

Research Article

# Indonesia's Climate Diplomacy under Joko Widodo: Shaping Equitable and Sustainable Global Future

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## Abstract

*Climate change is a significant global concern due to its potential for long-term detrimental impacts on multiple facets of life. However, prevailing viewpoints on climate change often exhibit a bias towards the interests of the global north, disregarding the needs and vulnerabilities of the Global south. This research utilizes qualitative descriptive methods, integrating theories of international relations, climate diplomacy, and Indonesian foreign policy to offer a comprehensive explanation. Indonesia, being highly susceptible to climate change impacts, plays a pivotal role in addressing this disparity. However, previous studies have overlooked the examination of how Indonesia can optimize its climate diplomacy efforts under President Joko Widodo's leadership. Analyzing Indonesia's climate diplomacy endeavors yields valuable insights for the country's contributions to global climate change solutions and addressing its vulnerabilities. This shapes Indonesia's future perspective on international relations, balancing its interests with the imperative for global cooperation. Indonesia's involvement under the leadership of President Joko Widodo in global climate change efforts is pivotal for fostering an equitable and sustainable future.*

*Keywords: Environment, Climate Change, Indonesia, Leadership.*

## INTRODUCTION

One of the latest prominent representatives of the global south that implements climate diplomacy is Indonesia. Indonesia is a large and populous country that is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. The country has been a key player in climate change negotiations since the early 1990s, and its engagement in these negotiations has been driven by a desire to build national resilience to the impacts of climate change. Indonesia faces a number of challenges in building national resilience, including poverty, inequality, and a lack of access to resources. However, the country also has a number of opportunities to build national resilience, including the development of new technologies, the adoption of new policies, and the mobilization of international support (Yustiningrum et.al, 2023). For Indonesia, climate change will have a significant impact on national resilience, and of course, for all countries in the world.

In the recent years, environmental issues have also dominated the discourse in International Relations. Once it is only of the many issues brought into discussions by very few actors sporadically, but now it has evolved into a main global topic that all world leaders are paying attention to. Every powerful and significant actor, both from state and non-state spheres, talk about environmental issues in various influential platforms in

international affairs such as the UN and the G20, including Indonesia, who has just finished wrapping up its G20 Presidency in Bali in November 2022. The nature of the growing public debate on the environment is reflected in the past global activities. The global debate from year to year shows how interesting and important the issue of global environment. Some of the global actions that have been occurred can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. Global Action in Environment Issue 2000-2015

Year	Global Action/Event	Issue
2000	Millennium Summit	Millennium Summit established the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
2002	World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg	World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg gave birth to a new Action Plan.
2005-2008	Millenium Development Goals	Millenium Development Goals were reviewed at high level meetings in New York.
2010	The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, also called Rio + 20	The United Nations Environment Assembly was established, becoming the world's high-level decision-making body on environmental issue. The Environment Assembly met to set priorities for global environmental policies and develop international environmental law.
2015	United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development	United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development gave birth to Agenda 2030 and its seventeen sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Source: <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/environment>

Environmental concerns hold immense importance in contemporary times as they have the potential to fuel conflicts and necessitate international collaboration. The twenty-first century has witnessed environmental issues emerging as a critical problem within the field of International Relations, as they can significantly alter the trajectory of globalization and the dynamics of the global system. Consequently, the way in which the world manages its environment will have a profound impact on the long-term survival of humanity (Pereira, 2015).

One of the environmental issues that continues to be heavily debated is climate change. Climate changes that consist of altering quantity and quality of earthly resources and components are bringing real, concrete, and damaging impacts to countries around the world. Lives have been lost, lands have been damaged, and oceans have been polluted. According to the NOAA (2021), there have been serious climate change incidents in the past decades. Global temperatures rise about 1° Celsius from 1901 to 2020. The rate of sea-level rise has accelerated over time, going from 1.7 mm/year throughout most of the 20th century to 3.2 mm/year since 1993. Glacier shrinkage is also evident, as the average thickness of 30 extensively studied glaciers has decreased by more than 60 feet since 1980.

