



Indonesia Sustainable Development News Digest

The *Indonesia Sustainable Development News Digest* is a biweekly collection of summaries of articles related to conservation, the environment and sustainability in Indonesia which have appeared in print or online in local, regional and global English-language media. We welcome comments, suggestions, and corrections. To learn more about us and to access previous editions of the News Digest, please visit our website at www.starlingresources.com. If you would like to add colleagues or friends to our distribution list or unsubscribe, please contact us at newsdigest@starlingresources.com.

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A. [Marine & Fisheries](#)

[US demotes Indonesia in human trafficking report over decrease in investigations](#)

—Shallaja Neelakantan, *BenarNews*, 19 July 2022

The US State Department demoted Indonesia to Tier 2 Watch List in its annual Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report because investigations of trafficking crimes had fallen for a fifth consecutive year and convictions decreased for a fourth consecutive year. Indonesia had been praised in last year's report for investigating, prosecuting, and convicting recruitment agents who facilitated the forced labour of Indonesians aboard Chinese fishing boats, but this year official complicity in trafficking crimes remained a concern the Indonesian government had failed to address, the report said. "The lack of robust, systematized victim identification procedures continued to hinder proactive identification of victims overall," the report said. "Coordination between the national anti-trafficking task force and its provincial and local-level counterparts was insufficient to translate central government policies into nationwide implementation. Indonesia needs to investigate, prosecute and convict traffickers, including complicit officials who ignore, facilitate, or engage in trafficking crimes, and amend a 2007 law to remove the required demonstration of force, fraud or coercion to constitute child sex trafficking," the State Department said.

[Ban on destructive fishing nets fails to make impact](#)

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

A year after its introduction to replace the destructive and unsustainable *cantrang* trawl net that was effectively banned in July 2021, the square-mesh seine net (*jaring tarik berkantong*), the diamond-mesh *cantrang* remains in use, while fishers have found ways to use the new net with a larger 5-cm rectangular mesh in much the same way as the *cantrang*, threatening already depleted fish stocks around the country. According to Oktavianto Darmono, a researcher at the Fisheries Resource Center of Indonesia (FRCI), the only difference is the shape of the mesh. In practice, both nets are dragged close to

the seafloor, similar to bottom trawling, which is prohibited in Indonesia. The Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Affairs (KKP) recently said it would beef up monitoring and enforcement on use of nets and called on local authorities to take action in waters up to 12 nautical miles from shore, which are under provincial government jurisdiction and is where much of Indonesia's small-scale and traditional fishers operates.

B. Forests & Land Use

[Palm oil producer mired in legal troubles still razing Sumatran forest](#)

—Hans Nicholas Jong, *Mongabay*, 26 July 2022

PT Cemerlang Abadi (CA) restarted clearing forests and peatlands in its concession in the Leuser Ecosystem on the island of Sumatra in September last year, according to the Rainforest Action Network (RAN), which used satellite imagery to identify more than 10 ha of secondary forest and 299 ha of young regenerating forest cleared as of February 2022. CA's concession consists of secondary forest that regenerated after the primary forest was logged. Despite being degraded, secondary forests can still play a crucial role in maintaining biodiversity, regulating climate, and protecting water supplies for local communities. Forests in CA's concession are classified as "high carbon stock" (HCS) forests that should be protected from deforestation. In 2018, CA was accused of clearing 269 ha of land in Aceh province after its right-to-cultivate permit (HGU) expired. When the land agency renewed CA's HGU in 2019, it reduced the size of the concession from 7,516 ha to 2,002 ha. Plans to redistribute the revoked part of the concession to communities are on hold because of a pending CA lawsuit pending against the Land Agency.

