



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

[Government Assures Free COVID-19 Vaccines for All](#)

—Petir Garda Bhwana, *Tempo*, 17 June 2021

The Indonesian government has assured it will provide COVID-19 shots to all citizens for free, Health Ministry's spokesperson for COVID-19 vaccination Siti Nadia Tarmizi said. "We need to clarify perception on the Health Minister Regulation No. 18/2021, that added a regulation regarding the Gotong Royong (mutual cooperation) vaccination and the government's vaccination program," she said. The Gotong Royong vaccination program was launched on May 18 this year initiated by the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KADIN) to support the national vaccination program and expand the vaccination coverage. Both programs are providing different vaccines for free, Tarmizi said adding that the Gotong Royong vaccines will be funded by companies for their employees. "The government's vaccination program and the Gotong Royong program will not use the same vaccines. Sinovac, AstraZeneca, Novavac, and Pfizer cannot be used in the Gotong Royong (vaccination) program," she elaborated. Sinopharm and Cansino vaccines will be provided under the Gotong Royong program, Tarmizi said. The challenge now is to meet vaccine demand.

[Calls mount for lockdown as Indonesia battles surge in COVID-19 cases](#)

—Nina A. Loasana, *The Jakarta Post*, 18 June 2021

Following mounting public pressure to impose tougher measures, the government has announced the tightening of COVID-19 restrictions to prevent the collapse of the country's healthcare system amid the recent case surge. The tightened restrictions will take effect for two weeks starting tomorrow. Under the new provisions, the offices of government bodies, regional administrations and the private sector in COVID-19 red zones need to limit capacity to 25% and allow the remaining employees to work from home. Meanwhile, offices in non-red zones are allowed to operate at 50 percent capacity. Workers are restricted from traveling to other regions during the work-from-home period. Schools in COVID-19 red zones are required to call off in-class learning plans, as all educational activities must be carried out online or long-distance. Similarly, activities in places of worship and other public areas that potentially create crowding have been banned "until the situation improves," Airlangga said. On the other hand, malls and restaurants in red zones are allowed to operate at 25% capacity and serve orders, including delivery and takeaway orders, until 8 p.m. Since Thursday, health authorities have reported daily record rises in confirmed cases. The peak was recorded on Monday when the national COVID-19 task force reported 14,546 new cases—the highest daily rise since the pandemic hit the country last year. Authorities suspect that the transmission has been exacerbated by the more transmissible Delta variant of the virus. It has been detected among cases in Jakarta, Central Java and East Java. Several regions, including Jakarta, are reporting an increase in hospital bed occupancy to more than 80% in just over a week.

B. Marine & Fisheries

[68 Indonesian Fishermen Facing Trespassing Charges Abroad](#)

—Petir Garda Bhwana, *Tempo*, 24 June 2021

As many as 68 Indonesian fishermen have been charged with trespassing in other countries, the Marine Affairs and Fisheries Ministry has disclosed. The number of Indonesian fishermen found trespassing the territories of other countries is still high, Director of Violation Handling at the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Teuku Elvitrasyah, said in a press statement released in Jakarta on Wednesday. "Some of our fishermen are facing legal process in Malaysia, India, Thailand, and Papua New Guinea. Their number is about 68," he informed. In the past three years, 140 Indonesian fishermen have been arrested in several countries, he said. Therefore, the ministry has continued to implement different approaches to improve the fishermen's understanding and awareness, he added. Many traditional Indonesian fishermen have been arrested abroad in the past because they did not clearly know Indonesia's sea borders with other countries, he pointed out. This happened because they were not equipped with navigation and communication devices and did not have sea maps, he said.

[Indonesia, France to build environmentally friendly fishing ports](#)

—M Razi Rahman, Fardah, *Antara*, 10 June 2021

Indonesia's Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Ministry (KKP) has said it will develop environmentally-friendly fishing ports in the country in cooperation with the French Development Agency (AFD). The cooperation in the environmentally friendly seaport project was discussed with France's Minister of Maritime Affairs, Annick Girardin, during her recent visit to Indonesia. "This collaborative project can help utilize environmentally friendly capture fisheries resources in the fishing port areas," acting Director General of Capture Fisheries at the KKP, M Zaini, said on Thursday. The cooperation is expected to strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries and advance the marine and fisheries sector, in accordance with the declaration of a strategic partnership between the Indonesian and French presidents in 2017, he added. Zaini also lauded the French government's support for the development of eco-fishing ports. Currently, the ministry is in the process of discussing the loan agreement with AFD France, he informed.

[Fishery exports could rise during pandemic: Marine Affairs Ministry](#)

— M Razi Rahman, Katriana, *Antara*, 4 June 2021

Opportunities to increase exports of fishery products could arise during the COVID-19 pandemic, as reflected by the positive trend of fishery exports during the January-April 2021 period, Artati Widiarti, Director General of Strengthening the Competitiveness of Marine and Fishery Products at the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries stated. Moreover, the ministry has targeted to improve the quality of marine and fishery products to increase the volume and value of exports in 2021. Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Sakti Wahyu Trenggono also targets an increase in the value of exports of around US\$1 billion from the earlier year, with a total of US\$6.05 billion in 2021. "During the first quarter of 2021, the exports of marine and fishery commodities showed a positive performance. Compared to last year, the increase in export value of marine and fishery products reached 4.15 percent during the January-April 2021 period. The total value of exports during the first quarter of this year reached US\$1.75 billion," Widiarti stated.