The Arctic region has experienced a notable decline in the area covered by sea ice at the end of summer, with a reduction of around 40% since 1979. Carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere have seen a significant increase of 25% since 1958 and approximately 40% since the Industrial Revolution. Additionally, snow is melting earlier compared to the long-

term average (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 2021). The best time to tackle climate change should have been done decades ago. The second-best time would be now.

Climate change has been endangering Indonesia's food security (Direktorat Jenderal Pengendalian Perubahan Iklim, 2017) and will undoubtedly give negative impacts to the growth of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the future (Foreign Policy Strategy Agency, 2022). The way Indonesia perceives the significance of climate diplomacy is materialized in its action during the G20 by inviting all G20 leaders to visit Indonesia's mangrove forest in Bali, which is a concrete example of Indonesia's commitment to mitigate the climate change problem. Thus, Indonesia's climate diplomacy is worth examining. To provide more focused research, this paper focuses on Indonesia's climate diplomacy during the leadership of President Joko Widodo. Learning from Indonesia's climate diplomacy during his tenure is essential to estimate how the issue of climate change will influence Indonesia in conducting its international affairs in the future.

Numerous studies have explored the relationship between leadership and climate change. Specifically, research has focused on the role of political leaders in shaping national and global responses to this challenge. According to Betsill and Bulkeley (2007), political leadership is crucial in driving climate change policy and action at both the national and international levels. Effective leaders are responsible for setting the agenda, mobilizing public support, and negotiating international agreements. Furthermore, research has identified specific leadership traits that are necessary for successful climate governance. Hsu (2015) argue that leaders who possess foresight, vision, and courage are more likely to take bold actions to address climate change and engage with other leaders to develop collaborative solutions. The significance of leadership in addressing climate change remains a crucial area of study, as political leaders continue to shape policy and action at both national and international levels.

The leadership of Joko Widodo has been marked by a significant emphasis on climate diplomacy, which has garnered international attention. Addressing climate change requires collective action and equitable distribution of responsibilities. In the ideal condition, Indonesia with global and regional cooperation should be able to mitigate the climate change, but in this research various scholars have stated that Indonesia has not been doing enough and still very far from successfully mitigating the environmental issues. This paper would then investigate how Indonesia apply the climate diplomacy, particularly concerning climate change mitigation adaptation during the leadership period of Joko Widodo.

## **METHOD AND THEORY**

The research methodology used in this study is a qualitative descriptive research method. According to Sugiono (2010), qualitative research refers to a type of research where the researcher is the main instrument. The data collection methodology is combined, and the data analysis is inductive (Sugiyono, 2010, p. 9). Descriptive research is research that uses data to solve a problem (Narbuko & Ahmadi, 2015). In this

descriptive research, the analysis process includes data presentation, evaluation, and interpretation.

The theory used is a combination of theories of international relations, climate diplomacy, and foreign policy theory. The occurrence of International Relations is a must as a result of interdependence and the increasing complexity of human life in the international community, hence interdependence does not allow for a country to be closed off from the world. The relationship or interaction between countries is the most basic thing to understand. These interactions between countries are carried out by each country through state actors and non-state actors due to the many complexities faced by the international community called Patterns of International Relations Interactions that take place in the association of the international community and create dependence between one country and another.

After the Cold War ended and positioned the current order into neither unipolar, bipolar, nor multipolar, the world is becoming more unpredictable (Pereira, 2015). Not only is the relationship between countries becoming more complex, but the issues that arise are not only concerning traditional issues, but non-traditional issues as well. Non-traditional security concern that poses a threat to every country in the world includes the issue of climate change. Climate change gives rise to three fundamental ontological concerns within the field of international politics.

Firstly, it prompts a reexamination of how causality operates within the international political system. Secondly, it brings into focus the interplay between the agency of individual entities and the constraints imposed by the structural dynamics of the system. Lastly, it raises the question of whether the international political system and its member states can be viewed both as self-contained systems and as integral parts of larger interconnected systems (Kavalski, 2007). Climate change thus can be defined as a borderless issue impacting countries globally, in which global cooperation is required to mitigate the issue. One of the many practices can be conducted through by climate diplomacy.

