Indonesia Sustainable Development News Digest—2024 Issue 3: 8 February‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌  ‌

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We welcome comments, suggestions, and corrections. To learn more about us and to access previous editions of the News Digest, please visit our website at*[*www.starlingresources.com*](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5Mjg4MQ==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9)*. If you would like to add colleagues or friends to our distribution list or unsubscribe, please contact us at*[*newsdigest@starlingresources.com.*](mailto:newsdigest@starlingresources.com) | |  |  | | --- | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **CONTENTS**  **A.      Marine and Fisheries**  **B.      Forests and Land Use**  **C.      Biodiversity, Conservation, and Protected Areas**  **D.      Climate Change, Energy, and Mining**  **E.      Pollution and Waste**  **F.      Investment and Finance**  **G.     Human Rights and Gender Equality**  **I.       RI General Elections**  **II.      Indonesia in Geopolitics** | |  |  | | --- | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **A. Marine and Fisheries**  [**Indonesia's certified tuna fishermen enjoy premium selling prices**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5Mjg4NA==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9) —Atman Ahdiat, *ANTARA*, 6 February 2024  Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Minister Sakti Wahyu Trenggono stresses the importance of a quota-based fishing policy for Indonesia's conservation, food security, and development. The government regulates fishing practices through various ministerial regulations. One success story is the Tanjung Air Panas handline fishermen in Maluku, certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) for sustainable tuna fishing. Certified fishermen benefit from increased export demand and better prices for seafood products. PT Aneka Sumber Tata Bahari (ASTB), a fishery industry in Tulehu Village, exports yellowfin tuna to the US, sourced from MSC-certified fishermen. ASTB encourages sustainable fishing practices among its partnering fishermen and rewards MSC-certified tuna with a higher price. The Maluku Marine and Fisheries Office supports local exporters, facilitating direct air freight from Ambon to Narita, Japan, enhancing product quality and market access for the province's fishery industries.   [**Indonesia Offers Maritime and Fisheries Investment Worth over US $750 million**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5Mjg4Ng==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9) —BM Lukita Grahadyarini, *Kompas*, 6 February 2024  The Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries forecasts an 8% increase, equivalent to over US $750 million, in marine and fisheries sector investment in 2024. The Ministry aims to attract investment and foster collaboration through the Indonesia Marine and Fisheries Business Forum, and has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to collaborate with various government bodies and universities. The ministries referred to are the Ministry of Home Affairs; Trade; Public Works and Housing; Agriculture; Agrarian and Spatial Planning/National Land Agency; as well as the Financial and Development Supervisory Agency. The goal of the MoU is to develop modern fishing villages, aiming to provide legal certainty for coastal communities and improve infrastructure. Investment in this sector exceeded US $600 million in 2023, with notable contributions from China and Malaysia. The Ministry encourages investment in shrimp, seaweed, tilapia, crab, and lobster aquaculture, with a focus on sustainable practices. Foreign investment is also sought for downstream fisheries activities. Provinces and local governments are urged to align programs with the ministry's goals for efficient planning and budget allocation.  [**Critics push for more transparency at RFMOs that govern high seas fishing**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5Mjg4Nw==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9) —Edward Carver, *Mongabay*, 31 January 2024  Environmental advocates are pressing for more transparency within Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), responsible for overseeing about 17 international fisheries bodies. RFMOs faced longstanding criticism for ineffective governance and susceptibility to industry influence.  