C. Forests & Land Use

[Biofuel drive threatens forests, climate target](#)

—A. Muh. Ibnu Aqi, *The Jakarta Post*, 21 June 2021

Indonesia's elevation of biodiesel as a renewable energy source might, in turn, jeopardize its climate policy as the country's prevailing policy regarding the fuel increases the risk of deforestation, a recent report has revealed. The government is pushing for mandatory use of diesel fuel blended with 30 percent palm-based biofuel, known as the B30 biodiesel fuel and with 40 percent biofuel blend by 2022. This policy plays an important role in the government's

efforts to slash oil imports, to open new markets for its palm oil exports and to support the country in its goal to transition away from fossil fuel-based energy sources. But a report recently published by international non-profit organization the CDP suggests that the country's biofuel policies are not in alignment with environmental-protection policies. The group's senior global policy manager for forests Helen Finlay acknowledged the biofuels' role in Indonesia's energy transition from fossil fuels. "However, it is important that they are developed in a way that does not undermine climate and development goals".

[Indonesian palm oil firm to 'remedy past mistakes' with forest restoration plan](#)

—Robin Hicks, *Eco-Business*, 15 June 2021

One of Indonesia's most controversial palm oil growers has embarked on a recovery plan to make amends for clearing rainforests by reforesting an area half the size of Singapore. KPN Plantation, known as Gama Plantation until 2019, said it will remediate 38,000 hectares of forest in Papua and West Kalimantan. An investigation by Greenpeace in 2018 revealed that the Gama company, a group of plantation firms with common ownership, had cleared 21,500 ha of rainforest in Papua and West Kalimantan over the previous five years. As a result of the campaign, Wilmar cut off Gama from its supply chain in June 2018, as did several other buyers. The following month, Gama declared a group-wide moratorium on new land development, and in September introduced a no deforestation, no peat, no exploitation (NDPE) policy. After consulting with Wilmar and environmental group Aidenvironment, Gama consolidated the 63 companies that operated on 200,000 hectares of plantation area into a single group. In 2019, Wilmar re-engaged Gama as a supplier.

[Report: Small increase in price of products based on palm oil could save forests](#)

—Robin Hicks, *Eco-Business*, 15 June 2021

The seemingly impossible task of decoupling deforestation from the palm oil industry could be achieved by raising the price of palm-based consumer goods by just 1.8%, a new report from risk analysis firm Chain Reaction Research (CRR) suggests. CRR's report finds that the consumer goods firms, that sell palm oil-based products, and retailers, claim two-thirds of the profits, some US\$20 billion, from the palm oil value chain. Large plantation owners, refineries and oleochemicals firms claim smaller portions of the profits, while smallholders claim none of the profits. Smallholders, which generate six per cent of the palm oil market's value, or US\$17 billion, tend to be poorly resourced and unproductive, generating around half of the yield of large-scale commercial farms. They are also the main drivers of rainforest loss in Indonesia. If consumer goods brands and retailers invested more in the smallholders that supply them, with cash-flow support for sustainable production for instance, deforestation could be all but eliminated from the palm oil value chain, the report finds.

D. Energy, Mining and Climate Change

[Tin mines close in on an Indonesian hamlet still clinging to nature](#)

—Taufik Wijaya, *Mongabay*, 16 June 2021

The Indigenous Lom people of Tuing hamlet have been guarding their area from the environmental dangers of mining activity for centuries; theirs is the only hamlet left in their community still free from tin mines. Tin mining dominates the economy in Bangka, an island off southeast Sumatra, but growing demand for the metal has wrought devastating ecological impact to the island that was once a paradise. The waters off Tuing now face a similar fate after zoning plans for coastal areas recently approved by the local government allow for mining to take place. The Lom people say they stand against the local government and state-owned miner PT Timah in proceeding with a mining plan that might push the island's oldest community traditions into extinction.

E. Pollution and Waste Management

[Ranked: The top 10 countries that dump the most plastic into the ocean](#)

—Sabrina Fearon Melville, *Euronews*, 22 June 2021

Plastic waste is still one of the largest environmental concerns we face in the 21st century. A recent report by packaging company RAJA reveals the top culprits worldwide producing the most plastic. Despite the United States producing double the amount of India's plastic waste annually (42 billion kg), only 2.4 million kg of it ends up in our oceans. This could be due to the fact that the US is well-known for exporting its waste to other countries including ones with poor waste management systems. When large countries like the US ship their plastic waste abroad they are able to claim it has been recycled. Collectively, the top five plastic waste dumpers throw an astonishing 314 million kg of plastic into the ocean per year. So who are the top 10?

