



Indonesia Sustainable Development News Digest

2025 Issue 13 — 19 June

*The **Indonesia Sustainable Development News Digest** is a biweekly collection of summaries of articles related to conservation, the environment, and sustainability in Indonesia that 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.*

CONTENTS

- A. Marine and Fisheries
- B. Forests and Land Use
- C. Biodiversity, Conservation and Protected Areas
- D. Climate Change, Energy and Mining
- E. Pollution, Waste, Water and Disaster
- F. Technology, Investment and Finance
- G. Human Rights, Indigenous People and Gender Equality

- I. Government Priority Program
- II. Indonesia in Politics and Geopolitics

A. Marine and Fisheries

Mining Not the Path to Sustainable Raja Ampat Economy

—Ichwan Susanto, *Kompas*, 11 June 2025

The Indonesian government has revoked four mining permits in Raja Ampat, Southwest Papua, signaling a shift toward conservation in one of the world's richest marine biodiversity areas. While seen as a small victory for sustainable development, the move underscores a broader debate: mining versus long-term nature-based tourism. A study by Konservasi Indonesia and local universities shows Raja Ampat can support up to 21,000 tourists annually, generating an estimated \$52.5 million in tourism value. With many locals depending on ecotourism, experts warn that continued extractive activities could harm marine ecosystems and communities across eastern Indonesia. Marine pollution threatens species migration and food chains, potentially leading to significant ecological and economic losses. The revocation of permits, following Raja Ampat's designation as a UNESCO Global Geopark in 2023, must be followed by stronger policy consistency, stricter oversight, and inclusive, community-led conservation strategies. Experts argue that sustainable tourism, not mining, offers the most ethical and resilient path forward for the region and its people.

Konservasi Indonesia: 'Raja Ampat Should Be Protected, Not Mined'

—Irsyan Hasyim, *TempoNews*, 11 June 2025

The Indonesian government has officially revoked a mining permit in Raja Ampat after confirming violations of environmental laws and its UNESCO Geopark status, a move welcomed by Konservasi Indonesia as a vital step in protecting one of the world's most biodiverse marine regions. The decision is seen as a commitment to long-term conservation over short-term extractive gains, highlighting the irreplaceable ecological, cultural, and economic value built by local communities. Studies show Raja Ampat can sustain 21,000 tourists annually without harming the environment, potentially generating up to US\$52.5 million through ecotourism. Experts warn that mining risks damaging marine ecosystems, threatening fish migration routes, including tuna and skipjack, and disrupting the habitat of 15 marine mammal species. Polluted waters could lead to the loss of plankton and small fish,

causing large marine species to vanish. Conservation Indonesia stresses that sustainable tourism offers a more viable economic future, urging policies rooted in environmental protection and community inclusion to preserve Raja Ampat's global ecological significance.

Indonesian women sustain seaweed traditions in a changing climate

—Maddy Bolt, *Mongabay*, 10 June 2025

On the Indonesian islands of Nusa Penida and Nusa Lembongan, women seaweed farmers like Ibu Nyoman Mitri are battling the impacts of climate change, including increased rainfall, storms, and a rising incidence of seaweed disease, which threaten centuries-old traditions passed down through generations. Once guided by the rhythms of nature, these communities now face challenges from erratic weather, tourism-driven development, and environmental degradation. Seaweed farming, vital for both local livelihoods and global industries—from food to cosmetics—has also become a lifeline during crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite mounting pressures, women continue to adapt, blending traditional knowledge with ecotourism and conservation efforts, including sharing techniques with coral reef restoration projects. Indonesia remains a major seaweed exporter, and women now lead 40% of related start-ups. As seaweed gains global attention as a sustainable resource, these women stand at the forefront of environmental stewardship and resilience, symbolizing both vulnerability and strength in the face of a changing climate.

Asadian, M., et al. (2018). [Algal Communities: An Answer to Global Climate Change](#). *Clean – Soil, Air, Water*, 46(10), 1800032.

Bindu, M. S., & Levine, I. A. (2011). [The commercial red seaweed *Kappaphycus alvarezii*—an overview on farming and environment](#) *Journal of Applied Phycology*, 23, 789-796.

Msuya, F. E., & Hurtado, A. Q. (2017). [The role of women in seaweed aquaculture in the Western Indian Ocean and South-East Asia](#). *European Journal of Phycology*, 52(4), 482-494.

Rimmer, M. A., et al. (2021). [Seaweed Aquaculture in Indonesia Contributes to Social and Economic Aspects of Livelihoods and Community Wellbeing](#). *Sustainability*, 13(19), 10946.

Shafie, M. H., (2022). [Application of Carrageenan extract from red seaweed \(Rhodophyta\) in cosmetic products: A review](#). *Journal of the Indian Chemical Society*, 99(9), 100613.

Silva Larson, A., et al. (2021). [Women's well-being and household benefits from seaweed farming in Indonesia](#). *Aquaculture*, 530, 735711.

Thampanya, U., et al. (2006). [Coastal erosion and mangrove progradation of Southern Thailand](#). *Estuarine, Coastal and Shelf Science*, 68(1-2), 75-85.

Pay-to-release program reduces shark deaths, but backfires in some cases

—Basten Gokkon, *Mongabay*, 5 June 2025

A pay-to-release fisheries program in Indonesia, aimed at conserving threatened hammerhead sharks and wedgefish, has reduced bycatch but also led to unintended consequences, according to a new study in *Science Advances*. Run by the NGO Kebersamaan Untuk Lautan (KUL), the initiative pays small-scale fishers in Aceh and Lombok to release live catches, resulting in the release of 71% of wedgefish and 4% of hammerheads. However, the program also encouraged some fishers to deliberately catch these species to claim payments, leading to a 44% rise in hammerhead mortality. Researchers used randomized controlled trials to evaluate the program's effectiveness and called for more robust designs to avoid perverse incentives. KUL has since revised the

scheme by capping release payments and piloting gear swaps. Despite Indonesia being the world's top shark and ray catcher, domestic laws offer no protection, leaving these CITES-listed species vulnerable. The findings underscore the need for carefully evaluated, inclusive conservation strategies that support both biodiversity and the livelihoods of small-scale fishers.

