



## **Indonesia Sustainable Development News Digest**

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*The **Indonesia Sustainable Development News Digest** is a biweekly collection of summaries of articles related to conservation, the environment and sustainability in Indonesia which have appeared in print or online in local, regional and global English-language media. We welcome comments, suggestions, and corrections. To learn more about us and to access previous editions of the News Digest, please visit our*

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### A. Marine & Fisheries

#### **[Reduced enforcement efforts see more Vietnam fishing boats encroach into Indonesian waters](#)**

—Basten Gokkon, Yogi Eka Sahputra, *Mongabay*, 20 May 2022

Illegal fishing by Vietnamese vessels in Indonesian waters has ramped up this year, sparking calls from fishers and environmental activists for increased monitoring patrols by Indonesian authorities. Vessel tracking. Vessel-tracking data and satellite imagery showed more than 100 instances of Vietnamese fishing vessels in the North Natuna Sea, inside Indonesia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) between February and April. But enforcement efforts have fallen off, with no Vietnamese vessels seized in Indonesian waters so far this year. Indonesia seized 603 foreign vessels for illegal fishing between 2015 and 2019, when Susi Pudjiastuti, then Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, imposed a strict ban on foreign fishing boats and boosted enforcement patrols. Susi's tough approach to tackling IUU fishing, including blowing up boats that had been seized, paid off, according to a 2018 study. But only 54 vessels were seized over the following two years, and none so far this year, despite clear evidence of incursions and illegal fishing, according to the Indonesian Ocean Justice Initiative (IOJI).

**Paper:** Reniel B. Cabral, Juan Mayorga, Abdul Ghofar, "[Rapid and lasting gains from solving illegal fishing](#)", *Nature Ecology and Evolution* 2, April 2018. [doi.org/10.1038/s41559-018-0499-1](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41559-018-0499-1)

#### **[IOTC decisions on yellowfin and skipjack tuna criticized as falling short of sustainability goals](#)**

—Chris Chase, *SeafoodSource*, 24 May 2022

The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) is again being criticized by ocean-focused NGOs that claim it is failing to take sufficient action to conserve tuna stocks. "For nearly a decade, the commission has failed in its responsibility to sustainably manage yellowfin tuna in the Indian Ocean," WWF Indian Ocean Tuna Lead Umair Shahid said. "We urge retailers, consumers, and fishing companies to walk away from sourcing the Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna." IOTC data showed both yellowfin and skipjack tuna to be overfished in 2020, with yellowfin caught at a level that exceeded the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) required to rebuild the stock by over 100,000 tonnes. The latest IOTC catch limit of 403,000 tonnes, decided on 20 May, continues to allow fishing at rates above the MSY, but if the same six countries that objected to the limits—Indonesia, India, Oman, Somalia, Madagascar, and Iran—continue to catch yellowfin at the same rate as in 2020, the total Indian Ocean yellowfin catch could climb to over 445,000 tonnes.

### **IOTC blacklists tuna fleet with record of IUU fishing**

—Shem Oirere, *SeafoodSource*, 27 May 2022

<https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/iotc-blacklists-tuna-fleet-with-record-of-iuu>

The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) has blacklisted a tuna-fishing fleet after an Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) investigation revealed it has a previous record of engaging in illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. The decision was based on a EJF investigation which led to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) banning the vessels in December 2021 and the Israr 1, Israr 2 and Israr 3 being dropped by their insurer in March. The investigation found the owners of the fleet, believed to be based in Oman, went to extreme lengths to evade scrutiny of their illegal actions, going so far as relocating its fishing activities from one ocean to the other, changing the flag under which the vessels were operating, changing the names of the vessels, and engaging in illegal transshipment. “Tackling each illegal fleet one by one is not the solution”, said EJF CEO Steve Trent, who called for efforts to “[prevent] use of flags of convenience, [improve] port inspections, and [share] information.”