[Indonesia's mangrove restoration bid holds huge promise, but obstacles abound](#)

—Warief Djajanto Basorie, *Mongabay*, 26 July 2022

Indonesia aims to restore 600,000 ha of mangroves by 2024, but questions remain about its progress. Mangroves absorb more carbon per hectare than inland forests. Indonesia has pledged to reduce its carbon emissions 29% by 2030 from a 2010 base year, but in Gorontalo province on Sulawesi, for example, more than 90% of the mangroves in the Tanjung Panjang Nature Reserve have been illegally cleared for shrimp and fish ponds, a local conservation group says. According to the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Indonesia loses 52,000 ha of mangroves every year, causing the destruction of about 40% of the total mangrove area over the past three decades. Mangrove destruction results in the emission of 190 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent annually, according to CIFOR, accounting for 42% of global annual emissions from coastal ecosystem damage. Hartono Prawiratmadja, head of the Peatland and Mangrove Restoration Agency (BRGM) claimed the agency's target of restoring 600,000 ha by 2024 was achievable, but critics note that the survival rate for replanted mangrove seedlings remains low.

C. Conservation & Protected Areas

[Plantations threaten Indonesia's orangutans, but they're not oil palm](#)

—Hans Nicholas Jong, *Mongabay*, 15 July 2022

Most orangutan habitat in Indonesia is located in corporate concessions outside of protected areas, but industrial pulp and paper concessions lack strong enough safeguards or commitment to protect the critically endangered apes, according to a report. Of the total 14.1 million ha of Indonesia's forested habitat suitable for orangutans, only 3.46 million ha or 24.5% lies within the boundaries of protected areas such as national parks, nature reserves, or game reserves. Meanwhile, 6.22 million ha, almost twice that amount, falls within corporate oil palm, logging, and industrial tree concessions, and based on observations, orangutans are often found in areas where humans are active rather than in primary natural forests with no disturbance, according to Belinda Arunarwati Margono, Director of Forest Resource Monitoring for the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK). The three industrial concessions with the largest areas of orangutan habitat in Kalimantan are PT Mayawana Persada, PT Industrial Forest

Plantation, and PT Taiyong Engreen. All three are also among the largest deforesters in the industrial tree sector.

Report: Christopher Wiggs, Jack Cunningham, [Orangutan landscapes at risk: The role of industrial tree concessions in protecting key forest habitat](#), Aidenvironment, (June 2022).

[Deforestation in Borneo threatens one in four orangutans](#)

—Basten Gokkon, *Mongabay*, 26 July 2022

Habitat for up to one quarter of the known population of Bornean orangutans will disappear across the island of Borneo under projected deforestation patterns over the next decade. A study warns that 74,419 km² (7.44 million ha) of forest—an area one tenth the size of Italy—would be lost between 2018 and 2032, resulting in the loss of habitat for 26,200 orangutans out of a current population of just over 100,000, with a projected total future loss from 2020 to 2050 of 45,300 orangutans. Nearly 150,000 of the great apes died between 1999 and 2015, largely due to deforestation and killing, according to a 2018 study. Previous projections assumed a constant rate of deforestation, but the new study accounts for the changing pace of deforestation over space and time, Maria Voigt, lead author of the 2018 paper and the new study. Three quarters of Borneo was still forested and home to an estimated 288,500 orangutans in 1973. Since then, more than a third of Borneo's forest has been lost to fires, logging, and industrial plantations. 177

Paper: Maria Voigt, David Gaveau, Erik Meijaard, et al, (14 July 2022). [“Deforestation projections imply range-wide population decline for critically endangered Bornean orangutan”](#), *Perspectives in Ecology and Conservation*. doi 10.1016/j.pecon.2022.06.001

[Over half of species threatened by extinction need targeted recovery action](#)

—Martin Guttridge-Hewitt, *Environmental Journal*, 20 July 2022

As governments worldwide negotiate a new Global Biodiversity Framework, a new study shows 57% of species classified as threatened and extinct in the wild require “Target 4” active management beyond expansion of protected areas, restoration of degraded ecosystems, reducing threats from climate change, or pollution reduction. Species requiring Target 4 protection occur in almost every country, with the largest number in Indonesia (490) followed by Mexico (449) and Australia. Targeted measures include captive breeding, reintroduction, moving individuals and small populations to new locations, supplementary feeding, breeding site provision, and improving vaccination coverage in order to enable species recovery and conserve genetic diversity, based on data from the IUCN Red List. Other key actions would include managing unsustainable harvesting and trade (Target 5, benefiting 63% of at risk species) and controlling invasive species (Target 6, benefiting 23% of species). Area-based conservation through spatial planning, restoration, and site-based efforts (including establishing protected areas) are required by 95% of threatened species.