Booth, H., et al. (2025). [Conservation impacts and hidden actions in a randomized controlled trial of a marine pay-to-release program](#). *Science Advances*, 11(17).

Harvest Failure to Loss of IDR 69 Billion, Fishermen Report Alleged Environmental Pollution by PHSS

—Sucipto, *Kompas*, 5 June 2025

Nearly 300 clam-farming families in Muara Badak, East Kalimantan, have reported oil company Pertamina Hulu Sanga-Sanga (PHSS) to regional police, alleging environmental pollution from drilling caused a mass die-off of blood cockles and crop failure across thousands of hectares. The Coalition for Concerned Clam Fishermen estimated losses of Rp 69 billion from failed harvests since December 2024. A study by Mulawarman University found increased organic matter and chemical contamination near PHSS drilling sites, with severe tissue damage in clams closest to runoff points. While PHSS denies liability, stating the findings are inconclusive and its operations comply with regulations, residents demand accountability. The company has offered limited compensation—Rp 2 million per farmer and food aid—but maintains there is no direct link to the deaths. Legal counsel cited lab evidence and field observations as grounds for the police report. Mediation efforts are ongoing, but residents remain in debt and unable to resume clam farming, citing repeated failed attempts and emotional distress.

B. Forests and Land Use

RI Govt bolsters scrutiny of forest area use permit holders

—Prisca Triferna and Raka Adji, *AntaraNews*, 12 June 2025

The Ministry of Forestry is tightening oversight of forest use permit (PPKH) holders, following environmental concerns over nickel mining in the ecologically rich Raja Ampat islands, Southwest Papua. The move comes after President Prabowo Subianto revoked the mining permits of four companies—PT Anugerah Surya Pratama, PT Nurham, PT Mulia Raymond Perkasa, and PT Kawei Sejahtera Mining—due to public outcry and evidence that their operations overlapped with the Raja Ampat Geopark. The Ministry has collected data on five companies operating in the area and may pursue legal action if violations are confirmed, said Director General of Law Enforcement Dwi Januanto Nugroho. He emphasized the need for improved supervision and governance amid heightened public awareness. The revocations were confirmed by State Secretary Minister Prasetyo Hadi and Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Bahlil Lahadalia, who cited overlapping land use and environmental damage as key reasons. Authorities are now working to ensure stronger enforcement and sustainable development practices in the region.

Indonesia Receives Over IDR 8 Trillion for Emission Reduction Performance

—Pradipta Pandu Mustika, *Kompas*, 11 June 2025

Indonesia has received nearly USD 500 million (IDR 8.13 trillion) in result-based payments (RBP) for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation under the REDD+ program, making it one of the largest recipients globally, according to Haruni Krisnawati, Expert Staff to the Minister of Forestry. However, this funding reflects only a fraction of Indonesia's actual emissions reductions—over 820 million tons of CO₂e between 2013 and 2020—of which only 61.5 million tons have been compensated. The RBP funds, managed by the Environmental Fund Management Agency (BPD LH), come from sources including the Green Climate Fund, Norway, and the World Bank's carbon funds, and are seen as strategic for achieving the FOLU Net Sink 2030 target. Experts stress that transparency, a robust MRV system, and inclusive governance are critical to sustaining RBP and unlocking further climate finance. Despite challenges in fund disbursement and climate financing gaps, RBP is viewed as a key policy tool and potential bridge to future carbon markets, supporting both emissions cuts and green economic development.

When the President's Customary Forest Decree Does Not Solve the Problem, the Movement to Close TPL Continues to be Raised

—Nikson Sinaga, *Kompas*, 10 June 2025

Calls for the closure of PT Toba Pulp Lestari (TPL) in North Sumatra's Lake Toba area are intensifying, driven by unresolved agrarian conflicts and ecological damage. Indigenous communities, churches, environmental groups, and activists are demanding action as TPL continues operating on 167,912 hectares—much within the Lake Toba watershed—despite

government-issued Customary Forest Decrees. Although President Jokowi granted decrees recognizing six indigenous communities' forest rights in 2022, implementation remains stalled due to lack of local legal support, with TPL refusing to acknowledge the decrees. At least 98 people have faced violence or criminalization linked to the conflict. Advocacy groups like AMAN Tano Batak and KSPPM are now pushing for the company's closure as the only resolution. Religious leaders, including the Batak Protestant Christian Church and Catholic Capuchin Order, support the shutdown, citing environmental degradation and indigenous marginalization. TPL denies wrongdoing, claiming compliance with regulations and citing official audits. However, critics argue the company's ongoing presence threatens both biodiversity and justice for local communities.

Message from Raja Ampat, "The Forest is Mama, the Sea is like Father, and the Coast is the Child"

—Cornelius Helmy Herlambang, *Kompas*, 10 June 2025

The Indonesian government has officially revoked four nickel mining permits in Raja Ampat, Southwest Papua, following mounting public pressure over environmental damage threatening the world-renowned marine tourism destination. The decision, announced on June 10, 2025, affects PT Kawei Sejahtera Mining, PT Mulia Raymond Perkasa, PT Anugerah Surya Pratama, and PT Nurham, all of which violated environmental regulations. Only PT Gag Nikel remains operational, though experts warn its offshore mining may still impact surrounding ecosystems. Mining has long clashed with tourism in Raja Ampat, home to 75% of the world's coral species and over 1,600 fish species. Past protests by local governments, indigenous councils, the Navy, and researchers had halted mining temporarily due to overlapping permits and coral reef destruction. Yet, the resurgence of online activism has reignited calls to permanently protect this biodiversity hotspot. Experts and local communities emphasize that the interconnected marine environment means damage in one area can spread rapidly, threatening livelihoods tied to fisheries and ecotourism in what is considered the heart of the Coral Triangle.