#### **Report: Illegal fishing fleet blacklisted in Indian Ocean to safeguard tuna**

—*Environmental Justice Foundation*, 25 May 2022

### **Joint Analytical Cell opens new fronts in fight against IUU fishing**

—Mark Godfrey, *SeafoodSource*, 31 May 2022

Joint Analytical Cell (JAC), a new collaboration by data-driven campaign groups aims to harness innovative technology and fisheries expertise to increase data-sharing and collaboration among governments and non-state actors to give lower-income coastal states better access to fisheries intelligence, data analysis and capacity-building in the battle against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. JAC was founded by the USAID-funded International Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Network; Global Fishing Watch; a partnership of Google, Oceana and Skytruth; and TMT, a non-profit that maintains a detailed database of IUU-related vessels and operators. JAC is expected to “particularly focus on strengthening port controls, transshipment activity, and air and sea patrols”. JAC will be showcased at the 2<sup>nd</sup> UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon in June. The collaboration was announced shortly after the creation of the US-led Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA), an unrelated intelligence-led initiative that will engage commercial satellite operators to track vessels suspected of illegal fishing to help poorer states battle against IUU fishing.

### **Tuna fishing industry association supports social responsibility in supply chains**

—[Indonesiantuna.com](https://indonesiantuna.com), 4 April 2022

The Indonesian Pole & Line and Handline Fisheries Association (AP2HI) and its strategic partners the International Pole and Line Foundation (IPNLF) and MDPI (*Masyarakat dan Perikanan Indonesia*) will participate in an Early Adopter Program to implement FishChoice Inc.’s Fishery Progress Human Rights and Social Responsibility Policy. The policy provides information about human rights risks and actions for Fisheries Improvement Programs (FIPs) to address those risks, giving seafood buyers essential information to contribute to their own due diligence efforts. The program addresses profiles for pole-and-line and handline skipjack tuna and yellowfin tuna in two regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs)—the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) and the Western Central Pacific Ocean Commission (WCPFC).

## **B. Forests & Land Use**

### **Seed orchard first step in restoring Bali’s Batur UNESCO Global Geopark**

—Robert Finlayson, *CIFOR Forest News*, 13 May 2022

The Bali Batur Geopark includes volcanic calderas, fumaroles and hot springs, a lake, and lava flows. Between 1804 and 2000, Batur has erupted at least 22 times. The double volcanos and crescent lake 1,031-1,200 meters above sea level have been called the finest in the world. But local residents are among the poorest in Bali. Degradation of the landscape has increased sediment runoff into the lake. A tree seedling seed orchard (SSO) focused on producing *Pongamia pinnata* seedlings has been established at Udayana University. “The SSO will not only provide seeds for longer-term restoration but also serve as a research site for producing trees that can thrive in challenging conditions,” said Himsal Baral, senior land restoration scientist with the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) who has initiated much of the restoration. “There are some 10,000 ha of degraded land in the geopark and surrounds,” said Baral. “This calls for not only a coordinated local effort but also collaboration with national and international partners.”

### [‘The promise was a lie’: How Indonesian villagers lost their cut of the palm oil boom](#)

—Mongabay, *The Gecko Project* and *BBC News*, 23 May 2022

Indonesian villagers lose hundreds of millions of dollars every year because palm oil producers fail to comply with regulations requiring them to share their plantations with communities. Smallholdings have been an integral part of Indonesia’s palm oil sector since the 1980s, and private companies often promised to share a portion of the plantations they would build with villagers in plots widely known as “plasma”. The scheme was intended to lift rural communities out of poverty, but it has become a major source of unrest across the country. Palm oil from companies accused of withholding profits from communities flows into supply chains of major consumer goods firms. When London Sumatra took control of Tebing Tinggi’s land in 1995, it promised the indigenous villagers that they would get more than half of it back, planted with profit-making oil palms, whose fruit the villagers would sell to the company. “The promise was a lie,” Mat Yadi, a village leader said. “Nothing was returned to us. They took everything.”

### [A hidden crisis in Indonesia’s palm oil sector](#)

—Mongabay, *The Gecko Project* and *BBC News*, 31 May 2022

From 2007, it became a legal requirement for companies to share 20% of any new plantation with communities, but at least 155 palm oil companies failed to provide hundreds of thousands of hectares of legally-required “plasma” to communities, leading to protests and unrest. However, government audits and intervention in plasma disputes have been limited and mostly ineffective. Golden Agri-Resources (GAR), Indonesia’s largest palm oil producer, has acknowledged that eight subsidiaries failed to provide all the plasma required by law for more than 13 years. More than 12 international companies, including Nestlé, Kellogg’s, Unilever, Johnson & Johnson, PepsiCo, Mondelez, Proctor & Gamble, and Colgate Palmolive have sourced palm oil from producers alleged to have withheld plasma, or the profits from plasma, from Indonesian communities over the past eight years.

