



**Indonesia Sustainable Development News Digest**

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*The Indonesia Sustainable Development News Digest is a biweekly collection of brief summaries of English-language articles related to conservation, environment and sustainability that have appeared in print or online in Indonesian, regional or global media. We welcome all comments, suggestions, and corrections.*

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## A. The Covid-19 Crisis in Indonesia

### [Covid-19 cases continue to decline despite Ramadan relaxation of pandemic mobility rules](#)

—Nina A. Loasana, *The Jakarta Post*, 16 April 2022

Indonesia has seen a decline in the number of new Covid-19 cases over the past few weeks despite continued relaxation of pandemic rules and increase in public mobility. The total caseload fell 38% in early April from 15,055 cases to 9,328. The country recorded 833 new cases on 14 April, the first time the number of cases dipped below 1,000 since mid-January. The improved results came amid an unprecedented relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions as the country seeks to transition to endemicity. Authorities waived mandatory quarantine requirements for fully-vaccinated travellers last month. For the first time in two years, the government has allowed Muslims to pray at public mosques without mandatory physical distancing requirements or limits on the number of worshippers allowed to gather at one time. Public mobility has also increased dramatically, especially in public parks, supermarkets, malls and vacation spots, national Covid-19 task force spokesperson Wiku Adi Sasmito said.

### [Opinion: Indonesia reopens to the world](#)

—Terence Wang and Aditya Akbar, *The Jakarta Post*, 18 April 2022

After experiments in Bali, Bintan and Batam, Indonesia effectively reopened its borders to tourists by reinstating visa exemptions for ASEAN nationals and scrapping on-arrival Covid-19 tests for vaccinated travellers on 6 April. Citizens of 33 other countries are also once again eligible for visas-on-arrival. The reopening promises a further boost to Southeast Asia's largest economy, which has been on a gradual recovery since GDP declined 2.1% in 2020 following the outbreak of the deadly Delta Covid variant. The country that hosted 16.1 million visitors in 2019 before the pandemic saw visitor arrivals drop to only 4 million in 2020 and 1.6 million last year. The country is also taking advantage of renewed demand and higher prices for key exports, including coal, crude palm oil, iron, and nickel, as Indonesia seeks to upgrade its status as a producer of raw material commodities to encompass more downstream components of commodity value chains, marking the preconditions for an economic resurgence by Southeast Asia's sleeping giant. *The writers are project managers for Barber Mullan & Associates risk consultancy.*

### [Study shows 99% on the people on Java and Bali have Covid antibodies](#)

—Stanley Widiyanto, *Reuters*, 18 April 2022

A study conducted on Indonesia's most populous island of Java and tourism island Bali in March showed that 99.2% of the population already carried Covid antibodies, a 6% increase from a December survey. Pandu Riono, an epidemiologist at the University of Indonesia who conducted the survey with the Indonesian Ministry of Health said that the higher antibody levels in the latest survey were due to a wider booster start rollout in January. Indonesia's daily case numbers have decreased significantly since a spike in February driven by the Omicron variant. Almost 60% of the population have been vaccinated against Covid. Health Minister Budi Gunadi Sadikin said the survey was a factor in the government's assessment that mobility relaxations ahead of the Ramadan holiday "can go smoothly without bringing negative impacts on our people." 132

## B. Marine & Fisheries

### [Indonesia to develop new surveillance vessels to monitor illegal fishing](#)

—M. Razi Rahman, Nabil Ihsan, *Antara News*, 10 April 2022

Rear Admiral Adin Nurawaluddin, Director General of Marine and Fisheries Resources Monitoring at the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DKP) confirmed that the ministry would develop two 50-metre fisheries surveillance vessels equipped with sophisticated anti-illegal fishing technology and equipment. "The technology to enhance monitoring of illegal fishing will include fitting of a rope cutter that can cut fishnets to disrupt illegal fishing practices," Narawaluddin said. Development of the Class II surveillance vessel would be carried out in collaboration with the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN). A model hull has been tested at the agency's Hydrodynamic Technology research Centre in Surabaya. The vessels will be built by Batam-based PT Palindo Marine and are expected to be completed in 2023. The National Police Agency Directorate of Corruption Crimes, the Attorney General's office, the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), Finance and Development Monitoring Agency (BPKP) and the Ministry of Industry would also be involved to supervise development of the new surveillance vessels.

### [Are Indonesia's maritime claims excessive beyond UNCLOS?](#)

—Aristyo Rizka Darmawan, *The Jakarta Post*, 12 April 2022

A recent US Department of Defense report on Freedom of Navigation in the South China Sea focuses on China but also cites other Southeast Asian countries including Indonesia. While the US does not challenge Indonesia's status as an archipelagic state or its sovereignty over its archipelagic waters, the report expressed concern about the extent to which foreign vessels are allowed to exercise the navigational rights to which they are entitled under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). In 2005-2010, the US Navy issued several diplomatic notes related to Indonesia's archipelagic waters, including protests against Jakarta's claim that its partial designation of an archipelagic sea lane (ASL) in 2003 was a "full designation". The US believes that under Article 53 of UNCLOS, if a state has not designated ASLs, all ships including warships can use all routes normally used for international navigation in the archipelagic waters, while Indonesia wants to assure its national security by having legal certainty for all navigational passages in Indonesia's maritime territory.