Villagers in Sumatra bring ancient forest flavors back to the table

—Claire Turrell, *Mongabay*, 5 June 2025

In Muaro Jambi, Sumatra, local women from the Paduka community have revived ancient culinary traditions by sourcing ingredients from surrounding forests and rivers, turning their humble heritage dishes into a thriving cultural and eco-tourism experience. Once serving instant noodles to temple visitors, the women now offer complex dishes like *rempah ratus belut* (hundred-spice eel) and *jamu* (traditional herbal drinks), using native herbs, freshwater fish, and sustainable cooking methods inspired by 7th–9th century temple bas-reliefs. With support from Jakarta-based Indigenous food promoter Javara, they identified wild plants, mapped food histories, and created menus rooted in biodiversity and ancestral knowledge. Since 2024, over 8,000 tourists have dined on temple grounds, generating incomes up to Rp1 million per dish and funding a new community center. Their efforts not only preserve culinary heritage and biodiversity but also counter the global trend of homogenized diets, which threaten food security and ecological resilience. The Paduka women now serve as a model for regenerative, community-led food systems rooted in cultural pride and environmental stewardship.

Colozza, D. (2022). [A qualitative exploration of ultra-processed foods consumption and eating out behaviours in an Indonesian urban food environment](#). *Nutrition and Health*, 30(3), 613–623

C. Biodiversity, Conservation and Protected Area

Mining Threatens Raja Ampat, Residents Call for Nature Protection

—Yosepha Debrina Ratih Pusparisa and FX Laksana Agung Saputra, *Kompas*, 16 June 2025

Amid growing concerns, residents across Indonesia are urging the government to halt mining activities in Raja Ampat, citing the fragile ecosystems of small islands and the long-term damage mining can inflict on both the environment and local livelihoods. Despite its global reputation for natural beauty and marine biodiversity, Raja Ampat faces threats from resource exploitation that may erode tourism potential and indigenous identity. Citizens like Agata Cahyaning, Monica, Apolonia Bernadia, and Akhlis Majid voiced strong opposition, emphasizing that development must prioritize environmental preservation, uphold local community rights, and adhere to sustainability principles. Critics warn that once damaged, the unique ecosystems of Raja Ampat cannot be easily restored, and that mining contradicts Indonesia's environmental laws and international commitments. They advocate for clear

regulations, strong enforcement, and inclusive decision-making, particularly for indigenous populations. The public call is clear: protect Raja Ampat as a model of ecological integrity and community-led development, not as a casualty of short-term economic gain.

Sumatran Tiger Conservation Emergency

—Irma Tambunan, *Kompas*, 12 June 2025

The recent deaths of several Sumatran tigers (*Panthera tigris sumatrae*), including one in Jambi after 28 days of treatment due to injuries from a pig snare, signal a conservation emergency for this critically endangered species. According to HarimauKita Forum Chairman Iding Achmad Haidir, 80% of Sumatran tiger habitat in conservation forests has been penetrated by human activities, triggering escalating conflicts and fragmentation across 27 isolated habitat pockets. Despite years of studies and recommendations, their implementation remains minimal, while relocation of tigers under conflict resolution efforts is further threatening wild populations. In 2024–2025 alone, multiple tigers were either killed or trapped in provinces like Jambi, Riau, and North Sumatra. Research by Sintas Indonesia also highlights dwindling prey availability and increasing poaching pressure as major threats. Conservationists warn that the death of breeding females, especially in small landscapes, poses severe risks to population survival. Iding calls for an urgent response based on strong science, community engagement, and consistent, preventive law enforcement to halt further decline.

After 100 Years Missing, Flying Frog from Sulawesi Rediscovered

—Deonisia Arlinta, *Kompas*, 11 June 2025

After being missing for over a century, the Sulawesi flying frog *Rhacophorus rhysocephalus* was rediscovered by researchers from Indonesia's National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) in August 2023 and has now been elevated to full species status. This unique frog, equipped with webbed fingers and toes that allow it to glide between trees, was previously classified as a subspecies of *Rhacophorus pardalis*. The rediscovery underscores Sulawesi's rich biodiversity, with five *Rhacophorus* species now identified on the island, including a newly described species, *Rhacophorus boeadii*, found in the highlands of Mount Katopasa and Mount Gandang Dewata. This new species, distinguished by unique morphological and genetic traits, honors the late zoologist Drs Boeadi. BRIN researchers warn that these frogs' habitats, mostly in highland forests, are increasingly threatened by climate change and deforestation. Sulawesi, part of the Wallacea biodiversity hotspot, ranks second in Indonesia for new species discoveries, reinforcing the island's ecological importance and the urgent need for further research and conservation efforts.

Sperm Whales, Giant Clams, and Manta Rays "Suffocating" Due to Nickel Mining in Raja Ampat

—Fransiskus Pati Herin, *Kompas*, 10 June 2025

Nickel miners have temporarily withdrawn from Batang Pele Island in Raja Ampat, Southwest Papua—part of a protected forest and coral reef conservation area—following widespread protests against mining across the region. Activist Alex Mambrasar, who lives nearby on Manyafun Island, warned the pause may be short-lived, as mining companies often resume operations after tensions ease. Both islands, covering a combined concession area of 2,193 hectares, lack environmental approvals despite being designated protected forests under a 2014 decree. PT MRP began exploration on May 9, 2025, using 10 drills, raising alarm among conservationists. Marine biologist Ilham Marasabessy highlighted the area's ecological value, including coral reefs, endemic species, mangroves, and migration routes for

protected marine life like manta rays and sperm whales. Research also found six of the world's seven giant clam species in the Manyafun archipelago. The Ministry of Environment is investigating potential legal violations and may revoke PT MRP's permit if pollution or damage is confirmed.