Diplomacy extends far beyond the external display of a position. Its application in addressing climate change is crucial for incorporating climate concerns into decision-making processes and reshaping the core national interests at home, as well as influencing discussions in other countries. Climate diplomacy should align with other national priorities and employ all available means to bridge the artificial divide between national and international interests. It should effectively translate national actions into tangible political progress on the international stage, while also leveraging international momentum to stimulate and drive domestic ambition (Mabey, 2013).

Mabey (2013) also states that the climate diplomacy must manage political trade-offs, in which policy coordination at the highest level is necessary to balance conflicting economic, energy, climate change concerns and its relevant diplomatic goals. Delivering an effective climate diplomacy strategy is beyond the capacity of just one department, no matter how powerful. This mainstreaming of climate into new institutions has brought onboard new actors. But this positive development has also led to higher tensions inside

governments as the power, leverage and agency of the traditional actors such as Ministry of Environment is weakened.

Hence, the most effective climate diplomacy requires a “whole of government” involvement, however it has yet to be fully achieved. Many innovations are hardly been employed by many countries. Given the importance of limiting climate risks, climate diplomacy is still relatively lack of resources in some countries, and it has not integrated as a top priority into broader foreign policy processes. In addition to the need to build on available capacities, there are many countries that can learn from diplomatic best practices in other areas to build more effective public use capacities in the area of climate change. Provided with large population and rich strategic resources, it is within reason that Indonesia holds a prominent position in regional and global affairs.

Indonesia's ascent in regional and global is resulted from several factors, one of them is resources and clear vision hold by Indonesia's leaders. Indonesia's leadership has been admitted by the world since achieving its independence. Although Indonesia is considered a “new” country, its leadership becomes a dominant characteristic of Indonesia's post-colonial state-craft in the region. However, internal instability appeared to destabilized the country. Vision of leaders was quite related with their perspective on nationalism and independence. These perspectives influenced Indonesia's foreign policy approach in interacting with international community (Thompson, 2014).

Independent and active, or commonly known as “*bebas-aktif*”, have been the main principles of Indonesian foreign policy since its independence. It becomes the fundamental for Indonesia in interacting with other states at global level. Through these two principles, Indonesia aims to be independent from any political block which exists in the global arena. It also implies Indonesia's willingness to enhance its role in international community. The first dimension of “*bebas-aktif*” doctrine shows Indonesia's respect for the sovereignty over the other states. By placing this dimension in the doctrine, it demands Indonesian government to not to interfere in other state's domestic political issues.

As sovereignty has been a sensitive concern of every state, offending this aspect could easily bring countries into conflicts (Poole, 2014). As what Haryanto (2015) stated, the principle of “*bebas-aktif*” serves as the “spirit” of Indonesia's conceptualized role. The principle of active non-alignment has been dynamically applied by the Indonesian government from the era of Soekarno to Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY), taking into account the role prescriptions or expectations from other countries. In general, this principle serves as a reference for analyzing Indonesia's foreign policy behavior. It serves as the foundation and justification that Indonesia's position in the world is not neutral and impartial, but rather free to actively engage in issues that will affect and have an impact on the world.

Indonesia's foreign policy is shaped by a complex interplay of both international and domestic factors, influencing its approach to global affairs (Haryanto, 2015). Understanding Jokowi's people-centric diplomacy requires acknowledging the concept of the level of analysis as a valuable tool in examining its formation. Jokowi divides the analysis of foreign policy into two stages: the international stage, also known as the

systemic level, which focuses on the behavior of state actors influenced by external factors; and the domestic stage, often referred to as the sub-system, which highlights the significance of internal factors in shaping a state's foreign affairs. These domestic factors encompass historical context, socio-religious traditions, public opinion, and geographical considerations. By employing the level of analysis approach, influential factors in the development of Indonesia's foreign policy can be identified, serving as the foundation for constructing a diplomatic framework that guides state actors in their decision-making

During Joko Widodo's administration, Indonesia's foreign policy has prioritized international engagement, focusing on expanding its global role. President Joko Widodo aims to cultivate relationships with other nations and reduce potential adversaries. His approach emphasizes an outward orientation grounded in democratic values, with the central goal of safeguarding the interests of the Indonesian people. This people-centric diplomacy diverges from the previous "thousand friends-zero enemies" under President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, which seemed to prioritize foreign policy over domestic needs. The earlier approach often resulted in a perception that Indonesia gained fewer benefits from its diplomatic efforts compared to other countries. In contrast, the current administration strives to align foreign policy with domestic interests, ensuring that the Indonesian people are the primary beneficiaries of Indonesia's diplomatic endeavors.