### [Legal defeats pile up for palm oil companies stripped of their permits in West Papua](#)

—Hans Nicholas Jong, *Mongabay*, 31 May 2022

An Indonesian court dismissed lawsuits filed by two oil palm plantation companies against Samsuddin Anggiluli, the head of South Sorong district in West Papua Province who revoked their permits over various violations on 23 May, marking the latest in a string of legal defeats for palm oil companies who lost their licenses. PT Anugerah Sakti Internusa (ASI) and PT Persada Utama Angromulia (PUA) had filed separate lawsuits to the Jayapura State Administrative Court. That same court threw out similar lawsuits against the head of a neighbouring district by two other companies whose licenses had been revoked in December and rejected two more lawsuits filed by a third company. The permit revocations were carried out in May 2021 following a province-wide audit of oil palm plantation licenses, which found that ASI and PUA’s concessions still comprised 96-97% intact forest.

## **C. Conservation & Protected Areas**

### [For reef mantas, Indonesia’s Komodo National Park is a ray of hope](#)

—Elizabeth Claire Alberts, *Mongabay*, 24 May 2022

Often tangled in fishing nets, manta rays are plunging toward extinction as fishing pressure and other stressors take a toll. A new study identified an aggregation of 1,085 reef mantas (*Mobula alfredi*) in Indonesia's Komodo National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site spanning more than 1,800 km<sup>2</sup> of islands, reefs and ocean, suggesting that the park may be one of the world's top locations for the species. Indonesia used to have a large manta ray fishery, but in 2014 the country pledged to protect both reef mantas and giant manta rays (*Mobula birostris*), making it illegal to capture them or trade any of their body parts, though illegal fishing still takes place. Like many other marine species, mantas are under pressure from rising temperatures, ocean acidification, and marine pollution, including by plastic. Reef mantas reproduce only slowly, reaching sexual maturity at about ten years of age and generating one offspring every two years. Reef mantas are classified as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List.

**Paper:** Elitza S. Germanov, et al, "[Residency, movement patterns, behavior and demographics of reef manta rays in Komodo National Park](#)", *PeerJ* 10:e13302, 16 May 2022. [doi.org/10.7717/peerj.13302](https://doi.org/10.7717/peerj.13302)

### [For more fish and healthier corals in Bali, focus on communities and connectivity](#)

—Carolyn Cowan, *Mongabay*, 6 May 2022

New studies highlight improvements that can be made to the conservation of Bali's coral reefs which face multiple stressors. While there are more coral-focused conservation initiatives underway in Bali than elsewhere in Indonesia, not all are successful. Gaps in marine protected area (MPA) management permit noncompliance with regulations. Harnessing the power of communities has been a driver of success in reef restoration projects, many of which fail due to inadequate long-term monitoring and evaluation. The authors recommend that marine resource managers coordinate across administrative regions to link up Bali's three officially-recognized MPAs—West Bali National Park, Pemutaran MPA, and Nusa Penida—to the wealth of community-managed MPAs around the island. But multiple localized actions have their limits, according to Zach Boakes, co-author of one of the studies. "The most important thing to protect reefs worldwide is a global reduction in greenhouse gas emissions," Boakes said. "This needs to happen to .. safeguard corals from bleaching, the number one threat to reefs across the globe."