D. Climate Change, Energy and Mining

RI nickel lacks sufficient environmental oversight

—Divya Karyza, *TheJakartaPost*, 18 June 2025

The Indonesian government has revoked the permits of four out of five nickel mining companies operating in the ecologically sensitive Raja Ampat region, following mounting environmental pressure, but allowed PT Gag Nikel to continue due to valid permits and production targets. Experts argue this partial action underscores deeper issues in the

country's nickel industry governance, including weak environmental oversight, inadequate enforcement of mining regulations, and a missed opportunity to demand higher standards in exchange for downstream investment. Despite Indonesia's dominant position in global nickel reserves, lax rules have enabled extensive mining, even in protected and small island areas, violating environmental safeguards. Analysts like Putra Adhiguna and Ahmad Zuhdi warn that the country's nickel push is saturating the market and risking ecological damage, particularly in areas like Halmahera and North Maluku. They advocate for responsible mining, stronger transparency, and incentives for environmental compliance. Officials admit the gap lies not in legal frameworks, but in poor monitoring, hoping the Raja Ampat case becomes a turning point for reform.

Indonesian utility PLN 'kneecaps renewables' with embrace of fossil fuels

—Jeff Hutton, *Mongabay*, 17 June 2025

Indonesia's state-owned power utility PLN has prioritized fossil fuel expansion over renewable energy in its latest 10-year electricity supply plan (RUPTL), projecting a 13 GW increase in gas and coal capacity by 2029, while renewable additions will lag slightly behind at 12 GW. Although PLN pledges to triple renewable output by 2035, most of the growth is delayed until the 2030s, citing grid instability and rising electricity demand. The plan limits rooftop solar to 3 GW and omits early retirement of coal plants like Cirebon-1, raising concerns among analysts over PLN's commitment to clean energy. Despite a Rp 565 trillion investment in grid infrastructure to support renewables, the company's poor track record—delivering just 0.6 GW annually against a 2.1 GW promise—has eroded investor confidence. Analysts warn that PLN's reliance on fossil fuels, paired with limited access to foreign financing, could undermine Indonesia's energy transition goals. Critics say the plan favors coal and gas, stifling progress toward a cleaner and more resilient power system.

May 2025 Second Hottest on Earth

—Ahmad Arif, *Kompas*, 13 June 2025

May 2025 was the second hottest May ever recorded globally, with an average surface temperature of 15.79°C—0.53°C above the 1991–2020 norm—ending a 21-month streak of temperatures exceeding 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, according to the EU's Copernicus Climate Change Service. Despite a slight drop from May 2024, North Atlantic sea surface temperatures reached record highs, and Europe faced its driest spring since 1979, triggering wildfires in Canada and worsening droughts in England, Denmark, and the Netherlands. Indonesia also saw rising temperatures, with a national anomaly of +0.32°C, the ninth highest since 1981. Meanwhile, marine heatwaves intensified across the northeastern Atlantic and Mediterranean, with global sea surface temperatures ranking second highest after May 2024. These alarming trends were highlighted at the UN Ocean Conference in France, where leaders called for urgent, large-scale, science-based actions to save marine ecosystems. The IPCC warns that without major interventions, there's a 50% chance global warming will permanently exceed 1.5°C by 2030–2035, risking catastrophic climate and biodiversity impacts.

No respite for Indonesia's Raja Ampat as nickel companies sue to revive mines

—Hans Nicholas Jong, *Mongabay*, 13 June 2025

A nickel mining controversy in Indonesia's ecologically rich Raja Ampat archipelago continues, as Greenpeace reports that three companies whose permits were revoked are suing the government to resume operations. Despite permit cancellations due to environmental violations, the government plans to build a nickel smelter and steel plant in

nearby Sorong, raising fears of renewed mining pressure. Greenpeace warns that if the smelter proceeds, dormant concessions could be reactivated to supply it, especially given the region's high-quality nickel. Gag Nickel, the only company still allowed to mine in Raja Ampat, may be linked to the Sorong project. Public backlash, sparked by Greenpeace's viral #SaveRajaAmpat campaign, helped prompt initial permit revocations, but uncertainty remains amid court battles and industrial plans involving Chinese investors. Greenpeace calls for a total nickel mining ban and cancellation of the Sorong smelter project to protect the region's globally renowned marine biodiversity. Government officials say the situation presents an opportunity to reconsider reforms in Indonesia's mining sector.

'Madness': World leaders call for deep-sea mining moratorium at UN ocean summit

—Elizabeth Claire Alberts, *Mongabay*, 11 June 2025

At the 2025 U.N. Ocean Conference in Nice, France, world leaders renewed calls for a global moratorium on deep-sea mining, warning of its irreversible harm to marine ecosystems. French President Emmanuel Macron condemned the industry as “madness,” while U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres stressed the need to prevent the deep sea from becoming a regulatory “Wild West.” The number of nations supporting a moratorium has grown to 37. Despite this, the U.S., under a Trump-era executive order, is asserting unilateral authority to mine in international waters via its domestic Deep Seabed Hard Mineral Resources Act, bypassing the U.N.-affiliated International Seabed Authority (ISA). U.S.-based The Metals Company has followed suit, applying for a permit through NOAA instead of the ISA. Critics, including leaders from Palau and the Marshall Islands, argue the deep sea is the “common heritage of humankind” and that international rules must be respected. Greenpeace and others warn that U.S. actions undermine multilateral governance and threaten global efforts to protect ocean biodiversity.

E. Pollution, Waste, Water and Disaster

Misery Beyond Reason Due to Wild Garbage

—Pandu Wiyoga, Stefanus Ato, Aditya Diveranta and Johanes Bimantara, *Kompas*, 18 June 2025

Illegal waste dumping has sparked public outrage across West Java, with mounting garbage piles encroaching dangerously close to residential areas and triggering health and environmental crises. In Sumur Batu, Bekasi, residents like Musa have endured three years of unchecked dumping by unregistered trucks, causing landfill overflow just 5 meters from homes, contaminating streets with leachate and polluting the air. Despite repeated protests and clear breaches of zoning laws, local authorities remain inactive, with officials citing fear of backlash from those benefiting from the illegal system. Similarly, in Limo, Depok, 6,000 residents exposed to toxic smoke from burning waste have demanded the closure of a 20-year-old illegal landfill. Their campaign led to the site's sealing in 2024 and the imprisonment of its owner. Yet unresolved waste piles remain. In Bogor's Sukasari Village, illegal dumping was linked to corruption involving South Tangerang's environmental chief, who misused Rp 75.9 billion in waste funds. Activists and communities are calling for stronger enforcement and accountability to protect public health and uphold environmental justice.

