



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. Marine & Fisheries

[Indonesia's Quota-Based Fishing Attracts Investors from China, Japan](#)

—Jayanta Noda Shofa, *The Jakarta Globe*, 23 November 2021

Indonesia's quota-based fishing has attracted investors from countries such as China and Japan, according to Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Minister Sakti Wahyu Trenggono. The quota-based measured fishing policy, which takes into account Indonesia's fish stocks, is set to come into force in 2022. The quota will fall into three categories, namely commercial, local fishermen, and non-commercial (recreational fishing and tourism). Both domestic and foreign investors will go into the commercial quota. "Many investors have shown interest. Among others come from China, Japan, Taiwan. As well as Europe who is keen on [investing in] the southern region due to its abundance of tuna and various deep sea fish species that are of very high value," Trenggono told the 2022 Economic Outlook forum on Tuesday. According to Trenggono, Indonesia has divided its fisheries management areas into four fishing industry zones. He also revealed that the quota-based system could also be a major boost to the fishery sector's contribution in the foreign exchange.

[Former Minister Edhy Prabowo Sentenced to 9 Years Behind Bars](#)

—Laila Afifa, *Tempo*, 12 November 2021

The Jakarta Court of Appeal has sentenced the former Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Minister Edhy Prabowo to 9 years behind bars. The court's chief justice assessed that the prison time in Eddy's first degree court verdict failed to provide a sense of justice for the public. The

Supreme Court's website on Thursday, November 11, wrote that "the imposition of the main criminal offense on the defendant does not reflect the sense of community justice that should have been handled extraordinarily." "Moreso, the defendant who was a Minister who led the Fisheries and Maritime Affairs Ministry, easily ordered his men to commit misconduct," the verdict reads, *Antaraneews* reported. The Jakarta High Court appeals panel eventually increased the length of Edhy's imprisonment and added a fine of Rp400 million with additional obligation to pay compensation of Rp9,687,457,219 and \$77,000. The Jakarta Corruption Court (Tipikor) previously handed Edhy Prabowo a 5-year jail time. The court of appeal classified the former Minister's crime as an extraordinary crime.

[Indonesia Returns 166 Detained Fishermen to Vietnam](#)

—Arie Firdaus, *Benar News*, 16 November 2021

Indonesia repatriated 166 Vietnamese fishermen to their home country this week after detaining them and confiscating their boats on suspicion of illegal fishing in Indonesian waters, government officials said Tuesday. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, about 500 Vietnamese fishermen had been stranded in Indonesia, some spending more than a year in shelters and detention centers run by the fisheries ministry and immigration authorities across the archipelago. Indonesia is holding another 132 Vietnamese fishermen in separate locations, according to Teuku Elvitrasyah, another senior official at the fisheries ministry. He said he hoped they would be sent home as soon as possible. Indonesian officials have said that pandemic-induced lockdowns had prevented the fishermen from being sent home more quickly, and that the Vietnamese government had made no attempt to arrange a repatriation flight. Meanwhile, Vietnamese fishermen who have been stranded in Indonesia have complained about poor living conditions in detention centers. Indonesia's government dismissed the complaints.

[Blue economy must be combined with integrated surveillance: minister](#)

—M Rahman, Kenzu T, *Antara*, 23 November 2021

The application of blue economy in Indonesia should be combined with integrated supervision to control the management of the national marine and fisheries sector, Marine Affairs and Fisheries Minister Sakti Wahyu Trenggono has said. "The Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries will carry out integrated supervision. This is our key and preparedness for controlling Indonesia's marine and fishery resources," he confirmed in a press release. According to Trenggono, the ministry will also continue to strengthen surveillance synergy with other law enforcement officials and local governments. The ministry has built technology based on satellite imagery and spatial data processing against illegal fishing consisting of the VMS (Vessel Monitoring System), Radarsat-2 Satellite, and Cosmo Skymed, he pointed out. It has become a method of monitoring measurable fishing he added. Therefore, it is hoped that the utilization of marine and fishery resources will give precedence to aspects of sustainability, he said. The roadmap of blue economy, healthy sea, and prosperous Indonesia was launched by President Joko Widodo on October 26, 2021.