Paper: Friederike C. Bolam, et al (2022), [“Over half of threatened species require targeted recovery actions to avert human-induced extinction”](#), *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* (18 July 2022), doi:10.1002/fee.2537

[Global Sea turtle DNA database traces illegal shell trade to poaching hotspots](#)

—Carolyn Cowan, *Mongabay*, 18 July 2022

Critically endangered hawksbill turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) have been hunted for centuries for their patterned shells used to make tortoiseshell jewelry and decorative curios, pushing the species to the brink of extinction despite international bans on killing or trading the turtles or their parts. Population numbers are down 75% from historic levels and recent assessments suggest fewer than 25,000 adult females remain in the wild. ShellBank, an initiative led by WWF in cooperation with governments, non-profits, academic institutions and communities is described as the world's first global accessible repository of sea turtle genetic data aimed at helping authorities crack down on poaching and illegal trade while helping researchers monitor turtle population dynamics. 177

Paper: Erin L. LaCasella, Michael P. Jensen, Christine A. Madden Hof, Ian P. Bell, Amy Frey, and Peter H. Dutton (25 January 2021), "[Mitochondrial DNA profiling to combat the illegal trade in tortoiseshell products](#)", *Frontiers in Marine Science* 7, doi:10.3389/fmars.2020.595853

[Stingrays can talk when they get riled up](#)

—Elizabeth Claire Alberts, *Mongabay*, 25 July 2022

Although almost 990 species of bony fish (Osteichthyes) produce sounds, evidence for active sound production by elasmobranchs (sharks, rays, and skates) has been scarce and there has been no previous confirmed examples of sound production by elasmobranchs in the wild. However, a new study by marine scientist Moni Pini-Fitzsimmons documents production of sounds by wild mangrove whiprays (*Urogymnus granulatus*) and cowtail stingrays (*Pastinachus sephen*) that may be distress or defense signals used for communication. Simon Hilbourne, with the ray-and-shark research organization, said there is anecdotal evidence that manta rays (*Mobula* spp.) also make similar noises. Mangrove whiprays are classified by the IUCN as "Vulnerable" to extinction while cowtail stingrays are considered "Near Threatened".

Paper: Lachlan C. Fetterplace et al, "[Evidence of sound production in wild stingrays](#)," *Ecology | Ecological Society of America*, 8 July 2022. doi.org/10.1002/ecy.3812

[Wildlife exposure to rat poison on oil palm plantations](#)

—Sean Mowbray, *Mongabay*, 13 July 2022

Rodent damage to oil palm crops can reduce yields by as much as 10%. The primary approaches to limiting rat infestations include deploying barn owls and domestic cats and putting out bait laced with rat poison. However, the anti-coagulant rodenticides used by most plantations pose a high exposure risk to non-target wildlife, either through direct consumption or bioaccumulation in species that eat rodents, including barn owls, a natural predator of rodents. Leopard cats, (*Prionailurus bengalensis*), palm civets (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*), Asian water monitors (*Varanus salvator*), and several rodent-eating raptor species are considered to be at high risk for secondary exposure from eating contaminated rodents, while larger carnivores, such as the Sunda clouded leopard (*Neofelis diardi*) or Malayan tiger (*Panthera tigris jacksoni*), were considered at low to medium risk. Pig-tailed macaques (*Macaca nemestrina*), listed as "Vulnerable" by the IUCN, also actively hunt rats on oil palm plantations. The presence of barn owls and macaques can play important roles in limiting rodent damage on plantations as they hunt at different times of the day. 171

Paper: Ravindran, S., Noor, H. M., & Salim, H. (2022). "[Anticoagulant rodenticide use in oil palm plantations in Southeast Asia and hazard assessment to non-target animals](#)", *Ecotoxicology* 31 (14 June 2022). doi:10.1007/s10646-022-02559-x