Indonesia banks on Danantara to reignite stalled waste-to-energy projects

—Ruth Dea Juwita, *TheJakartaPost*, 17 June 2025

The government is reviving its stalled waste-to-energy (WtE) program under a revised regulation, expanding from 12 to 33 projects in major cities, with state fund Danantara leading investment, construction, and operations as part of President Prabowo Subianto's waste crisis initiative through 2029. Each project, targeting areas with over 1,000 tonnes of daily waste, aims to generate 20 MW of electricity, with a fixed tariff of 20 US cents/kWh—double the national average. While Danantara's role is expected to streamline bureaucracy and reduce risk, experts warn the program could repeat past failures unless issues like poor waste segregation, land acquisition, and financing gaps—especially reluctance from local banks—are resolved. Only two of the initial 12 projects are operational, and concerns remain over high organic waste content, emission controls, and the removal of tipping fees. Critics, including Walhi and IESR, warn of long-term financial strain on regional budgets and PLN if

subsidies and safeguards are not carefully managed, despite the program's strategic potential to reduce landfill dependency.

5 Cases of Environmental Damage in Indonesia due to Mining Activities

—Ananda Ridho Sulistya, *TempoNews*, 15 June 2025

Mining activities across Indonesia have caused severe environmental degradation and disrupted local livelihoods, with multiple high-profile pollution cases drawing national concern. In Buyat Bay, North Sulawesi, PT Newmont Minahasa Raya was linked to arsenic and mercury poisoning, resulting in health problems among residents, despite initial denials. In Papua, PT Freeport Indonesia's disposal of millions of tons of mine tailings into the Ajkwa River has destroyed wetlands and displaced the indigenous Kamoro people. In Weda Bay, Central Halmahera, research confirmed heavy metal contamination—including mercury, nickel, and chromium—in rivers relied upon for drinking water. Meanwhile, nickel mining threatens the globally significant biodiversity of Raja Ampat, home to 75% of the world's coral species. In Bangka Belitung, both legal and illegal tin mining have devastated land and marine ecosystems, leading to forest loss, reef damage, and a collapse in fish stocks. As traditional livelihoods vanish, many residents have turned to unregulated mining for survival, highlighting the urgent need for stricter environmental safeguards and sustainable alternatives.

Indonesia Shuts Down Two Factories in Serang Over Severe Air Pollution

—M Faiz Zaki, *TempoNews*, 11 June 2025

The Environment Ministry (KLH) has sealed two factories—PT Jaya Abadi Steel and PT Luckione Environment Science Indonesia—in Serang, Banten, for serious air pollution violations contributing to deteriorating air quality in Greater Jakarta. The move follows a surprise night inspection on June 10, 2025, which revealed dense, untreated emissions, illegal hazardous waste disposal, and attempts to operate under regulatory radar. Minister Hanif Faisol Nurofi confirmed the shutdown is part of a broader crackdown across Java's industrial zones, emphasizing the need for a robust monitoring system and a shift to low-emission technologies. PT Jaya Abadi, an iron smelter using induction furnaces, emitted thick smoke and dumped steel slag waste, while PT Luckione, previously flagged in 2023, was again caught—this time via drone footage—releasing zinc oxide particulates exceeding air standards. Deputy Minister Rizal Irawan described the violations as severe environmental crimes, with legal action likely. KLH is intensifying enforcement to safeguard public health and the environment from industrial polluters.

Choking hazard: How North Maluku nickel industry suffocates local villagers

—Rabul Sawal, *TheJakartaPost*, 11 June 2025

Villagers in Gemaf, Central Halmahera, North Maluku, are suffering from severe air pollution caused by the nickel mining and processing complex operated by PT Indonesia Weda Bay Industrial Park (IWIP), just 500 meters from their homes. Residents, including young children like four-year-old Putri, have experienced chronic respiratory illnesses, which locals attribute to coal dust and emissions from IWIP's 13 captive coal-fired power plants. A 2023 study by AEER linked the facility to rising PM2.5 and PM10 levels, far exceeding government and EU standards. Health data show a surge in acute respiratory infections from 351 cases in 2018 to 2,745 in 2024. Economic losses from pollution-related illness are projected to reach Rp 12.3 trillion by 2035, with 5,000 expected premature deaths. Locals, many dependent on IWIP for jobs, feel trapped, while experts urge the government to halt new coal permits, revise

regulations, and implement a nickel decarbonization roadmap to transition to renewables. IWIP has yet to respond to public health concerns

F. Technology, Investment and Finance

Prabowo asks Jakarta to shell out half of seawall costs

—Ni Made Tasyarini, *TheJakartaPost*, 13 June 2025

President Prabowo Subianto has called on Jakarta to shoulder half the estimated US\$8–10 billion cost of building a massive seawall on the city's northern coast, citing its large budget and the project's local importance. Speaking at the International Conference on Infrastructure 2025, Prabowo emphasized that the central government cannot fund the entire eight-year project alone. The Jakarta seawall is part of the broader Giant Sea Wall initiative, a 500-kilometer coastal barrier from Banten to East Java aimed at combating land subsidence and flooding, with a total projected cost of \$80 billion over 20 years. Prabowo has issued a new Presidential Regulation listing the seawall as a national strategic project to streamline land

acquisition and permitting. Public Works Minister Dody Hanggodo and Coordinating Minister Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono confirmed strong investor interest, notably from China, Japan, and South Korea. However, critics warn the project may harm marine ecosystems and fisheries. Jakarta's administration has pledged support, with discussions ongoing to finalize investment and project concepts.