**Paper:** Boakes, Z., et al, "[Coral Reef Conservation in Bali in light of international best practice, a literature review](#)," *Journal for Nature Conservation* 67 (June 2022). [doi.org/10.1016/j.jnc.2022.126190](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jnc.2022.126190)

**Paper:** Tries B. Razak, et al, "[Coral reef restoration in Indonesia: A review of policies and projects](#)", *Marine Policy* 137 (March 2022). [doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104940](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104940)

### [Animal welfare groups call for stop to trade of long-tailed macaques](#)

—*The Jakarta Post*, 26 May 2022

Indonesian animal welfare groups have called for the government to ban the trade of long-tailed macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*), a widely-distributed Asian primate whose global population is now in decline. The IUCN Red List classifies the long-tailed macaque as "Vulnerable" and notes that "in spite of its widespread distribution, excessive hunting and persecution of this species is a cause for concern." Animal friends Jogja (AFJ) and Care for Monkey Action Group (AIPOM) said there was no regulation to stop hunting, abuse or trade in the species. Animal rights activist Reza Maulana said long-tailed macaques and similar species belonged in the wild, and that given the risks they pose to humans, should be used by humans only for very limited purposes and under strict regulations. "The use of monkeys for scientific purposes, for instance, needs regulation, approval, and consideration made by experts," Reza said.

**Paper:** A Fitriyah, et al, "[Survey of Long-tailed macaque's behavior in Mount Rinjani National Park, Lombok Timur](#)", *IOP Conf. Series: Earth and Environmental Science* 891 (2021), [doi:10.1088/1755-1315/891/1/012028](https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/891/1/012028)

### **Balanced ecosystem key to preventing and controlling locust plagues on Sumba Island**

—Dini Pramita, *Tempo English*, 30 May 2022

Yonatan Umbu Radda was only able to save two sacks of rice after his one-hectare rice field was attacked by migratory locusts on 20 May. It should have yielded at least two tonnes of rice. Now there is a risk that his savings are insufficient for him to be able to replant. He and other farmers may forego the next growing season, because the grasshoppers are likely to have already laid eggs in the soil. Ordinary grasshoppers change physically when they transition to become locusts. Insect ecologist Hermanu Triwidodo at IPB's Agriculture Faculty said climate change is the main reason for locust explosion. Last year's La Niña conditions caused heavy rains to fall earlier in Sumba, creating ideal humidity for locusts to lay eggs and hatch, boosting the size of the next generations of locusts. Since last October, up to eight or nine generations of locusts have invaded almost the entire island. Deforestation to create sugarcane and rice plantations through the food estate program worsened the locust plague.

### **Community participation trumps penalties in protecting seascapes, Raja Ampat study suggests**

—Julia John, *Mongabay*, 1 June 2022

Giving indigenous people and local communities a say in the design and management of marine protected areas (MPAs) boosts outcomes, a study of governance conducted in four MPAs in the Bird's Head Seascape of West Papua—the Kofiau-Boo Islands, Misool Selatan Timur, Selat Dampier, and Teluk Mayalibit found. Researchers analysed how variables like livelihoods and association with local groups affected biomass changes after accounting for environmental factors using non-MPA control sites. They found that fish biomass was greater when indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) were “more involved in decision-making and had more local management rights that were supported by government authorities,” said Robert Fidler, a co-author, possibly because participation bolstered the “perceived legitimacy of, and compliance with” resource-related rules, Fidler added. However, commenters noted that “participation alone is not a silver bullet,” with people sometimes committing offenses by exploiting knowledge they gained as participants, and also questioned the downplaying of enforcement and severe sanctions to deter violators.

**Paper:** Robert Y. Fidler, Gabby Ahmadia, Estradivari, Louise Glew, et al, “[Participation, not penalties: Community involvement and equitable governance contribute to more effective multiuse protected areas](#)”, *ScienceAdvances* 8:18, 4 May 2022. DOI: 10.1126/sciadv.abl8929

### **Avian idol competitions endanger the songbirds**

—*The Economist*, 28 May 2022

Hundreds of songbird competitions take place across Indonesia every year. The birds are assessed by referees who grade the complexity and range of their melodies. Owners of champion birds win televisions, motorcycles, and cash prizes worth hundreds or thousands of dollars. Indonesians have come to regard songbirds as a “social and financial asset,” writes Paul Jepson. Men from all walks of life participate—even Joko Widodo, Indonesia's president, who once entered his white-rumped shama (*Copsychus malabaricus*) in a competition. Ownership of songbirds in Java has doubled in a decade to between 66 and 84 million birds. Breeders can't keep up with demand, and in any case it is the wild birds that are most prized. So many have been whisked from the forests of Indonesia that more than a dozen species are in danger of extinction. As many as one million birds were smuggled out of the forests of Sumatra in 2019, according to one estimate. Indonesians' love of birdsong threatens the songbirds themselves.