D. Energy, Mining, & Climate Change

[Waiting for the Wind and Solar Power](#)

—Purwani Diyah Prabandari, *Tempo English*, 25 July 2022

The Sidrap Wind Power Plant (PLTB) has 30 80-meter high wind turbines. Inaugurated in 2019, Sidrap became the first large-scale wind power plant in Indonesia. Since early 2022, residents of Sidenreng Rappang (Sidrap) Regency in South Sulawesi have electric power for the first time. UPC Renewables, the co-owner of Sidrap PLTB, plans to increase the capacity from 75 MW to 135 MW. Another UPC Renewables subsidiary is developing another wind plant in Sukabumi Regency, West Java, which will become Indonesia's largest PLTB, with a capacity of 150 to 200 MW. At Cirata Reservoir in Purwakarta Regency, West Java, PJB-Masdar Solar Energy (PMSE) is building a floating solar power plant (PLTS) with a planned capacity of 145 MW. Accelerating the construction of large-scale PLTSs is the most viable strategy to achieve the target of 23% new and renewable energy (NRE), according to Dadan Jusdiana,

Director General of NRE for the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources. 80% of the US\$140 million cost will come from international creditors.

Opinion: Don't delay the energy transition

— *Tempo English*, 25 July 2022

Soaring prices for gas and oil means there are no reasons to continue delaying the energy transition from fossil fuels to new and renewable energy (NRE). The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (MEMR) has a roadmap for NRE to contribute 23% of energy by 2025, but as of 2021, only 13.7% of energy was from NRE sources. From 2030, the government will only build NRE power plants, including solar, wind, hydro, geothermal or tidal sources. President Joko Widodo's promise to urge the state electricity company PLN to halt operation of coal-fired plants should be realized. The 3,686 GW of potential generation from NRE will be an attractive proposition for investors. It's time to change the paradigm from cost to investment. We have more to lose if we continue using fossil fuel energy and do not begin the transition to cleaner energy sources now.

Climate change impacts to disproportionately hurt tropical fishers and farmers

—Basten Gokkon, *Mongabay*, 15 July 2022

The majority of coastal communities studied in five countries in the Indo-Pacific region—Indonesia, Madagascar, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, and Tanzania— face potentially significant losses of key agriculture and fisheries food products, which may be combined with other change drivers such as overfishing or soil erosion that have already caused a decline in productivity. Overall potential losses to fisheries are higher than losses to agriculture. The new study found that Indonesia, which possesses one of the world's biggest marine fisheries, could face an average 15% loss in the sector, with wide variation among different sites. The authors noted that alternative livelihoods often fail and are not a viable substitute for mitigating climate change for the approximately six million global coral reef fishers. "I really hope this work gets scientists and policymakers working in fisheries and agriculture to stop treating these sectors [as if they were] operating in isolation, said Joshua E. Cinner, the study's lead author. "Our study shows how tightly coupled they are."

Paper: Joshua E. Cinner, Ian R. Caldwell, et al (5 July 2022), "[Potential impacts of climate change on agricultural and fisheries production in 72 tropical coastal communities](#)", *Nature Communications* 13:3530

NGOs ask Elon Musk not to invest in Indonesia's nickel industry over environment worries

—Reuters, 26 July 2022

In an open letter to Tesla Chief Executive Elon Musk and shareholders, dozens of non-government organizations (NGOs) have asked the Tesla chief not to invest in Indonesia's nickel industry because of concerns about the environmental impact. The NGOs, including Indonesia's WALHI and Friends of the Earth United States. Indonesia has the world's largest nickel reserves. Indonesian president Joko Widodo, who met with Musk in Texas in May to discuss potential investments, is keen to develop a nickel-based electric vehicle industry. The government banned the export of unprocessed nickel ore in 2020 to ensure supply for investors. However, environmentalists are concerned the process would involve disposing of mining waste into the ocean, noting that converting forest to nickel mining will cause increased deforestation and the threat of pollution in rivers, lakes, and the ocean. In 2020 Musk urged the mining industry to produce more nickel "in an environmentally sensitive way".

