



Assessing Climate Justice Within Indonesia's Sustainable Development Framework

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Abstract

This paper assesses the integration of climate justice within Indonesia's sustainable development framework, focusing on how the country's development policies address both environmental sustainability and social equity in the face of climate change. Indonesia, as one of the world's most vulnerable countries to climate impacts, faces significant challenges in balancing rapid economic growth with the need to mitigate climate risks and ensure social justice. Climate justice, which emphasizes the disproportionate impacts of climate change on marginalized communities, requires that policy responses prioritize not only environmental sustainability but also the rights and well-being of vulnerable groups. This study critically examines Indonesia's national development plans, climate policies, and climate adaptation strategies to assess how well they incorporate climate justice principles. Through a combination of policy analysis, interviews with key stakeholders, and case studies of climate-related projects, the research highlights the gaps and opportunities in Indonesia's approach to integrating social equity into its climate agenda. Findings suggest that while there is growing recognition of climate justice in the rhetoric of national policies, the practical application of these principles often falls short, particularly in addressing the needs of indigenous peoples, rural populations, and women. The paper argues that achieving true climate justice requires a more comprehensive approach that prioritizes both environmental and social dimensions of development, with greater focus on inclusivity, participation, and long-term resilience. This research contributes to the discourse on climate justice by offering insights



into the challenges and opportunities for embedding justice-oriented policies within Indonesia's sustainable development framework.

[Tulisan ini menilai integrasi keadilan iklim dalam kerangka pembangunan berkelanjutan Indonesia, dengan fokus pada bagaimana kebijakan pembangunan negara menangani keberlanjutan lingkungan dan kesetaraan sosial dalam menghadapi perubahan iklim. Indonesia, sebagai salah satu negara yang paling rentan terhadap dampak iklim di dunia, menghadapi tantangan signifikan dalam menyeimbangkan pertumbuhan ekonomi yang pesat dengan kebutuhan untuk mengurangi risiko iklim dan memastikan keadilan sosial. Keadilan iklim, yang menekankan dampak perubahan iklim yang tidak proporsional terhadap masyarakat yang terpinggirkan, mengharuskan respons kebijakan untuk memprioritaskan tidak hanya keberlanjutan lingkungan tetapi juga hak dan kesejahteraan kelompok rentan. Studi ini secara kritis meneliti rencana pembangunan nasional Indonesia, kebijakan iklim, dan strategi adaptasi iklim untuk menilai seberapa baik mereka memasukkan prinsip-prinsip keadilan iklim. Melalui kombinasi analisis kebijakan, wawancara dengan pemangku kepentingan utama, dan studi kasus proyek terkait iklim, penelitian ini menyoroti kesenjangan dan peluang dalam pendekatan Indonesia untuk mengintegrasikan kesetaraan sosial ke dalam agenda iklimnya. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa meskipun terdapat peningkatan pengakuan terhadap keadilan iklim dalam retorika kebijakan nasional, penerapan praktis prinsip-prinsip ini seringkali kurang memadai, khususnya dalam memenuhi kebutuhan masyarakat adat, penduduk pedesaan, dan perempuan. Makalah ini berpendapat bahwa pencapaian keadilan iklim yang sejati membutuhkan pendekatan yang lebih komprehensif yang memprioritaskan dimensi lingkungan dan sosial pembangunan, dengan fokus yang lebih besar pada inklusivitas, partisipasi, dan ketahanan jangka panjang. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada wacana tentang keadilan iklim dengan menawarkan wawasan tentang tantangan dan peluang untuk menanamkan kebijakan berorientasi keadilan dalam kerangka pembangunan berkelanjutan Indonesia.]