While some progress towards transparency has been made, such as the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) publishing compliance reports, significant concerns persist. The WCPFC closed-door, 3-day meetings were said to be for technical reasons, not to hide bad behavior, hinder accountability and prevent meaningful public oversight. Journalists and NGO observers often face restricted access, limiting their ability to report on discussions and decisions. Critics contend this raises the possibility that countries with bad-acting vessels operating under their flag may avoid public scrutiny. The lack of transparency also complicates efforts to address overfishing and maintain healthy fish stocks. Scientists emphasize the importance of data transparency, noting that RFMOs often flood their websites with information but fail to provide essential data for analysis. Despite calls for reform, achieving meaningful change remains challenging. | |  |  | | --- | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **B. Forests and Land Use**  [**Minister Nurbaya and IUCN President hold talks on climate initiatives**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5Mjg4OA==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9) —*ForestHintsNews,*2 February 2024  Indonesian Environment and Forestry Minister Siti Nurbaya held a technical meeting with IUCN President Razan Al Mubarak at the MOEF Building in Jakarta. The dialogue centered on crucial environmental issues, marking Indonesia's strong partnership with the IUCN. The discussions began with detailed plans for implementing the outcomes of COP28, known as the "UAE Consensus," focusing on areas like food systems and decarbonization. The Minister emphasized the importance of international collaboration, particularly South-South cooperation, to enhance climate action. They delved into Indonesia's Forestry and Other Land Use (FOLU) Net Sink 2030 policy, aiming to achieve climate goals. Despite challenges with climate finance, Indonesia remains committed to meeting its targets. Results-based contributions from various sources amounted to substantial funding. Discussions also covered Indonesia's carbon governance, including the evolving Indonesia Carbon Exchange. Potential collaboration with the UAE in mangrove rehabilitation and plans for the World Mangrove Centre in Bali were also discussed. Al Mubarak praised Indonesia's commitment to sustainability, social forestry, wildlife conservation, and climate goals.  [**Indonesian govt to study Global Forest Watch's method in recording data**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5Mjg4OQ==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9)—Bernama*, NewStraitsTimes*, 24 January 2024  Indonesian Environment and Forestry Minister Siti Nurbaya Bakar announced plans to scrutinize Global Forest Watch's deforestation methodology following discrepancies highlighted in recent data. During her visit to Pulang Pisau District, Central Kalimantan, Bakar expressed concerns over the accuracy of Global Forest Watch's findings, suggesting that their method, which categorizes every fallen tree as deforestation, may not always align with ground realities. Bakar explained that while satellite data typically identifies dark green areas as forests, this isn't always accurate, citing instances where such areas were actually banana plantations. Emphasizing the need for on-the-ground verification, she highlighted cases where seemingly forested areas turned out to be transmigration house plots. Vice presidential candidate Mahfud MD weighed in, attributing discrepancies to differences in data interpretation. He clarified that Global Forest Watch records forest loss over a specific period, while Bakar's reference was to net deforestation, factoring in reforestation efforts. The statements underscore ongoing efforts to ensure the accuracy of deforestation data amidst growing environmental concerns in Indonesia.  [**Village Forest Management Prevents Fires and Promotes the Economy**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5Mjg5MA==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9) —Pradipta Pandu, *Kompas*, 24 January 2024  Involving communities in forest management promotes sustainability and prevents fires while benefiting the economy. KPH Tuwung in Central Kalimantan shows that village forest management prevents fires and provides economic value for the community. The Forest Management Unit in Tuwung Village, exemplifies this with a 1,297-hectare village forest managed under a social forestry scheme. Minister Siti Nurbaya Bakar observed the program, aiming to bolster forest management collaboration with the US Forest Service (USFS). Indonesia aims to showcase its sustainable forest practices to achieve clean carbon absorption targets by 2030. Through social forestry, access and management by communities have increased to 30%, fostering economic activities like honey cultivation and agroforestry. The USFS lauds Indonesia's efforts, signaling mutual knowledge exchange and strengthened collaboration between the two countries. Recent cooperation agreements focus on sustainable forest management and capacity-building initiatives to benefit communities and forests alike. | |  |  | | --- | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **C. Biodiversity, Conservation, and