Pulau Pari islands sue cement giant Holcim over climate change

—AFP via *The Jakarta Post*, 14 July 2022

Residents of Pulau Pari, an island north of Jakarta threatened by rising sea levels are suing the Swiss cement giant Holcim over its carbon dioxide emissions, according to Yvan Maillard Ardeni, a climate expert at Swiss Church Aid (HEKS), said on the charity's website. The complaint seeking compensation for damages already caused by climate change, money for flood defences, and a rapid reduction in the

company's carbon emissions, was lodged with a conciliation authority in Zug, Switzerland where the company's headquarters are located. "Holcim is globally the leading manufacturer of cement, the basic material for concrete, and one of the 50 biggest CO₂ emitters out of all companies worldwide," HEKS said. The Swiss NGO is backing the islanders' campaign alongside the Berlin-based rights group ECCHR and the Indonesian environmental pressure group WALHI. Holcim sold its Indonesian business to local cement maker Semen Indonesia in 2019, but globally it emitted more than seven billion tonnes of CO₂ emissions between 1950 and 2021, according to a study from the US-based Climate Accountability Institute, HEKS said.

E. Pollution & Waste

Minister: Economic problems can be addressed by handling food waste

—Baqir Alatas, Uyu Liman, *Antara News*, 8 July 2022

Better food waste management can help solve the community's economic problems amid soaring prices for food ingredients and spices, Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy Sandiaga Uno said. "It is ironic that the prices of chili and food ingredients are high, but we are wasting them. Along with Saudi Arabia and the US, Indonesia is one of the world's largest food waste producers, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit. A study by Indonesia's National Planning Agency (Bappenas) found that food waste over the period 2000-2019 reached about 23-48 million tonnes per year, leading to economic losses of US\$14.1-36.6 billion annually, or 4-5% of gross domestic product (GDP), he said. "We give our all to sustainable tourism," Minister Uno said, "and we expect all stakeholders in the tourism industry—including hotel, restaurant and café owners, as well as government, academics, media and NGOs—to assist in handling food waste in Indonesia.

Start-up company keeps plastic waste out of Indonesia's crowded landfills

—Catherine Shu, *TechCrunch+*, 8 July 2022

According to the World Bank, Indonesia produces 4.8 million tonnes of plastic waste each year that is "mismanaged"—meaning that it ends up uncollected, chucked into dumpsites or leaked from improperly managed landfills. Octopus, a Jakarta-based start-up, wants to reduce that number with a platform that makes it easier to collect waste products from consumers and recycle them into raw materials that brands can reuse. The company is establishing five sorting facilities and 1,700 checkpoints in four cities: Jakarta, Bandung, Makassar, and Denpasar, Bali, with the aim of handling 380 tonnes of waste ranging from plastics to electronic appliances each month. Indonesia's 3R "reuse, reduce, and recycle" regulations are meant to reduce the amount of plastic debris in the ocean by 70%. As of 2025, the government will have spent US\$5.1 billion on expanding the circular economy to more brands. Octopus says it has grown by over 400% over the past six months, including 150,000 monthly users and more than 60,000 *pelestari*, or independent waste collectors.

For residents of Jakarta's port district, coal is the neighbor no one wants

—Fadiyah Alaidrus, *Mongabay*, 27 July 2022

For students at Marunda State Primary School in Jakarta's northern port district, masks have remained a way of life. The school is located less than 500 m from an industrial site for unloading coal shipments owned by PT Karya Citra Nusantara (KCN), a company whose operations the government has designated as a national strategic project. Marunda's residents have struggled with coal dust in their air since 2019 since KCN began expanding its operations as a key distribution point for coal destined for power plants in the Jakarta area. In April, the Jakarta Health Agency conducted a public screening to assess the health of local residents. Respiratory disorders were reported for 18% of those surveyed, skin problems by 10%, and eye problems by 8%, suggesting that thousands of Marunda's nearly 36,000 residents could be experiencing coal dust related health issues. Three people, including two children, were identified as suffering from corneal ulcers caused by KCN's coal dust, according to a commissioner at the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI).