Keywords: Climate Justice, Sustainable Development, Climate Policy, Social Equity, Adaptation Strategies

Introduction

Climate change has become one of the defining challenges to sustainable development, with far-reaching consequences for environmental integrity, economic stability, and human well-being. Despite global efforts to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and strengthen climate resilience, the impacts of climate change remain unevenly distributed, disproportionately affecting low-income populations, indigenous peoples, coastal communities, and other socially vulnerable groups (IPCC, 2023). This disparity has shifted international attention beyond environmental sustainability toward the concept of climate justice, which

emphasizes the equitable distribution of climate-related risks and benefits, meaningful participation in decision-making, and recognition of the rights and needs of marginalized populations (Schlosberg & Collins, 2014; Newell et al., 2021). Consequently, climate justice has emerged as a critical dimension of sustainable development, reflecting the growing recognition that effective climate governance must address both environmental and social inequalities.

The relationship between climate justice and sustainable development has become increasingly prominent in global policy discourse following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement, both of which emphasize that climate action should promote equity, inclusiveness, and resilience while supporting long-term socioeconomic development (United Nations, 2015; UNFCCC, 2015). Sustainable development is therefore no longer understood solely as the pursuit of economic growth balanced with environmental protection but as a multidimensional process that integrates environmental sustainability, social justice, and institutional accountability (Sachs et al., 2019). Within this framework, climate justice provides an essential lens for evaluating whether development policies effectively protect vulnerable populations while ensuring that the benefits and burdens of climate action are shared fairly across society (Bulkeley et al., 2014).

Indonesia represents a particularly relevant case for examining the integration of climate justice into sustainable development. As the world's largest archipelagic state, Indonesia is highly exposed to climate-related hazards, including sea-level rise, coastal flooding, changing precipitation patterns, forest and peatland fires, biodiversity loss, and increasing frequencies of extreme weather events (IPCC, 2023). These environmental pressures intersect with rapid urbanization, dependence on natural resource extraction, deforestation, and persistent socioeconomic inequalities, creating complex challenges for achieving equitable and sustainable development (World Bank, 2021). Recognizing these challenges, the Indonesian government has incorporated climate action into national development planning through initiatives such as the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN), the Low Carbon Development Initiative (LCDI), and its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). However, while these policy frameworks demonstrate substantial commitments to environmental sustainability and emissions reduction, the extent to which they explicitly incorporate climate justice principles remains insufficiently understood.

Although a growing body of literature has explored Indonesia's climate governance, low-carbon transition, and sustainable development strategies, existing studies have largely focused on mitigation targets, adaptation planning, or environmental policy effectiveness (Boer et al., 2022; World Bank, 2021). Comparatively limited attention has been given to assessing whether climate policies adequately address distributive justice, procedural justice, and the

recognition of vulnerable communities—three core dimensions widely recognized within climate justice scholarship (Schlosberg & Collins, 2014; Newell et al., 2021). This gap is particularly significant because climate policies that neglect social equity may inadvertently reinforce existing inequalities, thereby undermining both climate resilience and sustainable development outcomes.

Addressing this research gap, the present study critically assesses the extent to which climate justice is embedded within Indonesia's sustainable development framework. Specifically, it examines how national climate and development policies incorporate principles of equity, social inclusion, and protection of vulnerable populations; evaluates the alignment between climate justice objectives and sustainable development priorities; and identifies institutional and policy gaps that may hinder equitable climate governance. By integrating perspectives from climate justice and sustainable development, this study contributes to the expanding literature on justice-oriented climate policy and provides evidence-based insights for strengthening inclusive climate governance in Indonesia. The findings also offer broader implications for other developing and climate-vulnerable countries seeking to reconcile economic development with environmental sustainability and social equity.

Literature Review

A. Conceptualizing Climate Justice

Climate justice has evolved from the broader environmental justice movement, emphasizing that climate change is not only an environmental issue but also a matter of social equity, human rights, and ethical responsibility (Schlosberg & Collins, 2014). Unlike conventional climate governance, which primarily focuses on reducing greenhouse gas emissions or enhancing adaptive capacity, climate justice examines how climate-related risks, responsibilities, and benefits are distributed among different social groups. It recognizes that populations contributing least to climate change often experience its most severe consequences, particularly in developing countries where socioeconomic vulnerabilities are deeply entrenched (IPCC, 2023).