**Paper:** Paul Jepson and Richard J. Ladle, “[Governing bird-keeping in Java and Bali: evidence from a household survey](#)”, *Oryx*, 14 July 2009. [doi.org/10.1017/S0030605309990251](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0030605309990251)

## **D. Energy, Mining, & Climate Change**

### [Indonesia looks to Association of Southeast Asian Nations \(ASEAN\) to offload excess electricity](#)

—Fadhil Haidar Sulaeman, *The Jakarta Post*, 30 May 2022

Indonesia's Ministry of Trade (Kemendag) called for jumpstarting ASEAN Power Grid (APG) initiative to enable Indonesia to deal with its oversupply of electricity by exporting excess power to neighbouring countries. Electricity supply on Java Island increased by an estimated 6 gigawatts in 2021 while demand only grew by around 800 megawatts, explained state-owned electricity provider PLN president-director Darmawan Prasodjo. The APG would interconnect power grids in the region, progressing from bilateral to full regional integration, but this will require harmonizing transmission infrastructures and trading regulations. Trade Minister Muhammad Lutfi, representing Indonesia at the ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) Special Meeting in May, said deeper cooperation within ASEAN was imperative as the current multilateral trading system faced multiple challenges which could render the World Trade Organization ineffective. However, Institute for Essential Services Reform Fabby Tumiwa said exporting would not solve the electricity oversupply problem, because most of Indonesia's electricity comes from non-renewable coal, while ASEAN countries like Malaysia and Singapore are not willing to import electricity generated from fossil fuels.

### [How voluntary carbon markets can help Indonesia meet its climate goals](#)

—Martin Santoso, Vivek Lath, Vishal Agarwal, *The Jakarta Post*, 30 May 2022

Indonesia has enacted regulations to help set up a compliance [mandatory] carbon market, including an emissions trading system (ETS) by 2025. To support this effort, a voluntary carbon market (VCM) will be key to realizing climate progress. In a VCM, companies buy and sell carbon credits on a voluntary basis. For example, a developer can establish an emissions mitigating project such as forest conservation, get it registered and verified by an independent body, and then sell the ensuing credits to another company or entity, which uses the carbon credits to offset their emissions. VCMs can operate in tandem with emissions trading systems across a range of sectors. Compliance markets typically target emissions-intensive sectors such as power, oil and gas, and heavy industry, while a VCM can attract participation from other industries such as forestry and agriculture which are difficult to incorporate into an ETS. Indonesia is the 8<sup>th</sup> largest greenhouse gas emitter in the world, but it also has the second largest potential to provide low-cost nature-based solutions for decarbonization.

*Martin Santoso is an associate partner in McKinsey's Indonesia office. Vivek Lath is a partner and Vishal Agarwal is a senior partner in McKinsey's Singapore office.*

### [Carbon sinks—offset markets struggle in the face of surging commodity prices](#)

—*The Economist*, 21 May 2022

The Sumatran rainforest can store 282 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per hectare. Stopping one ha of such forest from being cut down for palm oil would offset the emissions of 175 persons flying economy class from London to New York and back. This market could expand from about US\$1 billion today by a factor of 15 by 2030 and 1000 by 2050. "Nature-based" offsets pay for carbon sinks, such as forests, to be restored or preserved, but the market isn't working because the price of the carbon offset is far too low. Clearing one hectare of Sumatran rainforest could produce 2.5 tonnes of palm oil annually. Palm oil prices have climbed from US\$1,000 a tonne one year ago to US\$1,520, but the price of nature-based offsets has fallen to just US\$10 per tonne, so deforestation remains economically rational. Selling offsets for one ha of Sumatran rainforest at \$10 only yields revenues of US\$1,120—not enough to compensate for the potential loss of about \$3,800 for selling palm oil.