B. Forests & Land Use

[Most of Deforestation for Palm Oil Happens in SBY's Reign: Forestry Ministry](#)

—Ricky Mohammad Nugraha, *Tempo*, 15 November 2021

Environment and Forestry Ministry spokesperson Nunu Anugrah in a written statement said most of the deforestation for oil palm plantations in Papua and West Papua took place from 2005-2014 or during the administration of former President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono or SBY. He said Papua's area was roughly 472 times larger than Jakarta and 70% of its forests were on a permanent moratorium map. "It is clearly untrue that the deforestation was as if engineered in President Jokowi's era," said Anugrah in November 14's statement, responding to news about the satellite images of Papua's deforestation taken by the NASA from 2001 to 2019. He claimed the forest-clearing approved by former Forestry Ministry MS Kaban under President SBY's government amounted to 34,057 hectares, or more than half of Jakarta. Anugrah said deforestation broadened from 2012 up to 2016 but that the growth of deforestation stopped from 2017 to 2019. He believed it was irrelevant to conclude that Papua's deforestation could be blamed on palm concession areas that were cited by news agencies.

[COP26: Greenpeace criticizes Jakarta deforestation data](#)

— Mathias Hariyadi, *Asia News*, 11 November 2021

"Indonesia deforestation data 2019-2020 has been becoming the lowest level since the last two decades," said Pres. Jokowi in Glasgow addressing COP26 "Such achievement is undeniable". According to data presented at the climate conference by Environment Minister Siti Nurbaya Bakar, just over 115,000 hectares of trees have been felled in the past two years - a considerable reduction from over 462,000 hectares in 2018. Criticizing these claims, Greenpeace illustrated the data from a different angle: if we look at the period from 2003 to 2011, we see that 2.45 million hectares of forest were cut down. Between 2011 and 2019, the figure rose to 4.8 million hectares. Only one million trees disappeared between 2014 and 2015 after Jokowi came to the presidency. Although the rate of deforestation since 2015 has begun to decline, Indonesia's rainforest is continuing to shrink. Greenpeace activist criticized the environment minister for advocating for "large-scale developments that clearly have the potential for environmental destruction." "If we don't take immediate action to stop deforestation, we can't meet the modest emission reduction targets.

[Litigative Luhut demands audit of Greenpeace](#)

— Dio Suhenda, *The Jakarta Post*, 19 November 2021

Amid an ongoing defamation lawsuit against two human rights activists, Coordinating Maritime Affairs and Investment Minister Luhut Pandjaitan has demanded a financial audit of Greenpeace Indonesia in an apparent response to its criticism of government deforestation claims. The former Army general has accused Greenpeace of spreading misinformation in its criticism of President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo's speech at the COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland, on Nov. 1. In the speech, Jokowi said Indonesia had managed to bring the deforestation rate to a two-decade low, a claim the environmental watchdog rejected. Greenpeace noted that according to official data, the rate of deforestation had, in fact, increased from 2011 to 2019. Luhut questioned the credibility of the group's statement, which he claimed was contrary to the government's findings and data from international organizations. On Nov. 12, he threatened the watchdog with a financial audit. A spokesperson for the coordinating minister told *The Jakarta Post* that NGOs needed to be transparent in their organizational structure and funding details.