The terminology regarding climate diplomacy can be understood through the relevant sources mentioned above. This terminology explains the increasing pace of global change and the significance of addressing environmental issues, particularly climate change, in today's context. The interconnectedness of the dynamic environmental concept and Indonesia's foreign policy concept serves as the primary approach in defining the issues. Elaborating on the values of the "*bebas-aktif*" concept, followed by the introduction of a new approach under the Jokowi administration called "pro-people diplomacy," provides the foundation for a deeper understanding of how Indonesia, under the leadership of Joko Widodo, engages in climate diplomacy, which influences an equitable and sustainable global future.

## RESULT AND ANALYSIS

### Climate Diplomacy During the G20

During the leadership of President Joko Widodo, Indonesia has been making efforts to take the centre stage of the global cooperation in dealing with climate change. One of the latest actions was conducted during the G20 Summit in Bali. In November 2022, President Joko Widodo invited all G20 leaders to a mangrove forest known as Grand Forest Park Tahura (*Taman Hutan Raya / Tahura*) in Ngurah Rai, so they would be able to witness one of Indonesia's concrete actions in tackling climate change. The approximately 1,300 hectares Ngurah Rai Tahura was previously a large fishing area, which eroded the surrounding environment; but Indonesia had successfully transformed it into a mangrove forest functioning as a home to 33 species of mangrove trees, where 300 faunas such as fishes, shrimps, birds, monkeys, and snakes live. During the event, the G20 leaders did a joint mangrove planting event and countries such as India, Japan,

Australia, Italy, Spain Singapore, Netherland, the European Union, and the International Monetary Fund attended the event. By organizing the activity, Indonesia encouraged the said countries and international organization to continue to be committed to the global cooperation in addressing the climate change. Following the event, Joko Widodo stated that as a country with the largest mangrove forest in the world comprises of around 3.3 million hectares, Indonesia intended to continue to contribute to the global climate change cooperation.

Mangroves are very essential for ecosystem because they enable nutrient cycling, soil formation, wood production, fish spawning grounds, ecotourism and carbon (C) storage. They provide large long-term C storages and, as the global storage is sinking, preventing the loss of mangrove would be an effective strategy in mitigating climate change. For the last thirty years, Indonesia has lost 40% of its mangroves mostly due to aquaculture development, leading to an increase in annual gas emissions. Despite the fact that annual mangrove deforestation in Indonesia only counts 6% of its total forest loss, if Indonesian mangroves loss were stopped, the total emissions would decrease as much as 10–31% of estimated annual emissions from the current land-use sectors. In other words, the conservation of Indonesian mangroves should be put in a high priority in managing climate change (Murdiyarso, et al., 2015). Accordingly, by organizing the visit of G-20 leaders to the mangrove forest in Bali, Indonesia also emphasizes its importance in the global climate change mitigation cooperation.

Referring to data from the Central Statistics Agency as of December 2021, the extent of mangrove ecosystems in Indonesia reaches 3.63 million hectares, accounting for 20.37% of the world's total. This makes Indonesia the country with the largest mangrove forest in the world. For the Indonesian government, the development of mangrove ecosystems can generate additional revenue through carbon trading. Currently, the global carbon price ranges from US\$5-10 per ton of CO<sub>2</sub>. With a mangrove forest covering approximately 3 million hectares, which can absorb carbon emissions of around 950 tons, the government could earn an additional revenue of nearly Rp2,400 trillion from carbon trading. The state's income could be even higher when considering carbon trading from tropical forests and peatlands (The Ministry of Communication and Informatics of Indonesia, 2022).

According to data from the Coordinating Ministry for Maritime Affairs and Investment, Indonesia's tropical forests rank third largest in the world, covering an area of 125.9 million hectares, capable of absorbing carbon emissions of 25.18 billion tons. Meanwhile, in terms of peatlands, Indonesia has the widest coverage in the world, with 7.5 million hectares capable of absorbing carbon emissions of around 55 billion tons. By combining these three factors, Indonesia can absorb at least 113 gigatons of global carbon emissions (The Ministry of Communication and Informatics of Indonesia, 2022). This fact serves as a significant and deterrent factor in shaping Indonesia's climate diplomacy efforts. Indonesia is raising awareness globally about its impactful role.