How Indonesian fintech firm is bridging funding gaps for women entrepreneurs

—Amy Sood, *SouthChinaMorningPost*, 11 June 2025

As economic pressures mount and traditional banks remain out of reach for millions of rural women, fintech firm Amarta has stepped in, disbursing over US\$2.2 billion in microloans to 3 million mostly female entrepreneurs since 2010. These micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs)—vital to Indonesia's economy—contribute over 60% of GDP and employ 97% of the workforce, yet most lack formal credit access. Amarta addresses this gap by offering loans between US\$400 and US\$1,330, using hybrid digital-offline methods and joint-responsibility groups to reach underserved communities, especially outside Java. Despite digital and financial literacy challenges, especially in eastern regions, the platform has attracted over US\$200 million in funding, including a recent US\$55 million loan led by European financiers. Amid falling investor confidence and shrinking start-up funding—down 75% in 2024—Amarta emphasizes sound governance to ensure stability. With economic growth slowing to 4.87% in Q1, Amarta's CEO called for stronger government support for MSMEs and innovation ecosystems to safeguard lower-income entrepreneurs and sustain rural economic development.

Indonesia's US\$1.5 billion stimulus package faces uphill battle to revive economy

—Resty Woro Yuniar, *SouthChinaMorningPost*, 11 June 2025

Indonesia's US\$1.5 billion stimulus package, launched to boost household spending during the June–July school holidays, may not be enough to meet the government's 8% growth target, economists warn, as Q1 growth slowed to 4.87% despite the Ramadan-Eid spending season. The two-month package includes rice aid for 18.3 million poor families, cash subsidies for 17.3 million low-income workers, and transport fare discounts, mostly targeting the lower-income segment. However, analysts argue the plan lacks sufficient scale and overlooks the middle class and informal workers, who represent a significant share of consumption and employment. Critics highlight that cash aid fails to match living costs in major cities and excludes many informal laborers not registered in the social security system. Suggestions include broader tax breaks, electricity tariff discounts, and expanded stimulus for labor-intensive industries. Experts estimate growth will remain between 4.6% and 4.8% this year. With a stretched budget and limited fiscal options, the government's ability to stimulate the economy may weaken investor confidence if results fall short.

Danantara's Strategy Increasingly Attracts Foreign Investors

—Agnes Swetta Pandia, *Kompas*, 14 June 2025

Danantara's transparent and strategic investment model is expected to gain investor confidence, especially as the nation targets 8% economic growth by 2029. Speaking at Paramadina University on June 13, CEO Rosan Roeslani emphasized Danantara's role in driving industrial transformation and attracting joint foreign investments in key sectors like renewable energy. The firm plans to manage Rp 15,000 trillion in assets, sourced from state-owned enterprise (BUMN) dividends, not government budgets, with US\$7 billion in profits projected this year. Danantara aims to channel funds into high-impact industries that generate quality jobs—critical in a country where over a third of 140 million workers have only

elementary education or less. With foreign partners leveraging Danantara's capital—such as an example US\$2 billion from Danantara unlocking US\$8 billion more—trust and ease of bureaucracy are expected to grow. The agency targets 80% domestic investment and 20% international, with about US\$135 million allocated over the next five years, amid Bappenas projections of Rp 13,000 trillion total investment needed to spur inclusive national growth.

G. Human Rights, Indigenous People and Gender Equality

Culture minister's denial of mass rape in 1998 riots sparks outrage

—Yerica Lai, *TheJakartaPost*, 16 June 2025

Culture Minister Fadli Zon's denial of mass rape during the May 1998 riots has sparked widespread outrage, with rights groups accusing him of distorting history and deepening the trauma of Chinese-Indonesian women who were victims of the violence. In a recent YouTube interview, Fadli dismissed reports of sexual violence as "rumors" without evidence, contradicting findings by a government-sanctioned fact-finding team that identified at least 85 victims. His comments, tied to a controversial project to rewrite Indonesian history books with a "more positive tone," have drawn condemnation from historians, survivors' advocates, and the Chinese-Indonesian community, who warn of efforts to whitewash the Soeharto regime's abuses. Activist Ita Fatia Nadia and the Civil Society Coalition Against Impunity demanded Fadli retract his remarks and criticized his role in shaping historical narratives, including his support for naming Soeharto a national hero. Komnas Perempuan also condemned the denial, stating it perpetuates impunity and silences victims. Critics argue this reflects a broader attempt to rewrite Indonesia's dark past and erase minority suffering.

Mining Sector Still Masculine Bias, Minimal Involvement of Women

—Abdullah Fikri Ashri, *Kompas*, 15 June 2025

The International Day of Women in Mining (IDWIM), celebrated annually on June 15, highlights the ongoing underrepresentation of women in the global mining sector, where only 8–17% of workers are female despite growing evidence that gender diversity boosts productivity and innovation. Founded by International Women in Mining (IWIM) in 2022, the event aims to push for greater equality and inclusion, urging mining companies and governments to address structural barriers—such as masculine work culture, lack of facilities, wage gaps, and limited access to STEM training—that hinder female participation. The 2025 IDWIM conference, held online on June 17, focuses on how companies can transform to embrace sustainability and diversity. While global progress remains slow, with women comprising just 15% of mining workers in 2021, some regions like Africa show promise—women make up 39% of mining leadership there. In Indonesia, women account for a small fraction of the 1.2 million-strong mining workforce, though their presence in operational and executive roles is gradually increasing, driven by ESG principles and investor expectations.

Komnas HAM Flags Potential Human Rights Violations in Raja Ampat Mining

—Nabiila Azzahra, Nandito Putra and Eka Yudha Saputra, *TempoNews*, 13 June 2025

The Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) has warned of potential human rights violations linked to nickel mining in Raja Ampat, Southwest Papua, citing threats to the right to a clean environment and rising community conflict. Chairperson Anis Hidayah announced Komnas HAM is investigating mining operations by five companies on six small islands, including Gag, Kawe, Manuran, and Manyaifun. Four companies—PT ASP, PT MRP, PT KSM, and PT Nurham—have had their mining permits revoked following violations identified by the Ministry of Environment. The commission emphasized that mining on small islands contravenes national and international laws, including UNCLOS and Law No. 27/2007. Commissioner Saurlin Siagian reported horizontal conflicts between pro- and anti-mining residents, while Greenpeace and the Raja Ampat Conservation Alliance highlighted environmental destruction, with over 500 hectares of forest lost and marine ecosystems under threat. Komnas HAM will deploy a monitoring team and summon responsible authorities, as pressure mounts to enforce environmental and human rights protections in one of the world's richest biodiversity zones.