The literature commonly identifies three complementary dimensions of climate justice: distributive justice, procedural justice, and recognition justice (Fraser, 2008; Schlosberg, 2007). Distributive justice concerns the equitable allocation of climate-related costs, benefits, and resources, including financial assistance, adaptation investments, and compensation for climate-induced losses. Procedural justice emphasizes inclusive, transparent, and participatory decision-making processes that allow affected communities to influence climate policies. Recognition justice focuses on acknowledging the rights, identities, knowledge systems, and lived experiences of marginalized groups, including indigenous peoples, women, and low-income communities, whose perspectives

have historically been underrepresented in environmental governance (Newell et al., 2021).

These dimensions are increasingly viewed as mutually reinforcing components of effective climate governance. Policies that prioritize emissions reductions without addressing social inequalities may unintentionally exacerbate existing vulnerabilities, whereas justice-oriented approaches seek to ensure that climate interventions contribute to broader social and developmental objectives (Bulkeley et al., 2014). Consequently, climate justice has become a central framework for evaluating the effectiveness, legitimacy, and inclusiveness of climate policy.

B. Sustainable Development and Climate Policy

The concept of sustainable development has undergone substantial transformation since the publication of the Brundtland Report, which defined sustainable development as meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (World Commission on Environment and Development [WCED], 1987). Contemporary interpretations extend beyond balancing economic growth and environmental protection to encompass social inclusion, institutional resilience, and equitable governance (Sachs et al., 2019). This broader understanding is reflected in the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which integrates climate action across multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 13 while recognizing its interconnections with poverty reduction, health, food security, and social equality (United Nations, 2015).

Climate policy has similarly evolved from an emphasis on mitigation toward a more comprehensive approach that integrates mitigation, adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and resilience-building within national development strategies (UNFCCC, 2015). Increasingly, governments recognize that climate adaptation should be embedded within broader socioeconomic planning rather than implemented as isolated environmental initiatives. Integrated climate-development planning aims to enhance resilience while supporting inclusive economic growth, environmental sustainability, and social welfare (IPCC, 2023).

Nevertheless, scholars argue that many sustainable development frameworks continue to prioritize economic performance and emissions reduction over equity considerations (Leach et al., 2018). As a result, climate policies may generate unequal outcomes if issues such as resource accessibility, institutional participation, and social vulnerability are not explicitly incorporated into policy design and implementation. This has reinforced calls for integrating climate justice principles into sustainable development planning to ensure that climate actions produce equitable and socially inclusive outcomes.

C. Climate Justice in Developing Country Contexts

Climate justice is particularly relevant in developing countries, where high levels of climate exposure intersect with limited adaptive capacity, institutional constraints, and persistent socioeconomic inequalities (IPCC, 2023). Countries across the Global South often experience disproportionate climate impacts despite contributing relatively little to historical greenhouse gas emissions. These conditions create complex governance challenges, as policymakers must simultaneously pursue economic development, poverty reduction, environmental conservation, and climate resilience.

Existing research indicates that the implementation of climate policies in developing countries frequently encounters institutional fragmentation, limited financial resources, inadequate stakeholder participation, and unequal access to adaptation benefits (Newell et al., 2021). Vulnerable populations—including indigenous communities, rural households, women, and informal-sector workers—often remain underrepresented in climate decision-making despite facing the highest levels of climate risk (Bulkeley et al., 2014). Consequently, adaptation measures may fail to address local priorities or inadvertently reinforce existing patterns of social exclusion.

Recent scholarship has therefore emphasized the importance of participatory governance, locally informed adaptation strategies, and inclusive institutional mechanisms that recognize diverse knowledge systems and community experiences (Leach et al., 2018). Justice-oriented climate governance not only enhances policy legitimacy but also strengthens long-term resilience by ensuring that vulnerable populations actively participate in shaping adaptation and development pathways.

D. Research Gap

Despite the expanding literature on climate justice and sustainable development, important knowledge gaps remain. Existing studies have primarily examined climate justice from international governance, ethical, or adaptation perspectives, while comparatively fewer studies have evaluated how justice principles are embedded within national sustainable development frameworks. Empirical assessments that systematically analyze policy integration across climate, development, and social equity dimensions remain limited, particularly in developing countries.