*The author is a lecturer in international law at the University of Indonesia.*

### [Opinion: Will Widodo's new decree change the equation in Natuna waters](#)

—Kornelius Purba, *The Jakarta Post*, 18 April 2022

A new Presidential Regulation issued on 17 March, Perpres No. 41/2022, stipulates new defense and security zones and approaches for government agencies, including the Indonesian military (TNI) for maintaining Indonesia's sovereignty in the waters around the Natuna Islands. The step indicates Jakarta's anticipation that China may unilaterally assert sovereignty over the waters based on its "9-dashed line" and other arguments. The regulation calls for boosting the effectiveness of activities in areas around Natuna, controlling environmental impacts in areas where military drills are conducted, developing border security posts and placement of aids to

support navigation safety, as well as formation of a special joint regional military command comprising Army, Navy and Air Force units in Natuna. Several countries have promised to help Indonesia develop Natuna, but in the end Indonesia will have to rely on itself when addressing its dispute with China over sovereignty and economic rights in the Natuna waters.  
*The writer is a senior editor at The Jakarta Post.*

### [Oceans conference comes up with US\\$16 billion in pledges to safeguard marine health](#)

—Carolyn Cowan, *Mongabay*, 15 April 2022

Governments, the private sector, civil society groups, research institutions and philanthropic organizations announced 410 commitments worth more than US\$16 billion to improve the health, productivity and protection of the world's oceans at the seventh Our Ocean Conference (OOC) in Palau over 13-14 April. To date, seven OOC events have accrued more than 1,800 commitments worth more than US\$108 billion and protected at least 13 million km<sup>2</sup> of ocean. The conference focused on combating climate change, promoting sustainable fisheries, creating sustainable blue economies, advancing marine protected areas (MPAs) and tackling marine pollution. Noting that without action the annual flow of plastic into the ocean will nearly triple by 2040, speakers acknowledged last month's UN resolution to develop a legally binding treaty to combat plastic pollution. The crucial role of traditional and indigenous knowledge to ocean management was another key theme. Securing marine tenure rights of small-scale fishers is central to achieving sustainable marine resource management, said Indah Rufiati, fisheries lead with Indonesia-based non-profit Pesisir Lestari.

Paper: Indra Jaya et al, "[Are the working principles of fisheries management at work in Indonesia?](#)", *Marine Policy* 140 (March 2022). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2022.105047>

Indonesia is the world's largest archipelagic nation and the second-largest fish producer. Its fisheries are distinguished by a high diversity of species and a large variety of gear and methods. Fisheries management is equally complex with multiple levels of governance, decentralization, and traditional fishing tenure rights. However, the pool of fishery experts remains insufficient to meet stock assessment needs across the country. Although small-scale fisheries dominate Indonesia's fisheries management system, the process of decentralizing data collection and management functions to province, district and village levels is not sufficient to encourage more local ownership and compliance. Provincial licensing and boat classifications require attention and clarification. An enhanced national policy framework that empowers and engages local governments, universities, NGOs, fisheries and community groups would be beneficial. The threat of overfishing is visible in the data, and trends suggest the pathway involving unsustainable production goals and overfishing that has led to fisheries collapse in neighbouring countries.

Paper: Serge Andrefouet, et al, "[Indonesia's 13,558 islands—A new census from space and a first step toward a One Map for Small Islands Policy](#)", *Marine Policy* 135, January 2022. [doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104848](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104848)

Indonesia is the largest country in the world made up only of islands, 17,508 of them according to the current official figure, but landsat satellite images have inventoried a total of 13,559 islands with a minimum size of 0.001 km<sup>2</sup>, with 87% of the islands covering less than 1 km<sup>2</sup> and 39% smaller than 0.01 km<sup>2</sup>, highlighting the dominance of small and very-small islands. Indonesia launched its "One Map" policy in 2017 to mitigate land-use conflicts on the largest islands, but small islands have their own developmental, social and conservation issues as well. This new census of Indonesia's islands could serve as the foundation for an extension of the "One Map" policy vision to Indonesia's small islands.

## C. Forests & Land Use

[Paper: Slowing deforestation follows declining oil palm expansion and lower palm oil prices](#)

—David L. A. Gaveau, et al, *PLOS One*, March 29 2022. [doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0266178](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0266178)

Using satellite imagery and sampling data, the authors show that the oil palm plantation area doubled over 2001-2019 in Indonesia, the world's largest producer, while forested area declined by 11% (9.79 m ha), including 3.0 m ha ultimately converted into oil palm and 2.85 m ha cleared and converted in the same year. New plantations peaked in 2009 and 2012, and declined afterwards, with expansion of plantations and forest loss correlated with palm oil prices, though the decline took place later in Papua. Deforestation fell below pre-2004 levels over 2017-2019, but there is no guarantee that low levels of forest conversion seen over 2017-2019 will continue. The Indonesian government has recently relaxed or removed forest regulations, amended environmental and labour regulations in the so-called "Omnibus Bill" of October 2020, and unilaterally terminated its REDD+ partnership with Norway in 2021, casting doubts over commitments to control deforestation. As the price of palm oil has doubled since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, potentially driving further expansion, effective regulation will be key to minimizing future forest conversion and deforestation.