Deemed Dangerous for the Environment and Indonesia's Future, Walhi Sues Job Creation Law

—Ahmad Arif, *Kompas*, 5 June 2025

On World Environment Day, June 5, 2025, the Indonesian environmental group Walhi filed a judicial review request to the Constitutional Court challenging the Job Creation Law, arguing it endangers the environment and public rights. Walhi identified 13 articles in the law, enacted under President Joko Widodo, that weaken environmental protections by replacing mandatory environmental permits with more lenient "environmental approvals," reducing public oversight and legal recourse. Executive Director Zenzi Suhadi warned this shift undermines checks and balances, excludes communities and NGOs from environmental assessments, and favors corporate interests over constitutional rights to a healthy environment. Legal counsel Mulya Sarmono argued the changes violate Articles 1(3) and 28H(1) of the Constitution. The law's broad deregulatory measures, also present in the 2022 emergency regulation (Perppu), have drawn widespread opposition from civil society for facilitating pollution and environmental degradation in resource-rich sectors like forestry and plantations. Walhi demanded the Court interpret "environmental approval" as equivalent to a permit, warning the law marks a regression from democratic environmental governance to corporate impunity.

Calls to Close PT Toba Pulp Lestari Widen, Triggered by Ecological Damage and Social Conflict

—Nikson Sinaga, *Kompas*, 5 June 2025

Calls for the closure of PT Toba Pulp Lestari (TPL) intensified on June 5, 2025, as major religious institutions—the HKBP Church with 6.5 million congregants and the Catholic Capuchin Order—joined indigenous communities and NGOs in demanding an end to the company's operations in the Lake Toba area. TPL, holding a 167,912-hectare concession, is accused of causing deforestation, biodiversity loss, agrarian conflicts, and the criminalization of indigenous leaders like Sorbatua Siallagan, who was jailed before being acquitted. HKBP leader Victor Tinambunan and Capuchin representative Sumitro Sihombing condemned TPL's exploitative practices, citing worsening floods, landslides, and climate irregularities. Environmental group KSPPM reported a drastic forest cover decline in the region over the past two decades. In response, TPL claimed compliance with all regulations, citing Ministry of Environment audits and ongoing efforts to reduce environmental impacts and engage local stakeholders. Critics, however, argue that TPL's profits come at the cost of ecological destruction and community suffering, urging the Supreme Court and government to uphold environmental and social justice.

I. Government Priority Program

Prepare Students to Enter the World of Work

Ester Lince Napitupulu, *Kompas*, 18 June 2025

The Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Technology launched the Impactful Internship program on June 16, 2025, aiming to equip Indonesian students with real-world experience, social awareness, and professional skills to boost workforce readiness and global competitiveness. Replacing the previous MSIB initiative, the program allows students to intern across diverse sectors—from AI to smart cities—and integrates the experience into academic credits. Internships will run from August 4 to December 22, 2025, with registration open until July 11. Minister Brian Yuliarto emphasized the role of students as “change agents,” while Deputy Minister Stella Christie highlighted that MSIB alumni earn an average of Rp 5.5 million monthly—nearly double the national average—with many receiving direct job offers. Meanwhile, universities like UMN are also supporting student entrepreneurship; Skystar Ventures facilitated the creation of 39 startups this year through business incubation, workshops, and mentorships. These efforts reflect the government’s broader Impactful Campus vision to merge academic learning with hands-on, socially engaged, and industry-connected education.

School Revitalization Funds Managed Independently by Schools

Stephanus Aranditio, *Kompas*, 17 June 2025

The Indonesian government has launched a Rp 17.15 trillion school revitalization program targeting 10,440 educational units nationwide, prioritizing transparency, local empowerment, and community involvement. Minister of Primary and Secondary Education Abdul Mu’ti emphasized that schools will manage the revitalization independently using government-provided funds, aiming not just to improve infrastructure but also to foster learning environments that build student character, competence, and creativity. With 174,000 schools and 980,000 classrooms in disrepair, the total revitalization cost is estimated at Rp 492 trillion. Verified by BPMP and BBPMP using Dapodik data, 8,406 schools have met the

requirements for the first funding phase. Disbursement will be split into 70% upfront and 30% after progress reaches 50%, with principals held accountable. The program aligns with Presidential Instruction No. 7/2025, also promoting digitalization through smart classrooms and teacher training. Mu'ti stressed that integrity, community impact, and educational quality must guide implementation, noting that successful institutions may be inaugurated directly by President Prabowo Subianto.

Army's recruitment of 24,000 noncombat personnel criticized

—Yerica Lai, *TheJakartaPost*, 13 June 2025

The Indonesian Army's plan to recruit 24,000 personnel for noncombat territorial development battalions has drawn sharp criticism from civil society groups concerned about the military's expanding role in civilian life. Initiated under President Prabowo Subianto and supported by Defense Minister Sjafrie Sjamsoeddin, the program aims to deploy soldiers across all 514 regencies to support agriculture, health, livestock, and infrastructure. While Army officials argue this aligns with their territorial duties and non-war operations, rights groups warn it risks undermining post-Soeharto reforms that limited military involvement in civilian affairs. Critics, including the Setara Institute and Civil Society Coalition for Security Sector Reforms, argue the program weakens military professionalism, distracts from defense priorities, and strains the defense budget by diverting funds from weapons modernization and soldier welfare. Despite backlash, the Army continues its recruitment drive, following an earlier deployment of 1,728 personnel. Army spokesperson Brig. Gen. Wahyu Yudhayana insists the initiative will not compromise combat readiness and instead helps the military contribute directly to national development.