## **E. Pollution & Waste**

### [Tons of trash, less to recycle: The irony of recycling plastic waste](#)

—Tonggo Simangunsong, *The Jakarta Post*, 24 May 2022

Plastic waste disproportionately pollutes soil, air, and water. According to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK), of 68.5 million tonnes of waste generated in Indonesia in 2021, as much as 11.6 million

tonnes or 17% is plastic waste, but only a maximum of 9% from that figure can be recycled. When recycled, plastic waste has a value, but this is not maximized. One difficulty making recycling of plastic waste difficult to sustain is a shortage of raw materials, namely plastic waste itself. There are potential solutions with appropriate technology, but these are difficult to implement because waste and garbage collection is still done manually. Waste recyclers source plastic waste from scavengers. Supply is limited because not many people want to be scavengers because the price for plastic waste is still low. Scavengers sell polyethylene (PE) for US\$0.05/kg and polypropylene (PP) for US\$0.34/kg. The recycler cleans and chops it and sells the recycled PE plastic for US\$0.34/kg and PP plastic for US\$0.89/kg.

#### [Alliance to End Plastic Waste launches US\\$29 million Bersih Indonesia program in Malang city](#)

—Yudha Baskoro, *Jakarta Globe*3, 23 May 2022

The Alliance to End Plastic Waste (AEPW) and the government of Malang in East Java, along with the Coordinating Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Investments, have launched the Bersih Indonesia [Clean Indonesia] program to provide integrated waste management for 2.6 million people by 2025. The program will establish household-level waste management services and sorting, processing, and recycling facilities for Malang residents. The government has allocated land to build five Integrated Waste Processing Sites (TPST) and four Waste Transit Stations (SPA). Construction is scheduled to begin in mid-2022. In preparation for the new system, community engagement and school programs will begin next year. The TPST and SPA will also be built at the Talangagung Tourism Educational Landfill, which has distributed 400 24-hour bio-methane gas connections for residents' homes. When fully operational, the Bersih Indonesia program system will be able to divert more than 50,000 tonnes of plastic annually and create 3,000 new jobs. Phase One of Bersih Indonesia will be developed at a cost of US\$29 million.

## F. Investment & Finance

#### [Indonesia raises US\\$3.25 billion in its biggest global sukuk sale](#)

—Reuters via *The Jakarta Post*, 26 May 2022

Indonesia has raised US\$3.25 billion by selling US dollar-denominated Islamic bonds with 5- and 10-year tenures, the country's biggest global sukuk issuance, the Ministry of Finance announced. The 5-year notes carry a coupon of 4.40% while the 10-year notes are 4.70%, below the sovereign's initial price guidance. In 2021, Indonesia sold US\$3 billion worth of Islamic bonds. Those bonds carried much lower coupons compared with notes with similar maturities offered on the most recent sale. CIMB, Deutsche Bank, Dubai Islamic Bank, HSBC and Standard Chartered Bank were the joint lead manager and joint bookrunners for the transaction, while HSBC and Standard Chartered were also joint green structuring advisors. Most of the buyers were from Asia and the Middle East.

## G. Other

#### [UN rights groups flag potential violations in US\\$3 billion Indonesian tourism project](#)

—Hans Nicholas Jong, *Mongabay*, 25 May 2022

The UN has reiterated concerns over alleged human rights violations in a US\$3 billion mega infrastructure tourism development project to create a "New Bali" in the Mandalika region of the Lombok Island with construction of parks, resorts, hotels, and a racetrack, for which it is relocating 121 households. The government and project backers, including its main funder, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), claim this project will promote the development of ecotourism and contribute to poverty alleviation. UN rights experts have cited instances of local communities being evicted and the destruction of houses, fields, water sources, cultural and religious sites. On 8 March, the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights Olivier De Schutter again raised concerns about alleged violations against local and indigenous communities about the conditions under which the community members are being moved; whether they have consented to doing so; the compensation offered; and the conditions for their resettlement. NGOs have called on the AIIB to halt financing.