#### [For the sake of palm oil](#)

—Mahardika Satria Hadi, *Tempo English*, 11 April 2022

The Oil Palm Plantation Fund Management Agency (BPDPKS) was established in 2015 to compensate for a drop in the price of crude palm oil (CPO) due to oversupply. Indonesia produced 32 million tonnes of CPO that year, but global markets were unable to absorb the volume and the industry was threatened by losses. The solution from then Coordinating Economic Minister Sofyan Djalil was to allocate palm oil to climate change mitigation through production of biodiesel, a mixture of diesel and palm oil, employing a new law which required the government to stabilize palm oil prices through increasing its proportion in biodiesel from B5 (5%) in 2015 to B30 (30%) today. The presumption was that biodiesel could absorb 10 million tonnes of CPO annually. A levy collected on each tonne of CPO exported is then used to cover the price difference between diesel fuel and biodiesel. When palm oil companies chose to export most of their CPO when prices spiked to over US\$1,000 per tonne, the BPDPKS had to be used to subsidize domestic cooking oil.

#### [Opinion: Conflicts of Interest at the Oil Palm Fund](#)

—*Tempo English*, 11 April 2022

The role of the Indonesian government's Oil Palm Plantation Fund Management Agency (BPDPKS) should be to ensure sustainable development of oil palm agriculture, but in fact its sole priority is supporting biodiesel. Over 2015-2021, the agency received Rp 139.2 trillion (US\$9.7 billion) from levies on the export of crude palm oil (CPO) and its derivatives, of which 80% was used to subsidize biodiesel. Only 5% was used to support replanting of small-scale farmer plantations. In effect, almost all the Oil Palm Agency revenues end up in the hands of tycoons, while the welfare of small-scale farmers is side-lined. The BPDPKS is a public service agency headed by officials under the Ministry of Finance. However, decision-making authority is in the hands of the steering committee led by the Coordinating Minister for the Economy, since 2019 Airlangga Hartarto, Chairman of the Golkar Party. The agency is just a cashier. The steering committee determines the price conversion factor and thus the rate of profit for palm oil used in mandatory 30% biodiesel.

#### [New highway may strip 4.5 million ha of forest by 2036 in Tanah Papua](#)

—David Gaveau, *Nusantara Atlas*, 8 April 2022

The forests of Tanah Papua (Indonesian New Guinea) totalled 34.29 million ha (m ha) in 2019, 83% of the total area, representing 42% of Indonesia's forested area and the largest expanse of intact old-growth forest in the Asia-Pacific region. However, 4.5 million ha (m ha) or 13% of that could disappear by 2036 if Tanah Papua is allowed to follow the same trajectory as Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo). The 4,330 km Trans-Papua Highway, a national investment project, was

nearly complete in 2019, though 51 km remained unopened. Significant deforestation is likely to occur near existing and newly-completed road sections, with lowland forests in the central region of Papua Province experiencing the highest augmented threat. The 2012 decision of the Constitutional Court (35/PUU-X/2012) recognized the rights and authority of local communities over their ancestral territories, while the governors of Papua and West Papua provinces signed the Manokwari Declaration in 2019 requiring local governments to conserve at least 70% of the region and to protect the rights and roles of indigenous peoples.

Paper: David L. Gaveau et al, "[Forest Loss in Indonesian New Guinea \(2001-2019\): Trends, drivers and outlook](#)", *Biological Conservation* 261 (September 2021). [doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2021.109225](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2021.109225)

#### [Indonesian trade ministry official, palm oil executives charged in cooking oil crisis](#)

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

Indonesian prosecutors have charged a senior trade ministry official and three palm oil executives in connection with the scarcity of cooking oil that has caused public unrest. Indrasari Wisnu Wardhana, Director General of Foreign Trade at the Ministry of Trade allegedly conspired to issue permits to export crude palm oil (CPO) to four Indonesian palm oil companies. The Permata Hijau Group, Wilmar Nabati Indonesia, Multimas Nabati Asahan and Musum Mas are all major industry players. Wilmar Nabati Indonesia and Multimas Nabati Asahan are arms of Wilmar International, the world's largest palm oil trader, while Singapore-based Musum Mas owns one of the world's largest palm oil refinery networks. The four companies allegedly secured export permits from Indrasari allowing them to take advantage of spiking world palm oil prices despite having failed to meet the government's new Domestic Market Obligation (DMO) and Domestic Price Obligation (DPO), measures adopted in February in an effort to moderate domestic cooking oil prices in Indonesia. 159

## D. Energy, Mining and Climate Change

#### [Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources signals more price hikes for fuel, electricity](#)

—Vincent Fabian Thomas, *The Jakarta Post*, 15 April 2022

Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Arifin Tasrif announced that prices for subsidized fuel and subsidized energy commodities would be raised to minimize fiscal strains amid surging international oil prices induced by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The adjustments would apply to Pertalite gasoline, Solar diesel, kerosene, and 3-kg liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders, subsidized fuels that are widely used by lower-income homes and businesses. The government will also raise electricity prices through a tariff-adjustment mechanism allowing state-owned electricity company PLN to set prices based on global market conditions. The ministry earlier noted that subsidized fuel supplies were running low as more consumers switched to buying these fuels after the government raised the prices for non-subsidized fuels. "In the short-term, the tariff adjustment [on electricity] in 2022 could save the state budget Rp 7 trillion (US\$487.75 million to Rp 16 trillion in compensation, Arifin said. Over the mid- to long-term, the government has vowed to increase the use of renewables to avoid such shortages in the future.