Within the Indonesian context, previous research has largely focused on climate mitigation, forest governance, emissions reduction, renewable energy transitions, or adaptation planning (Boer et al., 2022; World Bank, 2021). While these studies provide valuable insights into environmental policy and climate governance, they offer limited examination of distributive, procedural, and recognitional justice within national development policies. Consequently, there remains insufficient understanding of whether Indonesia's sustainable

development framework adequately addresses the needs and rights of vulnerable populations while balancing environmental sustainability and economic growth.

This study addresses these gaps by critically assessing the integration of climate justice principles into Indonesia's sustainable development framework. By examining national climate and development policies through the analytical lenses of distributive, procedural, and recognitional justice, the research contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of justice-oriented climate governance and offers evidence-based recommendations for strengthening equitable and inclusive sustainable development.

Methods

A. Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative research design to examine the extent to which climate justice principles are integrated into Indonesia's sustainable development framework. A qualitative approach is appropriate because it enables an in-depth exploration of policy content, governance processes, and stakeholder perspectives that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative indicators alone (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The research combines policy analysis, legal analysis, and socio-environmental analysis to investigate the relationships between climate governance, sustainable development, and social equity.

The analytical framework is grounded in the three widely recognized dimensions of climate justice—distributive justice, procedural justice, and recognitional justice (Schlosberg & Collins, 2014). These dimensions serve as the primary criteria for evaluating how national development and climate policies address equitable resource allocation, stakeholder participation, and the recognition of vulnerable populations. By integrating these perspectives, the study provides a comprehensive assessment of climate justice within Indonesia's policy landscape.

B. Data Collection

Data were collected from multiple sources to enhance the comprehensiveness and credibility of the analysis. First, a documentary review was undertaken to examine Indonesia's principal climate and development policy documents. These included the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN), Indonesia's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement, the National Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation (RAN-API), the Low Carbon Development Initiative (LCDI), relevant environmental legislation, and sectoral policy documents. These materials were selected because they constitute the primary legal and institutional framework guiding climate governance and sustainable development in Indonesia.

Second, semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders involved in climate governance and sustainable development. Participants

included government policymakers, representatives of environmental agencies, development practitioners, academics, and members of civil society organizations engaged in climate adaptation and environmental justice. Purposive sampling was employed to identify individuals possessing relevant expertise and practical experience in climate policy implementation. The semi-structured interview format allowed respondents to discuss institutional challenges, policy implementation, stakeholder participation, and justice-related concerns while providing sufficient flexibility to explore emerging issues.

Third, the study incorporated case studies of selected climate-related development and adaptation initiatives implemented across Indonesia. The cases were chosen based on their relevance to climate adaptation, community participation, environmental management, and social inclusion. Examining these initiatives enabled the study to compare policy intentions with implementation outcomes and to identify practical challenges associated with integrating climate justice into development practice.

C. Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis and comparative policy analysis. Documentary evidence was systematically coded to identify policy provisions related to distributive, procedural, and recognition justice. Themes were developed through an iterative coding process, allowing recurring patterns concerning equity, participation, institutional coordination, and protection of vulnerable populations to emerge across policy documents.

Interview transcripts were analyzed using thematic coding to capture participants' perceptions of climate governance, implementation barriers, institutional capacity, and opportunities for strengthening climate justice. The findings from interviews were subsequently compared with documentary evidence to identify consistencies and discrepancies between policy objectives and implementation practices.

In addition, comparative policy analysis was employed to evaluate the alignment between Indonesia's climate policies, sustainable development strategies, and internationally recognized climate justice principles. The study further applied data triangulation, integrating evidence from policy documents, stakeholder interviews, and case studies to enhance analytical rigor, improve the validity of findings, and reduce the potential influence of source-specific bias (Yin, 2018).

D. Ethical Considerations

The research was conducted in accordance with established ethical standards for qualitative social science research. Prior to participation, all interview respondents received information regarding the objectives of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and their right to withdraw at any stage

without consequence. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants before interviews were conducted.