F. Investment & Finance

Capturing profits from the energy transition

—Purwani Diyah Prabandari, *Tempo English*, 25 July 2022

Indonesia is pushing for more new and renewable energy (NRE) to reach carbon neutrality by 2060. Easy availability of coal and other fossil fuel energy poses a challenge to the energy transition. Indonesia produced 614 million tonnes of coal last year, but only 21% was used by power plants and other domestic users. Indonesia is attractive to donor agencies because of its extensive NRE sources. The potential for solar energy is 3,295 gigawatts (GW), of which only 217 MW has been utilized. The European Investment Bank (EIB) has just opened a representative office in Jakarta. There are commitments from the World Bank, Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (DfW), Agence Française de Développement (AFD), and Asian Development Bank, while a Japanese institution is submitting a financing commitment of US\$10 billion, Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Arifin Tasrif said. The transition was also discussed at a meeting with finance ministers and central banks of G20 countries in Bali on 16 July. The cost of the energy transition could be as much as US\$1 trillion.

G. Other

Double crisis as dengue outbreak bites as Covid-19 cases rise

—Nina A. Loasana, *The Jakarta Post*, 22 July 2022

The number of dengue fever cases in Indonesia is rising even as health authorities battle a fourth wave of Covid-19 caused by the spread of the Omicron sub-variants BA.4 and BA.5, which are highly transmissible but in most cases cause less severe symptoms than earlier variants. As of early July, the Ministry of Health confirmed 61,046 cases of dengue fever this year with 580 deaths this year, with cases concentrated in West Java, Central Java and East Java. This is roughly three times the number of cases and deaths reported over the same period last year. Health authorities are encouraging the public to use mosquito repellent, install mosquito nets on windows and ventilators, keep fish that eat mosquito larvae in water containers, and grow mosquito-repellent plants to control the dengue fever vector, the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito. Over the past week, the country has recorded more than 5,000 new cases of Covid-19 every day, a 27.6% increase over the previous week. The Covid-19 positivity rate in Indonesia has now climbed to 11.7%.

I. President Joko Widodo's working visit to Northeast Asia

Indonesia's Joko Widodo and China's Xi Jinping meet in Beijing

—Kiki Siregar, *ChannelNewsAsia*, 26 July 2022

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/asia/indonesias-jokowi-meets-chinas-xi-jinping-both-pledge-step-bilateral-cooperation-2836561>

Indonesian President Joko Widodo and Xi Jinping, President of China and General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), met in Beijing on the first leg of Widodo's three-day working visit to Northeast Asia. "China is Indonesia's comprehensive strategic partner," Widodo declared in a jointly-issued statement. Widodo also congratulated China on the upcoming CCP 20th National Congress. The two leaders agreed on a five-year action plan to implement the China-Indonesia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, with Widodo stating: "We must fill this partnership with cooperation that is beneficial for our country and at the same time for the region and the world." Indonesia and China will also cooperate through China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Indonesia's Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) and are committed to complete the Jakarta-Bandung High Speed Railway. In the joint statement, the leaders signed cooperation documents on vaccines, green development, cyber security, and maritime development. China also reaffirmed its support for ASEAN centrality in the evolving regional architecture and for Indonesia's ASEAN chairmanship in 2023.

[Indonesia calls for more Japanese investment in electric vehicles and infrastructure](#)

—Wataru Suzuki, *Nikkei Asia*, 27 July 2022

“Indonesia has become a more effective and more transparent country, so that our economy was able to survive the pandemic of the last two years,” said Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan, Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs and Investment, at a business forum on the sidelines of President Joko Widodo’s visit to Japan. Widodo met Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishi on 27 July. Minister Pandjaitan, stressing that Indonesia is not dependent on a single country, laid out projects including an industrial park in North Kalimantan and electric vehicle (EV) battery projects in eastern Indonesia, where he said details of a potential investment by US EV maker Tesla is “being finalized”. Japan’s involvement in construction of Nusantara—Indonesia’s new capital in North Kalimantan—became unclear after the Softbank Group said it would pull out of the project in March. Softbank Chairman and CEO Masayoshi Son had been named to the steering committee for the Nusantara project. President Widodo is expected to meet South Korean president Yoon Suk-yeol on 28 July.