#### [Oil price hike may cost Rp 190 trillion \(US\\$13.23 billion\) in higher subsidies](#)

— *The Jakarta Post*, 20 April 2022

The Indonesian government may need to spend Rp 190 trillion (US\$ 13.23 billion) more than planned to cover growing subsidy costs as surging international oil prices drive up the cost of fuel imports, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (MEMR) minister Arifin Tasrif said, noting that the estimated cost for subsidies and compensation for gasoline, diesel, and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) may reach Rp 320 trillion, more than double the Rp 130 trillion assumed in the current state budget. That doesn't include [spending related to] electricity, Arifin added. On 1

April, Coordinating Minister of Maritime Affairs and Investments Luhut Panjaitan said the government had no alternative but to increasing the price for subsidized Pertalite gasoline and subsidized LPG, because not doing so would either weigh on the state budget or else “break” state-owned oil giant PT Pertamina.

### [Indonesia raises royalty on coal to boost state revenues amid commodity price surge](#)

—*The Jakarta Post*, 20 April 2022

President Joko Widodo signed a new regulation replacing the fixed 13.5% royalty rate with a new progressive rate ranging from 14-28% depending on the country’s benchmark coal price (HBA). “When prices are high, we want [to ensure] the government reaps an increase in state revenues,” explained Lana Saria, director of coal business development at the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (MEMR). “But when coal is at a very low price, the government does not want to burden companies with their financial obligations and still have conducive business situation.” All companies holding mining business license (IUP), special mining permit (IUPK) or a contract of work (PKP2B) will be subject to tax and non-tax obligations under the new regulation. The mining industry is a major contributor to nontax state revenue in Indonesia, the world’s top exporter of thermal coal. Miners contributed Rp 70.05 trillion (US\$ 4.91 billion) or 15.5% of total nontax state revenues last year. Indonesia’s HBA hit a record US\$288.40 per tonne earlier this month.

### [Indonesia maps rare earth reserves for downstream industry development goals](#)

—Divya Karyza, *The Jakarta Post*, 13 April 2022

The government has established plans to map Indonesia’s rare earth element reserves as part of a wider plan to develop downstream rare earth industries. Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (MEMR) Director General Ridwan Djamaluddin said eight locations containing rare earth reserves had been identified, including the Bangka Belitung islands, North Sumatra and West Kalimantan, with plans to explore in other areas, including Ketapang in West Kalimantan, Sibolga in North Sumatra and Pegunungan Tiga Puluh in eastern Sumatra up by 2024. The exploration effort is being carried out by state-owned tin mining company PT Timah and private companies, Ridwan said. The ministry is working on a downstream rare earth map and plans to restrict exports of certain products. The roadmap will also regulate the benchmark price for rare earth mineral monazite, a by-product of tin processing which can contain various rare earth metals. Indonesia kicked off its mineral downstreaming plans in 2020 by enacting a landmark nickel ore export ban to force mining companies to develop domestic nickel processing facilities.

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### [Sustainable forests and agriculture will require stronger international partnerships](#)

—Agus Justianto and Musdhalifah Machmud, *The Jakarta Post*, 21 April 2022

Indonesia aims to reach a net sink zero of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) by 2030 from forest and other land-use (FOLU) sectors as a priority sector for reducing emissions by 24.1% for conditional nationally-determined contribution (NDC) scenario, followed by the energy sector. A new Environment and Forestry Ministry (KLHK) Decree No. 168/2022 establishes a FOLU operational Plan. To combat illegal logging and trade, KLHK applies a soft approach through its Forest Legality and Sustainability Assurance System (SVLK) launched in 2009 and a hard approach through prevention and security operations by the Environment and Forestry Law Enforcement Directorate General. At the national level, Indonesia maintains its permanent moratorium on new forest clearance of primary forests and peatlands and continues to implement corrective actions to support Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. But Indonesia can never walk alone. The country needs partnerships to transform forests into emissions sinks.

*Agus Justianto is Director General for Sustainable Forest Management at the KLHK. Musdhalifah Machmud is a deputy to the Coordinating Economic Affairs Minister for Food and Agribusiness.*

### [As G20 chair, coal-heavy Indonesia sends mixed signals on green transition](#)

—Beh Lih Yi, *Thomson Reuters Foundation*, 8 April 2022

As president of the Group of 20, Indonesia is pushing for more international funding for the green energy transition in developing countries, but analysts say Jakarta needs to back up its call with more ambitious plans to cut emissions at home. The world's top exporter of thermal coal and eighth-biggest carbon emitter, Indonesia has announced plans to phase out coal for electricity by 2056 and just brought forward its net-zero emissions target from 2070 to 2060 or sooner. Jakarta has said it would stop building new coal-fired power plants after 2023, but there are concerns about projects in the pipeline still going ahead. As the world's top coal exporter, Indonesia should tap the windfall profits of coal operators to facilitate the green transition, energy analyst Putra Adhihguna said. "It's going to be hard to get financial assistance if we are inconsistent on our energy transition policy," said Andri Prasetyo of Trend Asia.

