajak Hontong. S.Pd., M.Pd.
Credit Catherine Coumans 2025*



*Village of Kaluwatu Chief, Polo Hindang.
Credit Catherine Coumans 2025*

The Sub-district Chief of Tamako District, Prof. Ignatius Pajak Hontong, says that agriculture is the main source of income for people in his district. He notes that there is currently no mining in his district and he expressed concern about any potential mining as his district borders the protected forest area of Mount Sahendaruman, which is a primary source for clean fresh water.

Legal Strategies

The Save Sangihe Island coalition has supported local plaintiffs in taking legal action to stop mining on Sangihe Island.

1) In 2021, 56 women from Bowone and Binebas villages, which are directly affected by Baru's proposed mine, sought an administrative review before the Manado Provincial Administrative Court. They alleged that the Environmental Permit issued to Baru's subsidiary TMS by North Sulawesi Provincial authorities was wrongly granted because they had not been properly informed of, and consulted about, the potential impacts of the proposed gold mine in their villages. The Environmental Permit covers an area of 65.48 hectares out of the overall concession area of 42,000 hectares (420 km²) covered under the Contract of Work, or Operational Permit. On 2 June 2022, a Panel of Judges found in favour of the women's claim that they had not been properly consulted or informed of the range of potential environmental impacts of the mine, including from its proposed use of a cyanide heap leach method of processing the ore. Many potential environmental impacts of the project were only revealed to Sangihe Islanders as a result of the review process initiated by the women. The judges ordered the revocation of the mine's Environmental Permit.³⁰

Later that same month, in apparent disregard for this ruling, Baru/TMS sought to bring drilling equipment to Sangihe via the Pananaru Port. Residents blocked the road to Bowone Village to stop the equipment from reaching Bowone. This led to one community member, Robison Saul, being criminalized for allegedly carrying a sharp weapon. He was immediately prosecuted under emergency law articles and jailed.³¹

In January 2023, Baru Gold announced that its subsidiary had successfully appealed and overturned the 2 June 2022 decision in favour of the 56 women from Bowone and Binebas.

2) On 23 June 2021, a separate case was launched, with support of JATAM, against the decision of the Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources to grant Baru's subsidiary an Increase in the Production Operations Stage of the Contract of Work, also known as an "Operational Permit." The case was filed at the Jakarta Administrative Court with case number 146/G/2021/PTUN-Jkt by six Sangihe plaintiffs and 30 supporting intervening plaintiffs. One of the arguments put forth by the Sangihe plaintiffs was that the Contract of Work was illegal as Sangihe is classified as a small island.

On 12 January 2023, the Supreme Court issued a decision (Putusan Kasasi Mahkamah Agung RI Nomor : 650 K/TUN/2022)³² cancelling Baru's Increase in the Production Operations Stage of the Contract of Work, or its "Operational Permit."³³ JATAM issued a statement saying: "we urge the gov-

30 MiningWatch Canada. 2022. Indonesian women win legal victory to protect small island home from Canadian Baru Gold. 10 June. https://miningwatch.ca/sites/default/files/press_release_indonesian_women_win_legal_victory_to_protect_small_island_home_from_canadian_gold_mine_june_2022_0.pdf

31 MiningWatch Canada. 2022. Baru Gold Ignores Court Order, Putting Lives of Indonesians at Risk. 15 June. <https://miningwatch.ca/news/2022/6/15/baru-gold-ignores-court-order-putting-lives-indonesians-risk>. See also a letter from MiningWatch Canada to Baru CEO Terrence Filbert regarding these incidents. https://miningwatch.ca/sites/default/files/letter_baru_gold_june_15_2022.pdf

32 Putusan Kasasi Mahkamah Agung RI Nomor : 650 K/TUN/2022. English version. <https://miningwatch.ca/sites/default/files/jan122023supremecourtrulingbarugoldenglish.pdf>