[Indonesia’s Joko Widodo and Japan’s Fumio Kishida agree to cooperate on energy, infrastructure](#)

—Agencies via *The Jakarta Post*, 27 July 2022

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said he and Indonesian President Joko Widodo had agreed during talks to cooperate in a variety of fields, including energy, infrastructure, and maritime security. Japan also agreed to provide ¥43.6 billion (US\$318.25 million) in loans for infrastructure projects and disaster prevention. Kishida told Widodo that Japan hopes to work with Indonesia to realize a free and open Indo-Pacific region, a vision Japan is pursuing amid China’s rise. Widodo conveyed his condolences over the death of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe earlier this month, saying Abe helped advance bilateral relations to a strategic partnership. The two leaders were expected to also discuss security and economic cooperation as well as the upcoming Group of 20 (G20) meeting in Bali, Indonesia. In recent years, Japan and Indonesia have boosted security cooperation. In August, Japan’s Ground Self Defence Force will participate in a multinational joint exercise in Indonesia which will also involve Australia and Singapore.

II. Tourism recovery in Indonesia

[Ministry strives to revive Indonesia’s tourism sector](#)

—M Bakir, Raka Adji, *Antara News*, 7 July 2022

The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (MTCE) is striving to revive Indonesia’s tourism sector through market recovery and expansion, product and service innovation, revitalizing tourism destinations, building human resource capacity, and increasing business competitiveness. The Ministry has targeted 1.8-3.6 million foreign tourist visits and 260-280 million domestic tourists, with foreign exchange earnings of US\$470 million to US\$1.7 billion this year. Since the pandemic, most domestic and foreign tourists have been young people travelling individually or in small groups in search of clean and safe tourist attractions. This has led to tourism stakeholders changing their strategy to prioritize nature recreation, focusing on health aspects, and reducing direct interactions by digitizing promotion, sales and payments. Under the direction of Minister Sandiaga Uno, tourism sector development has focused more on environmental welfare; showcasing local culture, society and traditional knowledge; and creating a balance between mass tourism and quality tourism. The tourism revival began with the successful Pertamina Grand Prix and the 2022 MotoGP event in Mandalika, West Nusa Tenggara (NTB).

[Labuan Bajo will cap the number of annual visitors to Komodo and Padar Islands](#)

—Deni Ghifari, *Jakarta Post*, 20 July 2022

East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) province announced it would cap the number of annual visitors to the islands of Komodo and Padar as well as surrounding waters capping at 200,000 from 1 August, Zet Sony Libing, head of the NTT Tourism Agency announced at a press conference. The restriction is motivated by environmental concerns, according to Carolina Noge, coordinating manager of the Komodo National Park conservation program. The cap will be implemented through charging visitors Rp 3.75 million (US\$250)

for an annual “conservation contribution”, she explained. According to Irman Fiumansyah, head researcher of the conservation program, every visitor consumes from Rp 2.8 to 5.8 million (US\$186-386) in ecosystem services, including water, oxygen, and waste production. “The ideal number of visitors is 219,000 per year,” Fiumansyah said. “The maximum would be 292,000 and the minimum 146,000, as anything below that would take a toll on the regional economy.” Tourism and Creative Economy Minister Sandiaga Uno explained that “Rinca Island will not apply the same rules, so there are still options.”
[Note: Komodo and Padar Islands are part of Komodo National Park, which includes Rinca as well as other smaller islands and their surrounding waters.]

[Foot-and-mouth disease could kill tourism in Indonesia](#)

—John McBeth, *Asia Times*, 22 July 2022

Indonesia may be thrilled to see foreign tourists flooding back into Bali, but agricultural authorities in Australia and New Zealand fear the worst. First detected in Indonesia two months ago, foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) has spread to 23 provinces across Java and Sumatra and infected as many as 400,000 cattle, according to the Disaster Management Agency (BNPB), which announced a new task force to supervise controls over movement of dairy and beef. Until now, Indonesia had been FMD-free since 1986, and Australia hasn’t had it for more than a century. Australian officials put the cost of the disease reaching their shores at US\$55 billion, while an outbreak could ruin New Zealand’s economy, which depends on agriculture for 80% of export earnings and 12% of gross domestic product. Indonesia has reported 200 cases in parts of Bali, leading some in Australia to call for banning travel to Indonesia. Bali’s Ngurah Rai international airport has installed sanitation pads for passengers to walk across, and Australian airports have followed suit as the disease in Indonesia enters an epidemic stage.