## E. Pollution and Waste Management

### [Algae could be the next secret weapon to combat plastic pollution](#)

—Dian Burhani (LIPI), *The Conversation*, 14 April 2022

Due to their small volume and high surface area, microplastic waste can absorb pollutants, causing chronic toxicity when consumed and accumulated within organisms. Microalgae are becoming the most promising nature-based candidate for mitigating marine microplastic waste. Microalgae can attach, take control, gather and stick to microplastics and initiate biodegradation processes including biodeterioration, bio-fragmentation and assimilation. Studies have reported successes in using microalgae to breakdown polyethylene (used for fibres in clothing and plastic bottles), low-density polyethylene (used in plastic bags), and bisphenol A. Indonesia possesses extensive maritime areas freshwater lakes with potential for microalgae cultivation. So far, studies on microalgae in Indonesia have focused on its potential as a green energy resource and its capacity to substitute for plastic, but we need to explore a broader range of solutions to plastic pollution issues, including plastic recycling and reusing strategies. New policies should align with the 2008-2015 National Action Plan in Marine Debris.

### [Marubeni signs MOU with Rekosistem to develop recycling business in Indonesia](#)

—Marubeni (Press Release), 18 April 2022

PT Marubeni Indonesia has concluded a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with PT Khazanah Hijau Indonesia "Rekosistem", a start-up company, to develop a recycling company in Indonesia, beginning with a proof of concept for collection, productization, and sale of recyclable waste as raw materials with Rekosistem from April 2022. Establishing waste collection systems and popularizing recycling in Indonesia are urgent tasks. Rekosistem collects various kinds of waste (including plastics, cardboard, paper, glass, e-waste, etc.) from corporate enterprises and individuals using a digital platform, giving users points that can be used for electronic payments in accordance with the amount of waste collected, and sells the collected waste to recyclers. Marubeni will promote waste collection in collaboration with Rekosistem and develop a recycling business utilizing the Marubeni Group's network.

### [Coal barge that ran aground off East Java spills cargo, disrupts local fishery](#)

—Gafur Abdullah, *Mongabay*, 7 April 2022

A barge carrying coal from Banjarmasin on the island of Borneo to the island of Lombok ran around near Sumenep district in East Java in January, spilling much of its cargo and disrupting the local fishery. The incident adds to the long list of environmental pollution disasters by the coal industry, said Wahyu Eka Setyawan, director of the East Java chapter of the Indonesian Forum of the Environment (Walhi), an NGO. Local fishers have reportedly complained that the waters turned dark due to the spill. The local fisheries agency and environment agency were alerted about the incident, but as of 5 April, only the fisheries agency had come to carry out an inspection, a local



resident of Sumenep said. Indonesian islands east of Bali in Nusa Tenggara Barat (NTB) and Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT) are not connected to the Java-Bali electric power grid and are largely dependent on burning coal, diesel, and fuel oil to generate electricity.

## F. Conservation and Protected Areas

### [Opinion: 'No' to corporate-driven tourism development in Komodo National Park](#)

—Venansius Haryanto, *Mongabay*, 19 April 2022

In 2013, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KHLK) issues nature tourism concession permits to PT Sagara Komodo Lestari (SKL) and PT Komodo Wildlife Ecotourism (KWE) to build luxury tourism business facilities inside Komodo National Park, the unique conservation home of the world's largest lizard, the Komodo dragon (*Varanus komodoensis*). SKL received permission to develop resorts in the Loh Buaya area of Rinca Island in the park, while KWE was given the right to develop land on Padar and on Komodo Island. Public resistance from environmental activists, NGOs, and local residents on the grounds that the projects were inconsistent with conservation principles, threatened the endangered Komodo dragon population, and would result in the expulsion of the Ata Modo community, erupted soon after the companies' plans were made public. The government should cancel the companies' concessions and ensure any future resorts are built outside the park to keep it safe for the dragons and other species and as a living space for indigenous communities. 164

*The writer is a researcher at Sunspirit for Justice and Peace, a research-based advocacy NGO based in Labuanbajo, Flores, NTT.*

Paper: Cypri Jegan Paju Dale and Gregorius Afioma, "[Puzzling Confluence of Conservation and Ecotourism in Komodo National Park](#)," Japan-ASEAN Transdisciplinary Working Paper Series No. 10, Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS), Kyoto University (2021).

Doi: 10.14989/TDWPS\_10

### [Hoping for dugongs to return](#)

—Purwani Diyah Prabandari, *Tempo English*, 18 April 2022

Residents of West Yensawai and East Yensawai villages on North Batanta in Raja Ampat have actively planted mangrove saplings for the past two years. By this year, when *Tempo*, the Indonesia Climate Change Trust Fund (ICCTF) and the National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas) visited, about 7,500 young mangroves were in place in front of the villages. The villagers have also transplanted seagrass and corals to the area. Yusuf Arifin, who owns a homestay, hopes these activities will encourage marine wildlife such as sea turtles and dugongs. "There would be many guests coming," Yusuf said. In 2010, the efforts of Leonard Saleo, a village resident who worked with Conservation International to plant mangroves and fight against destructive fishing ended with his murder by illegal loggers. But the community that is holding out are still working on mangroves, corals, and seagrass. According to Konstantinus Saleo, coordinator of the ecosystem rehabilitation program and the son of Leonard, there are 23 children and teenagers involved in the coral reef team who have previously been active in various conservation activities in the Raja Ampat Coastal Children Community, "so that after us there will be others."

