

Environmental Peacebuilding from Below: Customary Approaches in Timor-Leste

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Existing environmental peacebuilding research:

- Focus on cases strongly shaped by external actors
- Lack of knowledge on bottom-up processes
 - Problematic representations
 - Missed take away points for theory
 - Lack of insights for practitioners

Country context:

- Portuguese colonialism
- Indonesian occupation 1975-1999
- UN peacebuilding, poverty and communal tensions
- Revival of customary institutions



Tara bandu (“hanging prohibitions”):

- Process of negotiation and a ritual ceremony
- Used to manage local environmental issues
- Simultaneously addresses community tensions and violence



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Insights:

- *Tara bandu* as successful, endogenous environmental peacebuilding
- Importance of spiritual ecologies
- Benefits of external interventions
- Dangers of external interventions

Thank you for your attention

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