[Will an Island in Indonesia Become a New Frontier in the Space Race?](#)

—Dera Menra Sijabat and Richard C. Paddock, *The New York Times*, 16 November 2021

The land occupied for 15 generations by the Abrauw clan on Biak island in Papua province is everything to them: their identity, the source of their livelihood and the link to their forebears. But now the tiny clan fears it will lose its place in the world as Indonesia pursues its longstanding quest to join the space age. The Indonesian government claims to have acquired 100 hectares of the clan's ancestral land decades ago and has planned since 2017 to build a small scale spaceport there to launch rockets. Indonesia's president personally pitched SpaceX's founder, Elon Musk, last year on the idea of launching rockets from Indonesia, without mentioning a site. The possibility of his involvement has spurred a flurry of activity by Biak officials to promote the location, as well as renewed opposition from the island's Indigenous people. Leaders of the Biak tribe say building a spaceport on the site would mean cutting trees in a protected forest, disturbing the habitat of endangered birds and evicting the Abrauw.

C. Energy, Mining and Climate Change

[Indonesia's 'coal hard facts'](#)

—The Jakarta Post, 18 November 2021

India led the campaign at the COP26 in Glasgow to water down a deal proposed by many other countries to push for a 2030 deadline to phase out coal. Most scientists agree this is what is needed to curb the rise in global temperature to 1.5 degrees Celsius, the maximum tolerable level to prevent catastrophic environmental destruction. India says it still needs to use cheap coal to fuel economic growth. China pledges its coal use will peak up until 2030. Indonesia has made a concession on its commitment when to end it all, albeit with a qualification. Currently, Indonesia plans to end the use of coal by 2056, which is essentially when the last of its existing coal-fired power plants, and many more that are still coming online in the next few years, will retire. Finance Minister Sri Mulyani says Indonesia could move the date forward to 2040 if it can raise up to US\$40 billion needed to convert these coal plants into using renewable energy resources.

[Indonesia's green economy efforts deserve scrutiny, but also support](#)

—Kasit Piromya, *The Jakarta Post*, 15 November 2021

On top of halting deforestation and ending its reliance on coal, there are many other areas where Indonesia can step up its response to the climate crisis. In late September, ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights (APHR) published a report, Building Back Better: Southeast Asia's transition to a green economy after COVID-19. Indonesia's performance in almost all areas of the report was deeply disappointing. Of the 11 "green policies" identified as those that can accelerate a green economic transition, Indonesia had adopted just three. In contrast, however, Indonesia had the dubious distinction among the countries of the region of adopting all four negative policies identified as contributing to global emissions. There's much that can be done. The measures adopted as part of the COVID-19 economic recovery, and pledges made during COP26, present a unique opportunity to ensure Indonesia moves away from the current destructive economic model, and instead builds back better. Some progress has been made at COP26.

[Indonesia Calls for Collaboration on MSMEs, Climate Change in Asia-Pacific](#)

—Jakarta Globe, 15 November 2021

Indonesia is calling on the Asia-Pacific region to strengthen partnerships in empowering micro, small and medium enterprises —or MSMEs— as well as combating the climate crisis in a sustainable manner. Communications and Informatics Minister Johnny G. Plate added, MSMEs' bounce-back has proven to be a boon for Indonesia's economy and community empowerment. A multi-party collaboration is also necessary when addressing climate change to ensure its handling goes alongside socio-economic development. President Jokowi said financial inclusion is also a priority. Indonesia has provided soft loans and assistance of more than \$4 billion to 17.8 million pandemic-affected MSMEs and small individual businesses in 2021. Johnny said, "the president highlighted how climate change handling must go in line with the community socio-economic development, in hopes to achieve the sustainable development goals." Forest and marine conservation, as well as renewable energy transformation must improve the welfare of the lower-class communities. The transition towards a low carbon economy must also take place in a fair and collaborative manner, according to Johnny.