### [Most biodiversity hotspots in Borneo and Sumatra lack formal protection](#)

—Grace Dungey, *Mongabay*, 12 April 2022

The Sunda Islands of Borneo and Sumatra, which host some of the richest assemblages of biota worldwide, lost 15% and 25% of their primary forest cover over 2002-2019, the largest share in the world, threatening their biodiversity. A new paper found that most predicted biodiversity hotspots in Borneo and Sumatra fall outside formally-protected areas, with only 9.2% and 18.2% of the

modelled species richness located within the islands' protection zones, while existing protected areas are in relatively poor locations of insufficient size and extent to protect the main biodiversity hotspots. In both islands, a small number of protected areas provided for most of the protected biodiversity. The findings support a shift from single flagship species approaches to multiple species conservation approaches for habitat protection. Northern and eastern Kalimantan, regions almost completely lacking protection, harbour critical biodiversity hotspots. In Sumatra, extending the current network of protected areas is critical, especially in the western mountains and southern lowlands.

Paper: "L. Chiaverini, et al, "[Multi-scale, multivariate community models improve designation of biodiversity hotspots in the Sunda Islands](#)", *Animal Conservation*, 27 February 2022. doi:10.1111/acv.12771

## G. Banking and Finance

### [International funding insufficient to enable Indonesia to cut greenhouse gas emissions](#)

—Basten Gokkon, *Mongabay*, 15 April 2022

Indonesia cannot rely on international support to achieve its 2030 carbon emissions reduction target, so must develop innovative financing, a study concluded. The government calculated that it will need US\$323 billion in funding from the international community to slash emissions by 41%, but the country received only US\$6.4 billion between 2007 and 2019, mostly in the form of loans. Indonesia faced difficulties accessing international climate change grants. Under its commitment to the Paris Agreement, Indonesia would cut emissions by 29% by 2030 against the business-as-usual projection, or 41% if it receives international funding assistance. In 2009, industrialized countries promised to provide US\$100 billion a year by 2020 to help less developed countries reduce their emissions, but the most funding provided was US\$78.9 billion in 2018. The paper suggests Indonesia could use a combination of environmental (green) and Islamic-compliant bonds (or *sukuk*) as well as non-public sector finance through capital markets and issuance of security instruments.

Paper: Suroso, Djoko Santoso Abi Suroso, et al, "[Revisiting the role of international climate finance \(ICF\) toward achieving the nationally-determined contribution \(NDC\) target: A case study of the Indonesian energy sector](#)", *Environmental Science and Policy* 131, pp. 188-195, May 2022. doi:[10.1016/j.envsci.2022.01.022](#)

### [Opinion: Are conservation trust funds part of the answer for ongoing land protection?](#)

—Anne Lambert, *Mongabay*, 14 April 2022

Why endow funds for conservation? Some argue it takes money away from urgent current needs, especially for land acquisition. Conservation trust funds secure finance for long-term costs, typically protection and management of nature reserves. While some donors prefer to support the creation of new protected areas, under-funding of protection and management results in "paper parks" and under-protected preserves. Part of the answer is that conservation trust funds do not necessarily redirect money from immediate action. Securing primary forest and other intact terrestrial or marine tropical ecosystems by buying land can be a particular priority, but there are other conservation actions that reduce threats to species and ecosystems that require only short-term funding, but funding for land securement is not threatened by endowments. Many land trusts now stipulate that a percentage of the funds given to acquire land be set aside in an endowment to *keep* the land protected, because some donors fail to understand the long-term cost of protection and prefer to contribute to land acquisition.

## H. Special section on impacts of the Russia-Ukraine war

### [G20 finance chiefs to meet in US amid Ukraine crisis](#)

—Reuters via *The Jakarta Post*, 20 April 2022

Finance chiefs of the Group of 20 major economies were about to meet in the US to address global economic risks of the Russia-Ukraine war, soaring worldwide inflation and long-term consequences of the Covid-19 epidemic, G20 host Indonesia announced. However, because of Russia's planned virtual participation, there will be no agreed communique after the meeting, and some western countries are preparing to stage coordinating walk-outs at the meeting to protest Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Due to looming economic risks, the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and UN Conference on Trade and Development have lowered their outlooks for global growth in 2022. The G20 is at risk of unraveling and this week is incredibly important," said Josh Lipsky, director of the Atlantic Council's GeoEconomics Center and a former IMF adviser.

#### [Ukraine war hitting Indonesia instant noodle supplies](#)

—John McBeth, *Asia Times*, 15 April 2022

The future supply of Indonesian instant noodles hangs in the balance as flour millers scramble to fill a major hole left by the impact of the Russian invasion on Ukraine's wheat crop, now in greater peril from a threatened new offensive in the wheat-growing eastern region. Winning back its role as Indonesia's leading wheat supplier from Ukraine, Australia has only a limited ability to increase exports because of forward selling, leaving instant noodle makers to rely on Canada, the US, India, and perversely Russia. It is estimated that Ukraine has already lost US\$1.2 billion in grain exports. "If we fail to get a crop this year, it will be catastrophic for the rest of the world, for Asia and Africa, Ukraine's ambassador to Jakarta Vasyl Hamianin said. Indonesia is the world's second largest consumer of instant noodles, accounting for 12.6 billion of the world's 116.5 billion annual servings. Indonesia's wheat consumption, largely represented by noodles, was 26.4 kg pr capita last year, compared to rice consumption of 124.46 kg per capita. The Indomie brand, which accounts for 72% of the Indonesian market, has become synonymous with packaged instant noodles and is now available in more than 100 countries. Millers are now likely to have to swallow a price increase of 70-90% to import wheat, something they can't pass on to price-sensitive consumers.