33 MiningWatch Canada. 2023 Sangihe Islanders Win Another Important Legal Victory Against Canada's Baru Gold's Plans to Mine on the Small Island. 21 March. <https://miningwatch.ca/blog/2023/3/21/sangihe-island->

ernment, especially the Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources (MEMR), to not only have to immediately revoke PT TMS's mining permits, but also to immediately evaluate and revoke all mining permits on Indonesia's small islands."³⁴ In response to the Supreme Court Ruling the MEMR finally revoked the Operational Permit held by TMS on September 12th, 2023. However, the very next day a government official made a public statement that the company's 1997 Contract of Work was still valid and that Baru/TMS could apply for a new Operational Permit.

Baru's press release of 11 September 2023, mentions the many months of meetings the company had with the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources and numerous other government officials leading to the company being granted permission to file a request for a new Operational Permit in return for a reduction in the overall size of its concession to 250 km².³⁵ These attempts to circumvent the Supreme Court ruling of 12 January 2023 make no reference to the fact that Sangihe remains a small island that should be exempted from mining on that legal basis.

Ceremony and Movement Consolidation

While successful, legal actions and blockades have considerably increased tensions regarding mining on Sangihe. SSI has taken a lead in seeking to consolidate the local movement to protect the island from harm caused by mining through the creation of a ceremony that brings together women, men, elders, youth, local leaders, decision makers and faith based groups. On 20 November 2025 the ceremony, called Darumatehu Sembanua, with the theme "Protecting Nature, Preserving Tradition" was held for the third time.³⁶



Credit Catherine Coumans 2025

ers-win-another-important-legal-victory-against-canadas-baru-golds.

34 JATAM, The Victory of Sangihe People Becomes a Momentum to Save Small Islands in Indonesia. (JATAM 2023), <https://www.jatam.org/en/the-victory-of-sangihe-people-becomes-a-momentum-to-save-small-islands-in-indonesia>.

35 Baru Gold. 2023. Baru Gold Replaces Current Stage of Activity with New Production Operation Status for 25,000 ha. 11 September. <https://barugold.com/news-releases/baru-gold-replaces-current-stage-of-activity-with-new-production-operation-status-for-25-000-ha/>

36 Redaksi Barta1. 2025. Ketika Negara Absen, Adat Bicara: Darumatehu Sembanua dan Perlawanan atas Eksploitasi Sangihe. 20 November. <https://barta1.com/2025/11/20/ketika-negara-absen-adat-bicara-darumatehu-sembanua-dan-perlawanan-atas-eksploitasi-sangihe/>

Traditional elders and faith leaders enter the ceremony carrying herbs and champaca flowers that are burned “as an offering to God, the Universe, and the Ancestors”³⁷ to ritually purify the ceremony while invoking the intercession and support of spirits and ancestors. Their chants are accompanied by musicians on traditional instruments.

The ceremony interspersed speeches with traditional dances by women, men and children of Sangihe who were accompanied by drummers and musicians. The evening ended with a joint meal for all who had attended the event.



Credit Catherine Coumans 2025

37 As explained to the author of this report by Jull Takaliuang of SSI, “The choice of this action is based on the story of the kingdom of Manganitu, which was once attacked by the Dutch, but a person in power at that time simply smoked a cigarette/cigar and blew the smoke into the air, causing the weather to become foggy, and the enemy could no longer see Manganitu. From a biblical perspective, it is based on the story of the offerings of Cain and Abel, the sons of Adam and Eve. Abel’s good offering was accepted by God, allowing him to continue his life on the land given by God. None of this is recorded in written texts. It all originated from the reflections and actions of the traditional elder, Opa Niklas Mehare.”



Jull Takaliuang opens the ceremony. Credit Catherine Coumans 2025



Credit Catherine Coumans 2025



Credit Catherine Coumans 2025



Credit Catherine Coumans 2025



Credit Catherine Coumans 2025



Sunset over Tahuna Bay. Credit Catherine Coumans 2025