Protected Area**  [**Indonesian Govt Targets Expanding Marine Conservation Areas to 30 Percent by 2045**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5Mjg5Mg==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9) —Petir Garda Bhwana, *TEMPO*, 5 February 2024  Indonesia aims to increase marine conservation areas to 30% of its waters by 2045, according to Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Minister Sakti Wahyu Trenggono. Currently, conservation zones cover 8.7% of Indonesian waters, totaling 28.9 million hectares. The minister emphasized their importance for sustaining fishery resources, serving as natural spawning grounds and carbon sinks. Indonesian marine conservation areas store enormous potential, including 58,000 hectares of seagrass meadows, 1.2 million hectares of coral reefs, 211,000 hectares of mangroves, and 30% of the country's main fish spawning spots. Trenggono affirmed that such areas play a critical role in ensuring the sustainability of the country's fishery resources. He urged officials to ensure these areas remain free from shipping activities to protect marine ecosystems. He noted the Philippines' effective management of marine conservation areas as a model worth emulating.   [**Bid to mitigate gold mine’s impact on orangutans hit by stonewalling, data secrecy**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5Mjg5NA==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9)—Hans Nicholas Jong, *Mongabay*, 2 February 2024  An international task force aimed at conserving the Tapanuli orangutans faced resistance from a gold mine operator in Indonesia. The ARRC Task Force, engaged by the Martabe gold mine, ended the 2022 agreement due to concerns that the company's approach merely be a "tick box exercise," not a truly independent review to minimize the project’s impacts on the critically endangered species (the Martabe concession overlaps with the Batang Toru Forest, the orangutans' sole habitat in Sumatra). UK conglomerate Jardine Matheson Holdings Ltd., the mine's ultimate owner, attributed the breakdown to regulations limiting data sharing. The task force sought an independent review of the mine's impact but found obstacles in accessing and reviewing essential data due to regulatory restrictions. While the company aimed to comply with sustainability standards, recent deforestation within the concession raised concerns. Most of the forest loss occurred in orangutan habitat and carbon-rich landscapes, according to advocacy group Mighty Earth. The mine operator halted further clearing after revising its plans, indicating a shift in approach following environmental scrutiny.   [**In eastern Indonesia, a child adventurer discovers a new giant stick insect**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5Mjg5Ng==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9)—Ebed de Rosary, *Mongabay*, 31 January 2024  In March 2021, Davis Marthin Damaledo, then 14, embarked on a journey with his father on Timor Island, Indonesia. Venturing into the countryside, he stumbled upon an unfamiliar creature. Davis, now 17, aided by Garda Bagus Damastra of the Indonesian Mantis and Phasmid Forum (IMPF), collaborated with international researchers to study the insect. His discovery, later named *Nesiophasma sobesonbaii*, became significant for science. Two years after the discovery, scientists published the first description of the new species in the March 2023 edition of the journal Faunitaxys. Davis also co-authored the paper and named the foot-long stick insect in honor of Sobe Sonbaii III, the last ruler of the Sonbai Besar kingdom, which fought the Dutch colonial forces in Timor for much of the 19th century.  [**Study**: Hennemann, F., Damastra, G. B., Damaledo, D. M., Cumming, R. T., & Le Tirant, S. "](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5Mjg5Nw==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9)[Nesiophasma sobesonbaii n. sp. – a new giant stick insect from the island of Timor, Indonesia (Insecta: Phasmatodea)](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5Mjg5OA==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9)." Faunitaxys, vol. 11, no. 20, 2023, pp. 1-13. doi:10.57800/faunitaxys-11(20). | |  |  | | --- | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **D. Climate Change, Energy, and Mining**  [**The future of mobility: Will electric vehicles take off in 2024?