The evidence of Indonesia's commitment to climate change is enshrined in the Bali Leaders' Declaration 2022, which encompasses 52 points of statements, as well as various communiques and documents resulting from discussions among all G20 engagement

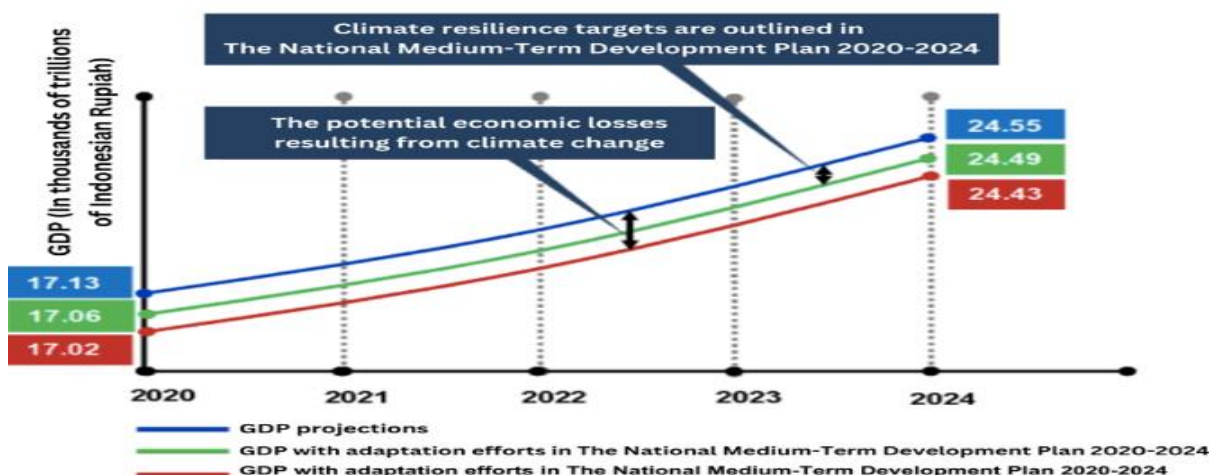
groups (Indonesia Baik, 2023). As the President of the G20, Indonesia has made utmost efforts to bridge the profound and extensive differences among G20 delegations. The G20 leaders also emphasized their collective commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), addressing climate change, and strengthening the health sector.

### Indonesia's Involvement in Global Climate Change Mitigation

The abovementioned activity is part of efforts Indonesia conducted in managing climate change and several motivations could be identified to explain why Indonesia is interested to includes itself in the issue. Climate change has been endangering Indonesia's food security and badly affecting its fisheries sector. It is not seldom that droughts have led to crop failure. Climate change also causes ocean acidification, thereby causing a decrease in catches (Direktorat Jenderal Pengendalian Perubahan Iklim, 2017).

In a Policy Brief on Sustainable Green Development for Indonesia in the International Fora, The Foreign Policy Strategy Agency of the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs specifies that the issue of climate change and sustainable development are global challenges that must be addressed internationally. For the Global south countries, the issues of poverty and sustainable development are very pressing, and the climate change will have a direct impact in the economic, social and environmental fields (Foreign Policy Strategy Agency, 2022). The policy brief estimates that the gross domestic product (GDP) of Indonesia will reach Rp. 24.55 thousand trillion in 2024; but, taking into account the economic impacts of climate change, it would decrease to Rp. 24.43 thousand trillion. It offers a middle ground, that by applying certain strategy in the international fora, which focuses on sustainable green development for Indonesia, there is a possibility of Indonesia achieving Rp. 24.49 thousand trillion GDP in 2024 (See Figure 1.). Thus, it is understandable that Indonesia has been actively taking part in international cooperations that address climate change because it is beneficial for the national economic development of the country.

Figure 1. Impacts of Climate Change to Indonesia's GDP



Source: Foreign Policy Strategy Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (2022).