### [Government plan to create new provinces is not viable, Papua governor says](#)

—Stanley Widianto, *Reuters*, 28 May 2022

Indonesia's plan to create new provinces in its impoverished eastern region of Papua has not been adequately discussed with the local population and is not viable, Lukas Enembe, Governor of Papua Province said. Lawmakers announced in April that Parliament would deliberate on adding three new provinces, sparking protests from Papuans in several cities over what they see as central government encroachment into the resource-rich region. Enembe said there are not enough resources to run the new provincial governments. Papua and West Papua consistently rank among the lowest provinces on the human development index and other indicators. "There are so few of our people here to create new provinces," adding that the proposal could lead to a larger influx of people from outside Papua. Made Supriatma, a researcher at the Yusof Ishak Institute in Singapore, concurred saying poor education means there would not be enough qualified local personnel to run new provinces.

### [Attorney General's Office appoints 34 prosecutors in long-stalled Paniai case](#)

Nur Janti, *The Jakarta Post*, 31 May 2022

The Indonesia Attorney General's Office (AGO) has appointed a team of 34 lawyers to prosecute human rights violations in Paniai, Papua. Last month the AGO named a retired Indonesian Military (TNI) officer as a suspect in the case. The incident occurred in December 2014 when security forces opened fire on a crowd of demonstrators, killing five persons, including four high school students, and injuring 21 others. The National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) determined that TNI personnel had committed a "gross human rights violation" by killing and persecuting civilians and handed the case to the AGO in 2020, but The AGO returned the report to Komnas HAM twice for "not meeting formal and material requirements". On International Human Rights Day last year, President Joko Widodo said the government was committed to resolving cases of gross human rights violations, including the Paniai case. To date, only three such cases have gone to trial, those in East Timor, Abepura, and Tanjung Priok, but none of the perpetrators were punished.

## I. [Joko Widodo's Group of 20 Summit](#)

### [Ukraine's Zelensky accepts Indonesia's invitation to attend G20 Summit on Bali](#)

—Yerica Lai, *The Jakarta Post*, 28 May 2022

Ukraine president Volodymyr Zelensky told an Indonesian audience he would accept Indonesian President Joko Widodo's invitation to attend the Group of 20 Summit in Bali "with honour and delight" and that he remained hopeful that the event "will just have friendly states and partner states and won't have any occupiers or aggressors". Ukraine has for three months resisted a full-scale military invasion by neighbouring Russia. Widodo has invited both Zelensky and Vladimir Putin, the president of Russia [a G20 member] to join the G20 Summit while also urging an end to all hostilities to avoid deepening a global economic crisis. The crisis in Ukraine has exacerbated global supply issues in sectors from agricultural products to automobiles and electronics. However, it remains unclear whether Zelensky would be able to physically attend the Bali meeting. "I cannot leave Ukraine," Zelensky said in a transmission. "I will join you if there is no war. If there is still a war, that can be done online if your leadership can accept this option."

### [Indonesia's G20 Summit Dilemma](#)

—Muhammad Zulfikar Rakhmat, *Asia Sentinel*, 30 May 2022

The G20 Summit scheduled for Bali in October risks turning into a free-for-all, with both warring presidents Vladimir Putin of Russia and Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine vowing to attend, the United States possibly boycotting, and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi sternly telling Jakarta that the summit should stick to economic issues and forget politics and security issues. "Jakarta is worried about the session falling apart. [President Joko Widodo] wants it to be a trade fair promoting Indonesia. Big business will be staying away, I suspect," one well-connected observer said. There has been no

indication from the Presidential Palace in Jakarta whether Indonesia resents China's efforts to intervene in its G20 leadership.

*Muhammad Zulfikar Rakhmat is a lecturer at Universitas Islam Indonesia*

## II. Joe Biden's Indo-Pacific Framework

### Biden's new Indo-Pacific Economic Framework trade pact is almost a laughingstock

—Kornelius Purba, *The Jakarta Post*, 30 May 2022

US President Joe Biden invited seven members of ASEAN to join his new trade offensive, the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF), aimed at distancing them from China, their most important trading partner. But Biden could only offer economic pledges worth US\$250 million, minuscule compared to China's pledge of up to US\$1.5 billion for three years. The US remains one of the world's biggest and most lucrative markets, but Indonesia knew from the beginning that IPEF would not constitute a free-trade deal. The White House proudly described how the IPEF will "enable the US and our allies to decide on rules of the road and ensure US workers, small businesses and ranchers can compete in the Indo-Pacific." But why should Indonesia help Biden address US domestic problems? Come on, Biden. Indonesia and ASEAN need market access, not indoctrination. Indonesia and other countries in the region need the US to counter-balance China's assertiveness in the South China Sea and in Natuna waters, but the lucrative US market is their most important interest.