**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5MjkwMA==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9) —Putra Muskita, *TheJakartaPost,*6 February 2024  The future of mobility in Indonesia encompasses more than just electric vehicles (EVs). While EVs attract attention, experts highlight the significance of efficient mass public transportation. Jakarta's rapid transportation system expansion reflects promising developments. However, EV adoption faces challenges such as high prices and limited charging stations. Despite this, Indonesia is expected to lead EV sales in Southeast Asia by 2035. Electric two-wheelers also hold potential for mass adoption, with ride-hailing companies like Gojek and Grab playing a significant role. The country's status as a leading nickel producer attracts international automakers to build EVs locally. Additionally, the integration of multiple public transportation modes, facilitated by superapps like Gojek, supports sustainable mobility. Public-private partnerships and government support are crucial for accelerating adoption and fostering modern, efficient urban mobility. There is more to the future of mobility than EVs. For sustainable transportation experts, the more impactful shift is toward efficient mass public transportation.   [**Indonesia joins UN-led Energy Compacts, commits US $122 billion to SDG7 and net zero**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5MjkwMw==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9) —Rahmat Hidayat, *JakartaDaily,*2 February 2024  Indonesia launched its Energy Compact, committing over US $122 billion to sustainable energy, targeting 23% renewable energy by 2029, with a focus on solar and wind power. The plan includes enhancing grid connectivity and aims to reduce energy intensity by 1% annually. Indonesia also targets a 24.5% increase in annual greenhouse gas emission reduction by 2030. Complementing the Compact, Indonesia issued regulations on energy conservation, including energy efficiency programs and the promotion of electric vehicles. Dr. Vivi Yulaswati highlighted Indonesia's commitment at COP28, emphasizing renewable energy development. Damilola Ogunbiyi praised Indonesia's initiative, aligning with global efforts on climate change. The UN in Indonesia will support these efforts through a One UN Strategy. Valerie Julliand emphasized the UN's commitment to Indonesia's sustainable energy future. Energy Compacts, voluntary commitments toward SDG7 and net-zero goals, were recognized as a High-Impact Initiative by the UN Secretary-General.   [**Indonesia's emissions reduction rating has slumped, partly affected by nickel downstreaming**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5MjkwNg==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9)  —[Robby Irfany Maqoma](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5MjkwNw==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9), *TheConversation*, 1 February 2024  Climate Action Tracker (CAT) assessed Indonesia's 2022 Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) climate target, finding it severely lacking and ranking it as "Critically Insufficient," implying that if all countries followed Indonesia's methods, global temperatures could rise by 4°C. CAT attributed this rating to two main factors: the significant increase in coal burning, particularly by new giant steam power plants like PLTU Batang and PLTU Jawa 4, which boosted emissions by 21% in one year, and the operation of captive power plants outside of PT PLN's plans and network, supplying electricity to industries such as nickel mining and processing/downstreaming. Lack of transparency in data regarding captive power plants impedes monitoring and hinders efforts to abandon dirty coal energy. Indonesia must prioritize data openness, alongside exploring alternative strategies beyond PLN's decarbonization efforts, to achieve its renewable energy target of 23% by 2025.   [**Climate crisis threatens fishermen's catch**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5MjkwOQ==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9)                                                                                                 —BM Lukita Grahadyarini, *Kompas*, 28 January 2024  The 2023 Coastal Climate Deliberation Forum report, conducted by the Indonesian Traditional Fishermen's Association (KNTI) in 31 cities and districts in Dec 2023, reveals the worsening climate crisis aggravated by development and economic disparities. Small-scale fishermen/women and coastal communities, especially in Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan, and Sulawesi, suffer from declining incomes and increased risks due to deteriorating ocean ecosystems and extreme weather events. Neglected by the state, many fishermen are forced to switch professions. Strengthening blue carbon ecosystems is essential for climate adaptation and mitigation. The National Blue Agenda Action Partnership (NBAAP) collaborates on this, with four task forces focusing on health, food, innovation, and financing pillars. The NBAAP Steering Committee guides the Blue Economy Roadmap's development, crucial for sustainable coastal livelihoods and ecosystem preservation, and informs the National Medium Term Development Plan 2025-2029. | |  |  | | --- | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **E. Pollution and Waste**  [**Environment Ministry devising