## I. [Special section on breaking up Papua](#)

### [The plan to break up Papua](#)

—Budiarti Utami Putri, *Tempo English*, 18 April 2022

The Indonesian government and the legislature are moving quickly to carry out a plan to create new provinces in Papua. Two of Jokowi's cabinet members are presiding over the deliberations on the legal umbrella for the regional expansion in the House of Representatives (DPR). Minister of Home Affairs and former National Police chief Tito Karnavian reportedly lobbied other political parties intensively to facilitate the bills, meeting with Minister of Defense and Chairman of the Gerindra Party Prabowo Subianto on 5 April, who then instructed Supratman Andi Agtas, a Gerindra Party cadre who heads the DPR Legislation body to move the bills forward, sources said. Mahfud Md., Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs, is also overseeing the Papua provinces project. Ahmad Doli Kumia, Chair of the Government Affairs Commission who attended a meeting with Mahfud, said the Coordinating Minister had said the government wants the process to be finished quickly. On 12 April three bills covering the establishment of new provinces of Central Papua, Central Highlands Papua, and South Papua were approved as House Initiatives. New bills to establish two additional new provinces are planned.

The idea of expanding the number of provinces had been raised in 2019 by figures in Papua whom President Widodo had met on a visit to Wamena in the Central Highlands region of Papua. "I'm not the one who offered or ordered it," the president reportedly said. Home Affairs Minister Tito Karnavian also raised the idea of creating new provinces in Papua in 2019, even though the government has not lifted a national moratorium against creating new provinces since 2014. "This is situational, based on intelligence data," Tito reportedly said. The problem was that

the Special Autonomy Law stated that new administrative regions could only be created with the approval of the Papuan People's Assembly (MRP) and the Papua Legislative Council. That obstacle was removed in July 2021 when the government enacted a revised Special Autonomy Law which authorized the government and DPR to create new administrative districts themselves.

On 13 April, Minister Tito Karnavian said that security and accelerating development were considerations for dividing up the region. "There is a gap, especially in the mountains area."

Ahmad Doli Kurnia, Chair of the DPR Government Affairs Commission, said it was hoped that creation of new provinces would quell the desires of Papuans to become independent. "Why ask for freedom if development has already been carried out?" Doli asked.

Demographic changes are also a factor. Research by Jim Elmslie at the University of Sydney said that based on the 1971 census, indigenous Papuans still accounted for 96% of the population of Papua province. By 2010, they only accounted for 73.6%, while non-Papuans were 22.8%. In West Papua province, indigenous Papuans now make up only 51.5% of the population.

### [Opposition to expanding the number of Papua provinces](#)

—Agung Sedayu, *Tempo English*, 18 April 2022

Members of the Papuan People's Assembly (MRP) who met with Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs Mahfud Md. on 15 April to attempt to persuade him to delay plans to create three new provinces in Papua also gave Mahfud a letter for President Widodo. Later, Amnesty International Executive Director Usman Hamid, who also attended the meeting with Mahfud, said that Mahfud had admitted that regional division would spark turmoil in Papua, but that Minister Mahfud maintained creating the three new provinces must be expedited so that the new provinces will be ready to hold general elections in 2024. "We are more convinced now that this expansion is in the interest of political elites, not the people of Papua."

Speaking to *Tempo* on 16 April, Mahfud acknowledged the meeting with the MRP and that some Papuan people reject the discourse on dividing up the region, but he claimed there were more people who supported the idea.

The MRP decided to file a judicial review for Law 2/2021 on the second amendment to the Papua Special Autonomy Law because the amended regulation removed the requirement that local government approve any administrative revision. The revised Special Autonomy Law remains controversial in Papua. Protests against the new Special Autonomy Law and the proposal to divide Papua into more provinces have been taking place in various cities since March, including the provincial capital of Jayapura and regency towns such as Wamena, Paniai, Yahukimo and Nabire.

The protests in Papua have met with repression from the authorities. On 15 March, the demonstrations in Yahukimo turned violent and two people died from gunshot wounds. In Wamena, the police arrested 12 people one day before the demonstration there began. In Nabire, the police reportedly arrested 8 participants. "When they were released, their bodies were bruised from beatings in interrogation," a protestor said. The peak of the demonstrations came on 1 April when there were simultaneous protests in Jayapura, Mimika, Sorong, Kaimana, and demonstrations in support from outside Papua and West Papua, including Yogyakarta, Malang, and Denpasar. In addition, Sebby Sambom, spokesperson for the West Papua National Liberation Army-Free Papua Organization said that the militia group would join the fight against the redivision of Papua province. "We will fight harder," Sebby said.