Development is the key for every country to establish a prosperous nation. The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia stipulates that the state must provide a decent living for citizens in the form of a proper place to stay and healthy living environment; and the citizens have the right to obtain health services and access to education. Sustainable development will enable Indonesia to achieve the said mandate, and Indonesia's active role in the global climate change cooperation is indeed in line with the constitution.

### **Indonesia's Commitment in Global Climate Change Mitigation Cooperation**

The Indonesian Government ratified the Climate Change Convention based on the Law Number 6 of 1994 concerning the Ratification of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and it is included in the Non-Annex I country. Thus, Indonesia is officially bound by obligations and have the right to take advantage of the various support and opportunities offered by the UNFCCC in the effort to achieve the goals of the convention. Indonesia hosted the 13th Conference of the Parties (COP-13) in 2007 in Bali, which produced the Bali Action Plan. It placed the important role of Indonesian forests through the implementation of the REDD+ scheme and by producing the IFCA (Indonesia Forest Climate Alliance) study. The Bali Action Plan includes agreeing on Policy Approaches and Positive Incentives for REDD+ in the Global south countries which makes it possible to provide solutions to deforestation in the Global south countries so that they can be reduced while still allowing the continuation of their national development.

President Joko Widodo maintains the policy. During his leadership, Indonesia's commitment and contribution was again demonstrated by ratifying the Paris Agreement that was signed in New York on 22 April 22 2016. As a ratifying country, Indonesia signifies its commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and actively takes part in the prevention of climate change. The Paris Agreement positions forests as the key to build efforts in reducing greenhouse gases due to their ability to absorb greenhouse gases. It encourages the parties to implement and support an agreement-based framework for activities to reduce gas emission resulting from deforestation and forest degradation; and to conserve and manage forests based on the principle of sustainability (Direktorat Jenderal Pengendalian Perubahan Iklim, 2017).

In addition, under Joko Widodo's leadership, Indonesia has placed significant emphasis on low-carbon and climate-resilient development as a key priority in its national development agenda. Climate change adaptation and mitigation have been integrated across various sectors. This commitment serves as the foundation for Indonesia's preparation of its First Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) document, which was submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in November 2016. The NDC outlines Indonesia's strategic approach to transitioning towards a low-emission future and enhancing climate resilience. As part of this commitment, Indonesia aims to reduce emissions by 29% to 41% by 2030. The focus extends beyond emissions reduction and encompasses efforts to strengthen economic,

social, and ecological resilience, as well as enhancing livelihoods and landscape sustainability.

### **Criticism of Indonesia's Approach to Climate Change**

Despite the abovementioned efforts, Indonesia often receives criticism that it has not done enough, that the commitment is merely on paper and is not put into real practice. The 29% to 41% emission reduction plan by 2030 has not been followed up by concrete blueprints nor action plans. The target is also contrary to the government's program to increase electricity capacity by 35,000 MW, which mostly relies on coal, while the target of increasing the portion of new and renewable energy by 23 percent in 2025 is still stuck at 9 percent as the investment was very minimal. Not surprisingly, the Climate Action Tracker (CAT) stated that Indonesia's climate change policy is highly insufficient (Djalal, 2021).

Since climate change is an urgent problem, countries should collaborate bilaterally to be able to mitigate the impact. One of those efforts could be seen from the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM) between Indonesia and Japan. It is a scheme for cooperation in a low-carbon project, to promote clean and renewable energy. Research on the application of JCM in Indonesia, with the case study of the Jakabaring Solar Power Plant in Palembang, showed that the Indonesian Government inconsistently support the clean energy development and the carbon-intensive industry players still played a dominant role in Indonesia's climate diplomacy. The power plant suffered from budget loss because it lacked of financial incentives from the government, highlighting a gap between rhetoric and practice. It should also be mentioned about the fact that Indonesia is committed in the Paris Agreement, but there is still a lack of coordination between the Indonesian Government, private entities, and civil society in transforming the commitment into the concrete actions (Robertua and Sihura, 2020).

Another criticism emphasizes on how Indonesia will not be able to successfully fulfill its climate change mitigation commitment when it does not separate the climate change issue from the economy development. The 1945 Constitution does not specifically formulate the protection of environment and human rights affected by environmental issues. The review suggests that there should be an amendment that separate environmental norms so there would be no assumption that the environmental issues, including climate change, is under the issue of economic development.