Prabowo: Indonesia Has Been Given Signs of Success Towards Food Sovereignty

—Iqbal Basyari, *Kompas*, 5 June 2025

President Prabowo Subianto declared Indonesia on track toward food sovereignty during a corn harvest event in Bengkayang, West Kalimantan, citing rising rice and corn output and reduced reliance on imports. Corn production has increased from 4 to over 6 tons per hectare, contributing to national reserves and enabling the first corn exports to Malaysia. Prabowo aims to halt corn imports by 2026 and establish 80,000 Red and White Cooperatives to support farmers' incomes and build storage infrastructure. The National Police, managing the corn planting, target one million hectares in partnership with over 136,000 farmer groups. Their efforts helped boost national corn production to 9.03 million tons in Q3 2025, a nearly 50% rise from last year. Exports now also include Gorontalo and West Nusa Tenggara, with surplus projections reaching up to 6 million tons. Police Chief Listyo Sigit Prabowo emphasized continued support, citing increased farmer income—from Rp 500,000 to Rp 4 million per month—and efforts to eliminate exploitative middlemen through fair access to Bulog sales.

Open Public Access to Justice, Government Forms 7,000 Posbankum

—Dian Dewi Purnamasari, *Kompas*, 5 June 2025

The Indonesian government is accelerating efforts to improve public access to justice by targeting the establishment of 7,000 legal aid posts (posbankum) in villages and urban areas by December 2025, with 5,008 already operational as of June. The Ministry of Law and Human Rights is also training village and sub-district heads as paralegals and peace mediators to help resolve local disputes and reduce the burden on courts. A new Legal Aid Information Center portal was launched to provide online legal consultations, literacy tools, and a platform for paralegals. At a Jakarta event on June 5, attended by key officials including

Supreme Court Chief Justice Sunarto and Minister Supratman Andi Agtas, the initiative was hailed as a major step toward inclusive and accessible legal services, especially for underserved communities. With over 2.9 million cases filed in first-instance courts in 2024, out-of-court mediation is seen as a strategic, cost-effective solution to strengthen justice delivery and preserve local wisdom at the grassroots level.

II. Indonesia in Politics and Geopolitics

Indonesia-Singapore Sign 19 Agreements, Including Extradition Treaty

—Kurnia Yunita Rahayu, *Kompas*, 16 June 2025

Indonesia and Singapore have strengthened bilateral ties with 19 strategic agreements, including progress on a long-pending extradition treaty, during President Prabowo Subianto's state visit to Singapore on Monday (16/6/2025). The extradition deal, signed in 2022 and

ratified in 2023, covers 31 offenses, including corruption and terrorism, with Singapore now committed to its implementation. The agreements also include defense cooperation, military training finalization, food security, low-carbon energy, and cross-border electricity trade. Prabowo emphasized the importance of the partnership, noting Singapore as a top investor in Indonesia, while PM Lawrence Wong highlighted growing economic ties, including renewable energy projects. Both leaders also discussed regional stability, calling for peaceful resolutions in Gaza and Myanmar. The visit marks Prabowo's first since his October 2024 inauguration, reinforcing five decades of diplomatic relations.

Indonesia's Prabowo to Visit Putin, Skip Carney G-7 Meeting

—Candra Asmara, *Bloomberg*, 12 June 2025

Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto will visit Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow next week, skipping the G7 summit in Canada despite a personal invitation from Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney. The June 18–20 visit includes bilateral talks and participation in the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum. The decision raises questions about Jakarta's foreign policy direction under Prabowo, who has maintained a non-aligned stance while deepening ties with global powers including Russia, China, and the U.S. Since his election, Prabowo has met Donald Trump, Xi Jinping, and Putin—whom he previously proposed a Ukraine peace plan favoring Russia's position. The upcoming talks may include defence, transport, and education cooperation. The foreign ministry noted the trip was arranged before the G7 invite, and Prabowo has expressed support for the summit proceedings. While Indian PM Narendra Modi will attend the G7 to ease tensions with Canada, it remains unclear if Prabowo will join virtually or send a delegate, reflecting Southeast Asia's balancing act amid global rivalries.

Turkey to export 48 of its nationally produced fighter jets to Indonesia

—Team, *APNews*, 5 June 2025

Turkey will export 48 KAAN fighter jets to Indonesia in a landmark \$10 billion deal—its first export order for the domestically developed fifth-generation aircraft—announced by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on the sidelines of the Indo Defence 2025 expo in Jakarta. The jets, still under development and set for delivery starting 2028, will be produced in Turkey with integration of Indonesian capabilities. Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto, who witnessed the signing alongside senior defense officials, has prioritized modernizing Indonesia's aging military arsenal by strengthening partnerships and acquiring submarines, frigates, and fighter jets from multiple countries. The KAAN deal follows earlier cooperation on a Baykar combat-drone facility in Indonesia and marks deepening defense ties between the two nations. Subianto emphasized the importance of defense investments for national sovereignty, warning that failure to build military capacity risks loss of independence. Turkey's KAAN fighter, which made its maiden flight in 2024, has also attracted interest from Pakistan and Azerbaijan, further signaling Turkey's emergence as a global defense exporter.

Calls Not Just “Green” from Weda Bay to Raja Ampat

—Dionisius Reynaldo Triwibowo, *Kompas*, 5 June 2025

Indonesia and France have strengthened cooperation on energy transition following French President Emmanuel Macron's visit in May, marked by two strategic MoUs signed between French firms Eramet and Crédit Agricole CIB with Indonesia's sovereign wealth fund Danantara to support mineral downstreaming and sustainable financing. The deals, aimed at boosting Indonesia's electric vehicle battery value chain, include lithium exploration and sustainable mining in Weda Bay, North Maluku, where Eramet has operated for 19 years.

While welcomed by the government, the expansion of nickel mining has sparked public health concerns. Studies by Nexus3 Foundation and Tadulako University revealed mercury and arsenic contamination in fish and local blood samples, as well as severe air pollution risks in Morowali, Central Sulawesi. TUK Indonesia warns that fundamental community rights are being sidelined by unchecked mining and calls for stricter oversight, cleaner supply chains, and ethical financing. Meanwhile, Greenpeace Indonesia has protested against nickel mining in ecologically sensitive Raja Ampat, citing forest loss and biodiversity threats in what they call “the last paradise on Earth.”