### [Papuan People's Assembly \(MRP\) urges suspension of plan to create new provinces In Papua](#)

—Nur Janti, *The Jakarta Post*, 20 April 2022

The House of Representatives and government should postpone deliberation of bills to create three new provinces in Papua because it will further stoke tensions and marginalize indigenous Papuans, the Papua Province People's Assembly (MRP) has warned. In a plenary meeting last week, lawmakers endorsed the bills to act as the legal basis for establishing new provinces for South Papua, Central Papua, and Papua Central Highlands, meaning the bills may be deliberated during the next sitting session. The move to accelerate deliberation of the bills came despite a judicial review petition filed with the Constitutional Court by MRP members challenging several

new provisions of the revised Papua Special Autonomy Law passed in 2021 which allows the House and government to create new provinces, cities and regencies without approval of the provincial MRP or existing regional legislative councils (DPRD). “We are trying to pass the bills into law before June,” said Rifqinizamy, a member of the Indonesian Party of Struggle (PDI-P). Timotius Murib, MRP Chair, said breaking up Papua Province would bring a new influx of people from other parts of Indonesia, exacerbating marginalization of indigenous Papuans.

## J. Other

### [President Widodo: “We will hold elections in 2024](#)

—Dio Suhenda, *The Jakarta Post*, 11 April 2022

President Joko Widodo said general elections will be held as scheduled on 14 February 2024, quashing rumours that his government is trying to delay the polls and extend his term beyond the constitutional limit. “Let the people know that the stages and schedules for the simultaneous general elections and regional elections have been set,” the President told a Cabinet meeting on 10 April. “These need to be made clear to avoid speculation .... that the government is trying to delay elections or speculation on a presidential term extension [or] a third term.” Over the past few months, numerous politicians within the ruling coalition and cabinet ministers have supported a proposal to extend President Widodo’s final term by delaying the 2024 elections, despite strong objections from other parties. But in early April the president ordered his ministers to stop calling for an extension of his term and to focus instead on handling the threat of inflation.

### [Police squash Indonesian Islamist group: Joko Widodo’s government and the FPI](#)

—Our correspondent, *Asia Sentinel*, 19 April 2022

The administration of President Joko Widodo has succeeded in cracking down decisively on Indonesia’s hardline Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), previously known for its reputation in raiding bars and intimidating religious minorities and once regarded as carrying out off-the-books operation to go after people or groups the police wanted to intimidate or get rid of. After being ordered disbanded, one by one its central figures have been imprisoned on various charges, including leader Habib Rizieq Shihab.

In December 2016, the FPI and another radical Islamist group, the Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) alarmed the government when they played a pivotal role in organizing mass protests—known as the 212 Movement—calling for the imprisonment of Basuki (“Ahok”) Tjahaja Purnama, governor of Jakarta at the time and a close associate of President Widodo, on charges of insulting Islam. Convicted of blasphemy, Ahok was imprisoned for two years. After his release in 2019, President Widodo appointed him commissioner of the state-owned oil and gas company PT Pertamina.

In 2017, the government ordered the HTI dissolved, and the FPI was banned in December 2020. Since then the public has been barred from accessing, uploading, or disseminating content related to either group through their websites or social media or from using their symbols.

At least 35 FPI members or former members have been accused of terrorist acts and 29 were convicted, while 206 FPI members were accused of other crimes and at least 100 have been found guilty. Rizieq was previously forced to flee to Saudi Arabia on charges of leaked pornographic WhatsApp conversations between himself and a woman who was not his wife.

“Even though we and the government were able to disband HTI and FPI, they still roam underground and move in their own way,” Minister of Religion Yaqut Cholil Qoumas recently told members of the Barisan Ansor Serbaguna (Banser), the military wing of the Ansor Youth Movement (GP Ansor), which is affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Indonesia’s largest Islamic organization. FPI and other hardline Islamic organizations are still alive underground and must be “monitored”, Yaqut explained. “This is the job of all of us.”

Yaqut’s appointment as Minister of Religion by President Widodo in December 2020 is seen as part of Widodo’s strategy to reduce the influence of hardline groups. Munarman, the FPI Secretary General, was recently sentenced to three years imprisonment on charges of involvement in a terrorist movement for having attended oath-of-allegiance events of the Islamic State (IS) in 2014

and 2015. He was one of the senior FPI figures who formed a new organization to replace the outlawed FPI, and was part of the advocacy team demanding justice for six FPI members shot dead by police in a roadside confrontation in December 2020. In March 2021, Rizieq was sentenced to more than four years in prison over several cases including violation of health protocols and lying about his swab test results.

### [Indonesia's House of Representatives passes landmark bill on sexual violence](#)

—Stanley Widiyanto, *Reuters*, 12 April 2022

The House of Representatives passed a long-awaited bill to tackle sexual violence aimed at providing a legal framework for victims to secure justice in a country where sexual abuse has often been regarded as a private matter. A majority of lawmakers backed the bill at the plenary session in parliament, overcoming opposition from conservative groups in the world's biggest Muslim majority country after six years of deliberation. The bill was welcomed by activists, though some objected to its limited scope and the omission of a specific clause on rape, which the government said would be included in other legislation. The final draft law includes prison terms of up to 12 years for crimes of physical sexual abuse, both inside and outside of marriage; 15 years for sexual exploitation; 9 years for forced marriage, including child marriage; and four years for circulating non-consensual sexual content. One party in parliament, the Islamist Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), objected to the bill, saying it should regulate against extramarital sex and calling for a ban on sexual relations based on what it described as "deviant" sexual orientation.