loan scheme for social entrepreneurs**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5MjkxMQ==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9) —Rahmad Nasution, *ANTARA*, 6 February 2024  The Ministry of Environment and Forestry, in collaboration with the Indonesia Environment Fund (BPDLH), is devising a loan program to aid social entrepreneurs involved in waste management, including waste banks and community-based initiatives. The initiative aims to reduce waste by 30% and handle 70% of total waste by 2025, as mandated by Presidential Regulation Number 97 of 2017. Directed by Rosa Vivien Ratnawati, the scheme targets eligible recipients, be it individuals or groups who in addition to focusing on making a profit also help tackle social and environmental issues, including waste management. The scheme is in the form of loans to ensure business continuity. Waste banks, operating akin to conventional banks, enable people to deposit recyclable waste. Indonesia boasts 25,540 waste banks as of June 2023, according to the National Waste Management Information System.   [**Communities on troubled Java river mold future from plastic waste**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5MjkxNA==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9) —Donny Iqbal, *Mongabay*, 1 February 2024  Communities along Indonesia's Ciliwung River in Bogor, West Java are taking action against plastic pollution, led by initiatives such as the Plastic Smart Cities program. Bogor Mayor Bima Arya Sugiarto spearheaded efforts to rehabilitate the river, known for its plastic and bacterial pollution. Bogor's daily waste output, enough to fill an Olympic-size swimming pool, highlights the scale of the issue. WWF-led Plastic Smart Cities partnership, involving over 50 cities worldwide, aims to reduce plastic waste by 30% by 2025. In Bogor, outreach workers are engaging communities to change perceptions about waste management and strengthen commitment toward sustainability. Neighborhood leaders like Siti Salamah and Budi Lubis are mobilizing residents to separate plastic waste from perishables and recycle plastic, providing an income source. Bogor has trained nearly 20,000 people in waste sorting and established recycling facilities. Entrepreneurs like Tadzalli Tigin Syahidan are innovating with plastic waste, using it for sustainable projects like retention wells. The plastic retention well should last longer than concrete. No contamination detected to date. | |  |  | | --- | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **F. Investment and Finance**  [**Indonesia can build green economy through decarbonization: KSP Chief**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5MjkxNw==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9) —Anton Santoso, *ANTARA*, 5 February 2024  Chief of the Presidential Staff (KSP) Moeldoko highlights Indonesia's potential for a sustainable green economy through decarbonization efforts, citing the World Bank's report estimating economic benefits of approximately US$447.64 billion by 2060. Recognizing challenges in raising public awareness, Moeldoko emphasizes the role of the Association of Carbon Emission Experts Indonesia (ACEXI) in educating economic actors. He stresses the importance of a practical short-term work plan. Moeldoko underscores Indonesia's green-oriented development policies, including land restoration, forest protection, land mapping improvement, and electric vehicle ecosystem development. KSP is acting on this matter by forming a Team for the Acceleration of the Carbon Trading Implementation to maximize carbon credit potential in Indonesia, to follow up on the president’s mandate.   [**Indonesia invites Turkish investors to develop tuna farms in Papua**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5MjkyMA==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9)—Basten Gokkon, *Mongabay*, 30 January 2024  The Indonesian government has called on Turkish investors to assist in establishing an offshore tuna farm in the eastern Papua region, aiming to transform it into a significant tuna export center. Fisheries Minister Sakti Wahyu Trenggono proposed this during his visit to Türkiye, highlighting the potential for Turkish investment and aquaculture technology to enhance tuna farming in Papua's Biak Numfor district. Indonesia seeks to address the unsustainable harvesting of wild tuna, a vital industry for coastal communities, by fostering aquaculture productivity. The move aligns with the President’s directive to boost aquaculture. Biak Numfor, situated within the biodiverse Cenderawasih Bay, offers favorable conditions for tuna farming, with infrastructure investments by the central government already underway. Plans include expanding direct tuna exports to Japan and obtaining sustainability certification for fisheries to alleviate pressure on wild stocks. Indonesia's aquaculture sector has seen