[Indonesia introduces carbon trading policy to reduce emission](#)

—Gayatri Suroyo and Bernadette Christina Munthe, *Reuters*, 15 November 2021

Indonesia has introduced new rules on carbon trading to set up a market mechanism to help achieve the country's greenhouse gas reduction targets by 2030, according to a copy of the regulation seen by Reuters. President Joko Widodo signed the regulation, called "the Economic Value of Carbon" ahead of the COP26 conference in Glasgow. The regulation introduces result-based payments, for initiatives that result in carbon reduction, as an instrument in the carbon trading mechanism, on top of the carbon tax that the Indonesian parliament passed last month. The carbon trade will have a cap-and-trade system where pollution level is limited and allowances can be traded by business entities within the country and cross-border. The regulation calls for a bourse to be set up to facilitate the trading. Officials have said a fully fledged carbon market will likely operate in 2025, but the carbon tax will kick in next April for above-cap pollution level at a rate of 30,000 rupiah (\$2.09) per tonne of CO₂e for coal-fired power plants.

D. Pollution and Waste Management

[Indonesia, FAO urge prudent use of antimicrobials in farming](#)

—Yuni Arisandy Sinaga, *Antara*, 25 November

Indonesia and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations have called for the prudent use of antimicrobials in farming in order to prevent a "silent pandemic". Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is one of the biggest threats to global health, food safety and security, plants and animal production, and global economic development, said FAO Indonesia in a written statement received here on Wednesday. According to FAO, around 700 thousand human deaths each year are related to AMR. AMR is rising to dangerously high levels in all parts of the world and threatening our ability to treat common infectious diseases, FAO said. In agriculture, it is causing production losses, damage to livelihoods, and jeopardizing food security, it said. However, AMR in food and agriculture poses risks to food systems, livelihoods, and economies, he pointed out. Besides their direct negative impact on animals,

animal diseases can also significantly affect food production, food security, and farmer livelihoods, he said. AMR increases those risks, he added.

[Reuse? Compost? Dump? Solving the eco-conundrum of nappies](#)

—Laura Paddison, *The Guardian*, 20 November

In July 2017, Prigi Arisandi stood in the Surabaya River in East Java, Indonesia, and counted nappies. In one hour, “176 diapers floated in front of my face,” he said. The Indonesian biologist, who won the Goldman environmental prize in 2011 for his efforts to stem pollution flowing into the Surabaya, decided to make nappy waste his focus. He launched the Diaper Evacuation Brigade, a movement of volunteers who travel across Indonesia, wearing hazmat suits to fish used nappies out of the country’s rivers. Indonesia produces an estimated 6bn disposable nappies a year. Many end up thrown into rivers and the sea, in part because the country lacks waste infrastructure but also because of a belief among some that burning babies’ nappies could cause them pain. Disposable nappies made up 21% of the waste found in the waterways of 15 Indonesian cities, according to a 2018 World Bank study. In the water, nappies break down into microplastics, leach chemicals, damage marine life and potentially contaminate drinking water.

E. Conservation and Protected Areas

[Indonesia slashes 2021 mangrove restoration target, vows to make up in 2022](#)

—Hans Nicholas Jong, *Mongabay*, 17 November 2021

Indonesia has revised down its 2021 target for rehabilitating mangroves in light of “technical hurdles” brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and other factors, according to the nation’s mangrove restoration agency. The new target is 33,000 hectares, down from 83,000 hectares, according to Hartono Prawiraatmadja, the head of the Peatland and Mangrove Restoration Agency. The larger plan to rehabilitate 630,000 hectares by 2024 remains unchanged, he said. Indonesia is home to more than a quarter of the world’s mangroves but the archipelago country has lost 40% of its mangroves in three decades as people harvest the trees for timber and clear them to make way for fish and shrimp farms, the Center on International Forestry Research (CIFOR) said in 2018. The government says it hopes the rehabilitation program can help meet its goal of turning Indonesia’s forests into a carbon sink by 2030 and bolster the nation’s “blue carbon economy,” according to deputy environment minister Alue Dohong.