### **Indonesia's Actions on Climate Change**

Responding to the criticisms, the paper would like to reiterate that development is the key for every country to establish a prosperous nation and its sustainability is a must. Mandated by the 1945 Constitution, Indonesia is obliged to guarantee the achievement of welfare for its citizens. On the contrary to the statement in the previous paragraph, the 1945 Constitution allows Indonesia to put more emphasis on the mitigation of climate change by pairing it with Indonesia's economic development (Faiz, 2016).

Furthermore, international discussions emphasizes that efforts to control climate change are carried out by taking into account national circumstances, including state conditions and capacities, as well as state sovereignty. Therefore, Indonesia's commitment and contribution concerning climate change is carried out in accordance with the capability of government, including in terms of international relations. It is true that Indonesia's commitment concerning global cooperation in addressing the climate change has not yet been fully implemented and several challenges are still existed, but Indonesia has been making various fruitful attempts, exemplified by the transformation of a large fishing area in Ngurah Rai Bali into a 1,300 hectares Mangrove Forest. It is a very important step because of the importance of mangrove forests in reducing carbon emissions.

Indonesia is leading by examples. The level of forest fires in Indonesia decreases to 82% in 2020, while greenhouse gas emissions from forests and land use was controlled up to 40.9% in year 2019 compared to 2015. In 2020, deforestation in Indonesia was at its lowest level within the last twenty years, while last year the world lost 12% of its forest compared to the previous year as many global north countries experienced the biggest forest and land fires in history. The achievements were attained because Indonesia had been combining environmental considerations, including climate change, with economic and social aspects, under sustainable forest management policies, which prioritize partnerships with communities. In other words, the success is due to the fact that Indonesia put climate change mitigation action in the context of sustainable development (Foreign Policy Strategy Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022).

Another important role of Indonesia within the perspective of international cooperation in mitigating climate change is that Indonesia serves as the bridge that connects the global north and the global south countries. Indonesian Minister for Environment and Forestry, Siti Nurbaya, during her remark at the G20 Joint Environment and Climate Ministers' Meeting (JECMM) in Nusa Dua, on 31 August 2022, stated that Indonesia maintained its position and its impartiality by practicing free and active foreign policy in accordance with the 1945 Constitution. The free and active foreign policy was manifested when the Indonesian Minister of Environment and Forestry welcomed the Ministers of the Environment and Climate, both from the Global north and Global south countries. The meeting generated a chair summary that covers environmental issues and climate change. It took a considerable amount of time to finalize the summary due to different national interests and perspectives of the involved parties.

The participants in the forum reached a consensus to enhance research efforts and promote local and regional initiatives in tackling climate issues. They emphasized the importance of involving vulnerable groups and strengthening engagement in maritime and climate change discussions within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Additionally, the forum addressed the crucial matter of environmental funding, aiming to foster sustainable financial support to effectively address climate change. This aspect holds significant importance, particularly for countries from the global south (Triferma and Resinta, 2022).

## **Indonesia in the Global Competition on Climate Change**

It is important to note that concerning climate change and its correlation with sustainable development, the relations between the Global north and South countries do not only comprise of cooperation but also competition. As a matter of fact, Indonesia and the European Union (EU) are at “war” concerning the export of Indonesian nickel ore and CPO. President Joko Widodo reiterated that the 2020 decision to ban nickel exports persisted and Indonesia is ready to face the EU’s challenge at the World Trade Organization. The decision is to enforce mining companies to develop the downstream metal industry so Indonesia can export semi-processed products. Previously, he emphasized that Indonesia will file a lawsuit against the EU’s ban on Indonesian palm oil, which EU characterizes as the main source of deforestation in Indonesia (The Jakarta Post, 2021).

Amidst the nickel and CPO disputes between Indonesia and the EU, President Jokowi went to Belgium on 13 December 2022, for the ASEAN-European Union Summit. The president had made it clear that Indonesia stands firm with its position but the disagreements will not hinder ongoing business and cooperation with the EU. This particular example underscores the fact that environmental issues, including climate change, are interconnected with development issues, particularly economic in this matter. Furthermore, the way Indonesia stands against the EU underlines that Indonesia once again is leading by examples, underlining that developing countries should defend its national interests despite being in the opposite position of the more powerful developed countries.