1. India – 126.5 million kg of plastic
2. China – 70.7 million kg of plastic
3. Indonesia – 56.3 million kg of plastic
4. Brazil – 38 million kg of plastic
5. Thailand – 22.8 million kg of plastic
6. Mexico – 3.5 million kg of plastic
7. Egypt – 2.5 million kg of plastic
8. United States – 2.4 million kg of plastic
9. Japan – 1.8 million kg of plastic
10. United Kingdom – 703 thousand kg of plastic

F. Conservation and Protected Areas

[Coastal communities take the lead: How plans to safeguard Southeast Asia's biodiverse waters are evolving](#)

—Tim Ha, *Eco-Business*, 23 June 2021

Commitment from communities and the local government has been a key ingredient to West Papua's success in safeguarding its rich marine ecosystems, says Meity Mongdong, who manages Conservation International's West Papua programme, through which the group supports the Indonesian government's marine conservation efforts in the province. More and more, villagers are recognised as critical stakeholders in conservation planning and management. In 2014, Indonesia established its MPA management authority (UTPD), which has since been turned into a collaborative institution to allow authorities and communities to look after marine parks and govern financial resources together. It is a trend that has emerged across Southeast Asia, notes Erdmann who is vice president for Conservation International's Asia-Pacific marine programmes. "In recent years, a major change in marine conservation has been a growing belief that it should be bottom-up," he says. Involving communities in marine protection strengthens compliance and ensures that MPAs respect and build on existing indigenous traditions that villagers have upheld for generations to safeguard their resources.

[Two new Javan rhino calves spotted in the species' last holdout](#)

—Basten Gokkon, *Mongabay*, 16 June 2021

Conservation officials in Indonesia have reported a sighting of two new Javan rhinoceros calves, boosting hopes for stable population growth of the nearly extinct species. The calves, a female and a male, were spotted on different occasions in March by camera traps in Ujung Kulon National Park on the western tip of Indonesia's Java Island, the Javan rhino's (*Rhinoceros sondaicus*) last habitat on Earth. The addition of the two calves brings the species' total population to 73 individuals, comprising 40 males and 33 females. There has been at least one newborn Javan rhino calf recorded every year since 2012, according to the International Rhino Foundation (IRF). The Javan rhino's last safe haven is Ujung Kulon, where strict protection has meant there have been no reported poaching attempts in more than 20 years thanks to the work of patrol teams known as rhino protection units. However, rhino experts have highlighted other threats to the habitat, such as illegal fishing and lobster trapping in the protected waters of the park.

[Ministry warns against use of animals in circuses, shows in Indonesia](#)

—Yuni Arisandy Sinaga, *Antara*, 14 June 2021

Animals are no longer allowed to be used in mobile circuses and other itinerant shows, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry has warned. "In the context of animal shows, there is no longer permission for any mobile or itinerant shows using animals, no more traveling animal circuses," Indra Semiawan, director of biodiversity conservation at the Environment and

Forestry Ministry, said here on Monday. He made the statement during an online discussion on the fate of dolphins rescued in Bali which were used for an itinerant show.

Mobile animal circuses and shows have been prohibited to protect animal welfare, particularly the physical and mental health of animals, he explained. The physical condition of animals used in mobile circuses and itinerant shows can often deteriorate, he said. It is for this reason that the Environment and Forestry Ministry is striving to improve the monitoring of animal show practices, he added. The ministry has also spoken with some zoos and asked them not to organize mobile animal shows or attractions, Semiawan informed.

G. Other

[Indonesia's omnibus law: a red flag for investors?](#)

—Sandy Milne, *China dialogue*, 14 June 2021

The protesters who took to the streets of Jakarta, Bandung and other Indonesian cities in October 2020 were diverse to say the least. Islamic leaders, dressed in white jalabbiyah, stood with scantily clad Instagram influencers. Trade unionists, indigenous leaders and environmentalists rubbed shoulders with the National Anti-Communist Alliance. Many Indonesians were protesting President Joko “Jokowi” Widodo’s latest raft of neoliberal reforms, the Omnibus Law on Job Creation. The massive 1,028-page bill amends, annuls and adds to 79 existing laws. Critics of the bill, including Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, argue the sweeping changes come at the expense of workers’ rights and environmental protections. In an age when sustainability is growing as a determining factor in investment decisions, it’s not just students who are turned off by the omnibus. A group of 36 investors, representing US\$4.1 trillion in assets, criticised the bill for “severe environmental, human rights and labour-related repercussions that introduce significant uncertainty and could impact the attractiveness of Indonesian markets.”

[Germany grants Rp1.02 Trillion to support Indonesia's sustainable development](#)

—Yuni Arisandy Sinaga, *Antara*, 23 June 2021

The German government has awarded 59.4 million euros (about Rp1.02 trillion) in grants to Indonesia to fund a number of major bilateral technical cooperation projects supporting sustainable development in Indonesia. With a total grant value of 59.4 million euros, there are 16 projects in Indonesia funded by the German Government, among others in the areas of renewable energy, green infrastructure, forestry and climate change, sustainable economic development, vocational education and training (TVET) and governance.