[Work starts on new sanctuary for captive breeding of Sumatran rhinos](#)

—Basten Gokkon, *Mongabay*, 12 November 2021

Conservation officials in Indonesia have broken ground on a new sanctuary for Sumatran rhinos, part of ongoing efforts to breed the critically endangered species in captivity and stave off its extinction. The groundbreaking for the facility took place inside the Leuser Ecosystem in East Aceh district at the northern tip of Sumatra. The new facility, the third in the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary (SRS) network, is one of Indonesia’s top strategies to help prevent the Sumatran rhino from going extinct in the wild. Conservationists plan to capture at least five rhinos from the wild in Leuser and move them to the new SRS as part of a captive-breeding program that’s seen as the best option for staving off the species’ extinction. Indonesia’s

captive-breeding program currently has eight Sumatran rhinos in two sanctuaries: seven in Sumatra's Way Kambas and one in the Kelian forest in Borneo. In the wild, there are believed to be just 30-80 Sumatran rhinos left, all of them on Indonesia's Sumatra and Borneo islands.

[Report: Orangutans and their habitat in Indonesia need full protection now](#)

—Basten Gokkon, *Mongabay*, 19 November 2021

The administration of Indonesian President Joko Widodo must implement full protection for orangutans and their intact forest habitats while beefing up law enforcement against poaching and land burning to save the critically endangered animals, according to the report by the U.S.-based Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA). Also identified as important: expediting recognition of Indigenous forests that comprise orangutan habitat. A 2018 study calculated that the island of Borneo lost nearly 150,000 orangutans between 1999 and 2015, largely due to deforestation and killing. A population assessment by the Indonesian government published in 2016 estimated that none of Sumatra's wild orangutan populations would survive beyond the next 500 years unless habitat destruction and poaching were resolved. The EIA said the Indonesian government has systematically failed to protect orangutan habitat, enforce existing wildlife laws, or reverse the decline of these species. "For decades, Indonesia has prioritized industry and profit over environmental health and biodiversity protection, and orangutans have paid the price," Tench said.

[Bali's new highway project sparks concerns about agriculture and conservation areas](#)

—Sachi Kondo, *Mongabay*, 18 November 2021

Concerns over a major highway project in Bali are mounting, with a new study revealing how the road would affect the island's signature farmlands. In a report released Oct. 31, the Indonesian Forum for the Environment (Walhi), the country's biggest green NGO, pinpointed the agricultural areas in danger of being cleared for the project. Walhi contends the road will shatter Bali's centuries-old irrigation system, known as subak. The system is an integral part of the "cultural landscape of Bali" that UNESCO in 2012 inscribed as a World Heritage Site. The Gilimanuk-Mengwi toll road, scheduled for completion in 2024, will cover roughly 96 kilometers from the port of Gilimanuk on Bali's western tip to the island's capital and biggest city, Denpasar, in the south. The NGO says 481 hectares of rice fields would be breached by the project, including 34 subaks in Jembrana, 54 in Tabanan and nine in Badung. The construction may also affect 67 hectares of land inside West Bali National Park.

F. Other

[Primary-colored poison: Lead paint still a major threat to Indonesian kids](#)

—Ayat S. Karokaro, *Mongabay*, 17 November 2021

Many cities feature public facilities for kids painted in bright colors. But in Indonesia, those shades of paint are a serious health risk to children, according to a new study showing that a large percentage of the paints produced and used in Indonesia, particularly the brightly colored kinds used around children, contain dangerously high levels of lead, many with more than 600 parts per million (ppm), the regulatory safe limit. Exposure can damage the brain and nervous system, slow growth and lead to lower IQs. It is estimated that there are around 33 million school-age children in Indonesia who are exposed to lead paint on a daily basis. The association of paint manufacturers says it may consider adopting a safe limit of 90 ppm, the same as the World Health Organization prescribes, but that many of the small manufacturers

that still use lead aren't part of the association. Advocates have called for stronger regulations governing sales of lead-based paints, including lead content information to be published on paint cans.