### Opinion: Indo-Pacific Economic Framework not a blessing for Asia

—Xin Ping, *The Jakarta Post*, 27 May 2022

The United States has been trumpeting that its Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) will bring prosperity to the region. But its sole purpose is to advance the Indo-Pacific Strategy and key interests of the US instead of driving post-pandemic recovery, development and prosperity of the region. The IPEF has been created to encourage regional economies to "decouple" from the Chinese market by leading them to alternative supply chains. This would install a closed, exclusive and confrontational arrangement into this region, designed with clear geopolitical and ideological intentions. There are speculations that the US is trying to recruit Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam to join the IPEF. In a sense, the US could be forcing these countries to adopt certain domestic economic policies to serve US interests. The exclusive and even punitive provisions contained in IPEF may contradict the commitments made in regional free trade agreements. The US might hope to use IPEF to get regional allies and ASEAN countries on board to encircle China, but this is unlikely to materialize.

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## III. Indonesia's palm oil export ban and its aftermath

### Resumption of palm oil exports hampered by policy uncertainties

—Reuters via *Jakarta Post*, 23 May 2022

Indonesia allowed palm oil exports to resume on 23 May after a three week ban, but shipments were not expected to get underway until details of new rules aimed at securing a share of the edible oil for domestic consumers become clear. The world's biggest palm oil producer halted exports of the commodity on 28 April in an effort to bring down soaring local cooking oil prices, rattling global markets for edible oil already struggling with supply shortages due to the war in Ukraine. The export ban led farmers to stage rallies across Indonesia to protest a 70% drop in the price of palm fruit at mills as refiners stopped accepting their product. To ensure domestic supplies, Indonesia said it would impose a Domestic Market Obligation (DMO) requiring producers to sell a portion of their production locally at a fixed maximum price. The country plans to retain 10 million tonnes of cooking oil at home using the DMO, Coordinating Economics Minister Airlangga Hartarto said.

### **Opinion: Indonesia's palm oil export ban reverberated globally**

—Steffi Hamann, *The Conversation*, 25 May 2022

Global food crisis, heatwaves, droughts, and Russia's invasion of Ukraine have caused the prices of soybean, canola oil and sunflower oil to soar, leading commodity traders to turn to palm oil, the cheapest and most abundant vegetable oil. Oil palm plantations yield three tonnes of oil per ha annually, while other oil-producing crops generate less than one tonne, so when Indonesian president Joko Widodo announced an unprecedented ban on palm oil exports in late April, it sent shock-waves across global agri-food markets, particularly in populous countries relying on the import of vegetable oils like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Egypt. While North American and European consumers rarely encounter palm oil in their frying pans, they experience refined, bleached and deodorized palm oil on a daily basis in processed foods and consumer goods, including shower gel, dish soap, lipstick, cookies, instant noodles and packaged bread. The impacts have been most dire for the world's poorest regions, the majority of whom are in sub-Saharan Africa and South America.

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### **Slick operator: Indonesian cooking oil probe may spread to biodiesel industry**

—Hans Nicholas Jong, *Mongabay*, 19 May 2022

The arrest of Lin Che Wei, a prominent economist and consultant for his alleged role in securing illegal export permits from the Ministry of Trade for producers of crude palm oil (CPO) has placed biodiesel production, a critical sub-sector of the country's palm oil industry into investigators' crosshairs. Prosecutors had already arrested Indrasari Wisnu Wardhana, the ministry's Director-General for International Trade, along with executives from three major palm oil producers: the Permata Hijau Group, Wilmar Nabati Indonesia, and Musim Mas. Prosecutors allege a massive conspiracy by corrupt officials and palm oil companies to sell CPO abroad while evading their obligation to allocate a share of their production to domestic edible oil markets. Record high prices for edible oils had made it far more profitable for producers to export palm oil than to sell inside Indonesia, where the government had capped the price for CPO. Lin, a consultant to various ministers going back to the early 2000s, played an outsized role in the conspiracy, prosecutors say.