[Foot-and-mouth outbreak in Indonesia prompts restrictions in New Zealand](#)

—AFP, 26 July 2022

New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Adern warned an outbreak of food-and-mouth disease in Indonesia could cost up to 100,000 jobs in New Zealand’s agriculture sector. “While not a threat to humans, it would devastate our national herd. Essentially all cloven hoof animals are at risk, Adern told reporters. New Zealand has never had an outbreak, and there are currently no direct flights from Indonesia to New Zealand, but Adern said it was important to keep the disease from entering the country via Australian tourists who had visited Indonesia or China. Australia has so far resisted calls to close its borders to arrivals from Indonesia.

III. The conflict in the Papua region

[Nine killed in Papua’s highlands in an attack by armed separatists](#)

—Reuters via abc.net.au, 16 July 2022

Ten persons were shot and nine died after an attack by armed separatists in the remote highland area of Nduga in Papua province, authorities said. The incident took place days after enactment of a new national law that divides the region into five provinces, carving South Papua, Central Papua and Highland Papua out of Papua province. The government has said establishing the new regions would accelerate development, improve public services, and create new civil service job opportunities for Papuans, but critics said the move gives Jakarta more power over the region, where a battle for independence has been waged since the area became part of Indonesia after a controversial UN-supervised vote in 1969. “Papuans are concerned that more non-indigenous Papuans will arrive, further marginalising them in their own land, Amnesty International human rights lawyer Veronica Koman said. The West Papua Liberation Army (TPNPB)—the armed wing of the Free Papua Movement (OPM)—which the government has designated as a terrorist organization rejected the administrative carve-up, threatening to shoot dead any officials involved.

[Escalating armed conflict and a new security approach in Papua](#)

—IPAC Report No. 77, *Institute of Policy Analysis*, 13 July 2022

Armed conflict in Papua, Indonesia's easternmost region, has escalated significantly since 2018. The new chief of the Indonesian military (TNI) Andika Perkasa has promised a "softer" security approach, but the new measures must do more than stem flow of funding, weapons and recruits to West Papua National Liberation Army (TPNPB), the armed wing of the Free Papua Movement (*Organisasi Papua Merdeka*, OPM). The leading factor enabling increased attacks is the TPNPB's ability to acquire more weapons by raiding and stealing from the growing number of army posts, cross-border purchases, and illegal sale of government-issued weapons by rogue security officers. Ad hoc deployment of troops from outside Papua and large-scale military operations in heavily populated areas has done little to check TPNPB's growth. The TNI chief's new security approach seeks to address past failures by reducing reliance on outside troops and building a permanent military presence in the region through local recruitment. "The government must .. end impunity for past abuses and prevent future harm by security forces," Perkasa said.

[Bribery claim by Merauke Regent sparks calls for investigation](#)

—Yvette Tanamal, *The Jakarta Post*, 17 July 2022

A speech by Romanus Mbaraka, regent of Merauke in Papua Province, in which he admitted bribing members of Indonesia's parliament (DPR) to change parts of the Papua Special Autonomy Law to make way for a new South Papua province has sparked calls for investigation. Mbaraka was participating in a parade in Merauke on 11 July to celebrate the establishment of South Papua province, one of three new provinces in Papua created that day. Video recordings circulated on the internet indicate Mbaraka said a DPR member called him in 2020 to tell him he would need to go "all out" if he wanted the new province to be established. "I approached everyone in the [DPR]. The price was high. If I were to say then I would be caught by the KPK [Corruption Eradication Commission], but it was expensive. I had to alter an article of law," Mbaraka reportedly said. Merauke is the capital of the new province of South Papua, which contains large oil palm plantations.