significant growth, contributing to global trends in sustainable fisheries management. This follows an earlier similar endeavor for Vietnam to invest in lobster farms. | |  |  | | --- | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **G. Human Rights and Gender Equality**  [**Indonesia and Spain sign agreement to protect migrant fishing workers**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5MjkyMg==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9)    —Basten Gokkon, *Mongabay*, 5 February 2024  Indonesia and Spain signed an agreement to protect migrant fishing workers, aimed at combating exploitation and abuse. This move comes amidst concerns over the mistreatment of migrant workers in the fishing industry. Around 1,000 Indonesians work on Spanish fishing boats in 2021, earning an average of 1,000 euros per month. To ensure safety and compliance, Indonesia requires workers heading overseas to obtain certification under international standards as required by 1995 Convention of Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F), which Indonesia ratified in 2019. However, a study found that only 6% of deckhands at Jakarta's largest fishing port had proper safety certification due to cost and awareness issues. The agreement seeks to address these gaps by enhancing standardization and transparency. Additionally, Indonesia is improving training and certification for its fishers domestically. The government aims to ensure the safety and rights of Indonesian fisheries crew globally by aligning training with international standards and pursuing bilateral agreements with hosting countries.  [**Climate change threatens girls' education**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5MjkyMw==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9)—Sonya Hellen Sinombor, *Kompas*, 27 January 2024  Climate change disproportionately affects women's access to education, exacerbating existing inequalities. Girls, particularly in eastern Indonesia, face challenges not only in attending school but also in the quality of their education due to climate-related disasters like water scarcity. Research by Plan International involving over 500 youths, mostly girls, from Indonesia, Nepal, and Australia reveals that one-third of schools experienced closures or damage due to climate disasters, with nearly half of respondents feeling unsafe going to/from school. The event "Meeting of Plan Indonesia Youth Network (PlaNet) #5: Towards the Future, Fighting the Climate Crisis" discussed these issues, emphasizing the urgent need for action. Water scarcity in eastern Indonesia disrupts girls' education, with some walking up to five kilometers daily for water, impeding study time. Recommendations include establishing a National Council for Young Women to address climate issues and integrating climate education into the curriculum. The event also highlighted sustainable solutions and the potential of natural resources for economic development.   [**Jokowi’s land reform agenda stalls as conflicts nearly double, report shows**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5MjkyNQ==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9) —Hans Nicholas Jong, *Mongabay*, 25 January 2024  A report by the Consortium for Agrarian Reform (KPA) reveals a significant surge in land conflicts during President Joko Widodo's tenure in Indonesia. From 2015 to 2023, there were 2,939 land disputes involving 6.3 million hectares, compared to 1,520 conflicts during the previous presidency. These disputes mainly affect Indigenous communities and are often triggered by government concessions to plantation firms and infrastructure projects. The conflicts have impacted up to 1.75 million households, with many facing violence and eviction. Notably, conflicts involving palm oil companies are prominent and have resulted in fatalities. Pro-investment stance has raised concerns about human rights and environmental issues. According to KPA, the government has largely failed in its reform agenda, having previously promised to register community-owned lands and redistribute expired concessions back to communities. A key driver of land disputes are infrastructure projects that the Jokowi administration has designated as “national strategic importance,” which gives the government eminent domain rights. KPA emphasizes the urgent need for true agrarian reform to address the crisis, empower communities, and protect their land rights. | |  |  | | --- | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **I. RI General Elections**  [**Indonesia Elections 2024: Will Jokowi’s successor be ‘brave and firm’ in upholding human rights?