## **The Future of Indonesia’s in Correlation with Climate Change**

The paper deliberated various actions Indonesia implemented under climate diplomacy during the leadership of President Joko Widodo, which stems from the fact that climate change has been negatively affecting Indonesia’s development and will continue to do so in the future. In the economic development for example, by conducting climate diplomacy, it is possible for Indonesia to achieve higher GDP (Rp. 24.49 thousand trillion GDP in 2024) compared to a case in which Indonesia ignores climate change mitigation (Rp. 24.43 thousand trillion in 2024). In the future, because economic development continues to be the priority of Indonesia as a part of the global south countries, characterized by its low GDP, high population, and high amount of unemployment among others, climate diplomacy will continue to play an important role in how Indonesia conducting its International Relations.

As a country that adheres to the principle of "*bebas-aktif*" in its foreign policy and relations with other nations, Indonesia is not in a neutral position, especially regarding environmental change and sustainable development issues. Being active and independent does not mean that Indonesia cannot take sides. The government of Joko Widodo has demonstrated that Indonesia's bold steps in addressing climate change are driven not only by the interests of the Global south but also by the long-term interests of all parties worldwide.

Furthermore, due to its free and active foreign policy, Indonesia manages to lead by examples in bring forward the interests of the Global south to foster the global climate change mitigation cooperation. One of the latest examples of its leadership was shown during a meeting of ministers of the environment within the G20 Presidency 2022, where different national interests and perspectives of the parties were accommodated. The meeting agreed to increase researches, local, and regional initiatives in addressing climate issue; involve vulnerable groups; and strengthen engagement in maritime and climate change dialogue at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); as well as encourage sustainable funding to deal with climate change, which is highly important for the Global south. Another leading example by Indonesia took form in the way Indonesia stands against the EU concerning the nickel and CPO disputes. It sends the message that a member of the South can also stands firm against the North.

Leading by examples, Indonesia has been able to stress the importance of the interests of the South in global climate change cooperation mitigation. Sustainable development as has been discussed, is very important for the South, including Indonesia. Hence, in the future, it is highly possible that in implementing its climate diplomacy, Indonesia will continue to take the leading role in global cooperation to mitigate climate change to ensure that the interests of the South will be addressed accordingly. Indonesia's actions in climate diplomacy serve as a deterrent factor for its participation in global decisions and policies regarding climate change, and fostering an equitable and sustainable global future.

## CONCLUSION

The occurrence of globalization has led to increased interdependence between countries, meaning that environmental issues have become a shared burden. Climate change is now considered a non-traditional security concern that affects states' economic growth and welfare development. The practice of climate diplomacy is necessary for a borderless solution to the problem, but it must also consider the interests of the global south by incorporating the principle of sustainable development. Indonesia under the leadership of Joko Widodo, as part of the Global south, has committed to climate change mitigation and diplomacy by ratifying the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Paris Agreement, and submitting Indonesia's First Nationally Determined Contribution.

Indonesia's participation in global climate change mitigation is crucial since it suffers tremendous negative impacts on its natural resources, which can hinder its economic growth and welfare development. Joko Widodo's government has proven to be taking an important role and demonstrating its concentration on environmental issues with climate diplomacy which serves as a manifestation of Indonesia's foreign policy concept of "*bebas-aktif*", emphasizes that Indonesia does not adopt a neutral stance but rather takes a side in promoting the common good. Indonesia's climate diplomacy under the leadership of Joko Widodo also serves as a deterrent factor for its participation in global decisions and policies related to climate change, in order to promote and foster an equitable and sustainable global future.

In addition, deepen understanding of the specific impacts of climate change on Indonesia's natural resources, evaluate the effectiveness of the country's mitigation efforts, and analyze the socioeconomic implications of climate change on various sectors. Investigating the inclusivity and equity aspects of Indonesia's climate diplomacy, conducting comparative analyzes with other countries, and examining the long-term implications on its foreign policy will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of Indonesia's role in addressing climate change and use climate diplomacy as a tool to foster an equitable and sustainable global future.

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