Tenun Songket Alor (Alor ‘Songket’ Woven Fabric)

Country: Indonesia

Date of registration: 30/04/2019

Main characteristics/features

Alor ‘Songket’ Woven Fabric (Tenun Songket Alor) is made using traditional gedogan looms. The making of the motif is done using the song/songket technique using two strands of yarn that have been spun into one with cotton or factory-made yarn. The woven fabric is known for its moko motif which must be present in every songket woven fabric produced, and acts as an identifier of a person or tribe, or as a means of payment for a dagger or dowry and shows social status. The moko’s function is as a symbol or identity, social status, religious (‘magical’) significance, customary settlement tool, economic object, dowry, the main part of a series of heirloom gongs, a unifying device, musical instruments and as a substitute for human lives.

Geographical area

Alor ‘Songket’ Woven Fabric is produced in nine subdistricts in Alor regency, namely Alor Timur, Pureman, Northeast Alor, South Alor, Mataru, Southwest Alor, North Central Alor, Teluk Mutiara and West Pantar.

Production/processing

The stages of Alor ‘Songket’ Woven Fabric production begin with the process of spinning cotton yarn or purchasing cotton or polyester yarn. The next stage is the selection and colouring of yarn using natural dyes made by Alor ‘Songket’ Woven Fabric artisans or using purchased chemical dyes. Then weaving processes starts.

Link between product and territory

Alor regency, is a territory dominated by the sea which makes up 79% of it, and has a variety of abundant marine resources which is very influential on the culture and creativity of its people reflected in the motifs used in Alor ‘Songket’ Woven Fabric of each ethnicity. This can be seen from the weaving motifs which illustrate the strong interrelationship between people and their environment, such as the use of motifs that refer to plants, animals, fish, shells and the like. In the Alor community, there are five main ethnicities, namely Kolana, Batulolong, Kui, Alor and Baranusa in Pantar. Each ethnic group has different motif designs that are characteristic, and the diversity of motifs is related to the customs, beliefs, culture, environment and habits of the local community. In terms of its own human factors, it is clear that the linkage is seen, namely by using the moko motif as a characteristic of the songket weaving produced.