**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5MjkyOA==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9) —Aqil Haziq Mahmud and Leo Galuh, *ChannelNewsAsia*, 7 February 2024  The 2024 Indonesian election is overshadowed by concerns over human rights, with no candidate presenting clear plans to address issues such as police brutality and suppression of free speech. Activists like Haris Azhar and Fathia Maulidiyanti have faced intimidation and legal charges for their criticism. The two were charged with defaming the Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs and Investment after they presented a study on links between military operations in Papua and the minister’s alleged mining interests. The candidacy of Joko Widodo's son with frontrunner Prabowo Subianto in the election suggests implicit support, raising questions about neutrality. The Reform movement, which began in 1998 to promote democracy and rights, faces setbacks, with observers noting regression under Widodo's administration. Despite Amnesty International's recommendations and calls for justice for past human rights violations, candidates have been vague on concrete actions. The legacy of forced disappearances and police brutality persists, with little attention in campaign messages and debates. The presence of hardliners also still poses challenges to human rights reforms. While Widodo enjoys popularity for infrastructure policy, dissent remains. Activists continue to advocate for change despite efforts to silence them.   [**Indonesia election 2024: will Gibran’s chances be hurt by poll body’s ethics scandal?**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5MjkzMQ==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9) —Resty Woro Yuniar, *SouthChinaMorningPost*, 7 February 2024  Gibran Rakabuming Raka, Prabowo Subianto's running mate and President Joko Widodo's son, faces an ethics scandal regarding his registration with Indonesia’s election governing body. The Election Organization Ethics Council found the chairman of the General Elections Commission (KPU) and six commissioners guilty of breaching ethics for not amending the organization’s regulation on the minimum age of candidates before accepting Gibran’s registration. Although this won't nullify Gibran's candidacy, it raises questions about the election's legitimacy. While some officials claim it won't impact the candidacy, others see it as a warning of potential violations in the upcoming election. Despite these concerns, Prabowo still leads in the polls. However, undecided or swing voters might avoid supporting the Prabowo-Gibran pair as a result of another ethics scandal. The first scandal surrounding the candidacy of Gibran, the 36-year-old mayor of Surakarta in Central Java, occurred on October 16, when the Constitutional Court ruled that those below the age requirement of 40 were still eligible to run in a presidential election if they had already been elected to a different office.  [**Bawaslu, KPU on guard for overseas voting amid potential glitches, foul play**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5MjkzMw==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9) —Yvette Tanamal, *TheJakartaPost*, 6 February 2024  The Elections Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) is intensifying communication to prevent disruptions and foul play in overseas voting for Indonesia's presidential and legislative elections. Concerns over irregularities include duplicate names on voter rolls and logistical glitches. Bawaslu is particularly focused on countries with large Indonesian populations and past violations, like Malaysia, Pakistan, Qatar, Afghanistan, and Australia. Over 1.7 million voters across 128 cities overseas are registered to vote, facing challenges with polling stations, mobile ballot boxes, and mail-in ballots. Bawaslu urges strict adherence to procedures to minimize risks. The General Elections Commission (KPU) vows to address violations promptly and has faced criticism for mishandling overseas voting in Taiwan and New York, USA. Bawaslu is investigating reports of duplicate names in Johor Bahru, while the KPU pledges corrective action. Close coordination between Bawaslu, KPU, and the Foreign Ministry continues to ensure a fair election process, with the ministry committed to facilitating logistical support impartially.   [**Indonesia Presidential Rivals Bore Down on Labor in Last Debate**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5MjkzNg==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9)—Chandra Asmara, *Bloomberg*, 5 February 2024  In the final presidential debate before the Feb. 14 election, Ganjar Pranowo pledges to review job creation laws, responding to labor concerns. Prabowo Subianto avoids addressing labor issues, while Anies Baswedan highlights unemployment in remote areas. The Job Creation Law, a cornerstone of President Joko Widodo's tenure, aims to attract investment but faces criticism for potentially undermining workers' rights. Ganjar also vows to increase health spending, echoing calls for social justice in assistance distribution. With over 204 million voters, the election will determine Indonesia's economic trajectory. Prabowo, leading in polls, faces criticism for choosing Jokowi's son as his running mate, accused of perpetuating nepotism, cronyism and corruption. Jokowi's policies come under scrutiny, with concerns about dynasty-building and conflict of interest. Foreign investors await the election outcome to gauge continuity or change in Indonesia's governance.   [**Indonesia election: everything you need to know**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5MjkzOA==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9)—Rebecca Ratcliffe, *TheGuardian*, 5 February 2024  On February 14, over 205 million Indonesians will vote in one of the world's largest elections, selecting the next president and other representatives. The youth, comprising over half the electorate, play a crucial role. Incumbent President Joko Widodo cannot seek re-election. Leading the polls is Prabowo Subianto, a former general, while Anies Baswedan, a former academic, and Ganjar Pranowo, a public servant, are also contenders. Prabowo's candidacy with Jokowi's son raises dynasty concerns. The winner needs over 50% of the vote; otherwise, a runoff occurs in June. The election focuses on democracy, dynasties, and youth issues. Candidates utilize social media, notably TikTok and Instagram, to engage young voters, though discussions on youth-specific programs are lacking. Young people are concerned about welfare and employment but while candidates’ policy platforms all mention these issues still there’s a noticeable absence of discussions on programs tailored specifically for the youth demographic, with candidates often resorting to political gimmicks in their attempts to engage this demographic. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **II. Indonesia in Geopolitics**  [**New Zealand pilot kidnapped a year ago in West Papua will be freed, rebel group says**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5Mjk0MA==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9) —Eva Corlett, *TheGuardian*, 7 February 2024   New Zealand has appealed for the release of a pilot who was taken hostage by rebels in the West Papua region as a bargaining chip for their independence movement against Indonesia. Guerrilla fighters in the central highlands of restive Papua [kidnapped New Zealander Phillip Mehrtens](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5Mjk0Mg==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9) after he landed a small commercial passenger plane at the remote Paro Airport in the mountainous area of Nduga on 7 February 2023. Winston Peters, New Zealand's deputy prime minister, calls for Mehrtens' immediate release. Despite assurances of Mehrtens' welfare, his whereabouts and conditions remain uncertain. The conflict highlights ongoing tensions in resource-rich Papua. The rebels, demanding independence, have circulated videos of Mehrtens with their demands. The area remains dangerous, with clashes between rebels and Indonesian forces. New Zealand is working with Indonesia to secure Mehrtens' release. The conflict, escalating since 2018, traces back to Papua's controversial incorporation into Indonesia in 1969.   [**Support for world peace is Indonesia's foreign policy: VP Amin**](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/sl/MTg5Mjk0NA==/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ces9) —Azis Kurmala, *ANTARA*, 4 February 2024  Vice President Ma’ruf Amin reaffirmed Indonesia’s commitment to global peace during the 2024 Human Fraternity Majlis in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. He emphasized Indonesia's support for initiatives aligning with its constitution and foreign policy principles. The event commemorated the fifth anniversary of the Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together. This is a joint statement signed by Pope Francis of the Catholic Church and Grand Imam Al-Azhar Ahmad Al Tayyeb on February 4, 2019 about how different faiths can live in harmony in the world. Amin urged global unity to address conflicts and emphasized the importance of peace, humanity, and brotherhood. He highlighted the need for breakthroughs to foster these values, expressing hope that the Zayed Award for Human Fraternity would contribute to this goal. Indonesia praised the Emirati authorities for organizing the event, attended by officials including Emirati Minister Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan and representatives from the Zayed Award committee. | | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **End** | | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | *We hope you enjoy reading our Indonesia Sustainable News Digest. If you no longer wish to receive this biweekly email, you can unsubscribe*[***here***](https://s8334258.sendpul.se/unsubscribes/en/NDkzMjkz/b489914e5ff168098e645608ec068597467ce/h/3902472b1acfa86026d195a59ef54ae7)*.* | | | | | |