To ensure confidentiality and privacy, participants' identities were anonymized during data processing and reporting. Personal information was securely stored and used exclusively for research purposes. Particular attention was given to discussions involving indigenous peoples, rural communities, and other socially vulnerable groups whose experiences with climate change and development policies may involve sensitive social, cultural, or political issues. Throughout the research process, the study adhered to the ethical principles of respect, confidentiality, non-maleficence, and responsible representation to ensure that participants' perspectives were accurately and respectfully reflected.

Analysis and Discussion

A. Analysis on Climate Justice and Climate Policies

1. *Climate Justice in National Development and Climate Policies*

The analysis of Indonesia's national development and climate policy documents demonstrates a gradual transition from a predominantly growth-oriented development paradigm toward one that increasingly acknowledges climate resilience and social inclusion. Policy frameworks such as the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN), the Low Carbon Development Initiative (LCDI), and Indonesia's Enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) explicitly recognize climate change as a multidimensional challenge affecting economic productivity, environmental sustainability, and human well-being. However, despite this policy evolution, climate justice remains largely implicit rather than institutionalized within Indonesia's development agenda.

From the perspective of distributive justice, national policies emphasize investments in climate adaptation, disaster risk reduction, ecosystem restoration, and low-carbon economic transformation. These initiatives seek to reduce vulnerability through improved infrastructure, sustainable agriculture, and environmental conservation. Nevertheless, the allocation of climate finance and adaptation resources is predominantly determined by administrative capacity and economic priorities rather than by differentiated vulnerability assessments. Consequently, provinces possessing stronger governance capacity and greater fiscal resources often receive more effective adaptation support than remote or economically disadvantaged regions. This uneven allocation challenges the distributive justice principle that climate resources should prioritize populations facing the greatest climate risks (Schlosberg & Collins, 2014; Newell et al., 2021).

Moreover, Indonesia's climate policies remain strongly influenced by developmental priorities that emphasize economic growth, industrial expansion, and infrastructure investment. While these objectives contribute to national prosperity, they also create policy trade-offs. For example, strategic investments

in mining, energy development, and large-scale infrastructure projects may increase national economic competitiveness while simultaneously intensifying environmental degradation and exposing vulnerable communities to displacement and ecological risks (Leach et al., 2018). This reflects what Bulkeley et al. (2014) describe as the persistent tension between economic modernization and climate justice, where economic objectives frequently outweigh considerations of social equity.

The findings further indicate that climate justice is treated primarily as a complementary objective rather than as a guiding principle of policy formulation. Equity is commonly framed within poverty reduction and regional development strategies, yet explicit mechanisms for evaluating whether climate policies redistribute opportunities, reduce inequalities, or protect socially marginalized populations remain limited. Similar observations have been reported across several developing countries, where climate policies successfully mainstream adaptation but insufficiently address structural inequalities underlying climate vulnerability (IPCC, 2023).

2. *Adaptation Strategies and Social Equity*

Indonesia's adaptation strategies demonstrate significant progress in strengthening national resilience through integrated water management, coastal protection, ecosystem restoration, climate-smart agriculture, and disaster preparedness. These initiatives have enhanced institutional preparedness and reduced immediate climate risks in several vulnerable regions. Nevertheless, the findings reveal that adaptation effectiveness cannot be assessed solely through physical or environmental outcomes; rather, its success depends on whether adaptation measures reduce social vulnerability and improve equity.

The analysis suggests that adaptation interventions frequently prioritize technical and engineering solutions while paying comparatively less attention to socioeconomic disparities. Investments in seawalls, flood control systems, irrigation infrastructure, and early warning technologies undoubtedly enhance adaptive capacity. However, such interventions may generate unequal benefits because communities differ substantially in their capacity to access government programs, financial assistance, and technical support. Wealthier municipalities often possess stronger planning institutions and administrative capabilities, enabling them to implement adaptation initiatives more effectively than poorer districts.

This finding supports the argument that adaptation itself is not inherently equitable. As Eriksen et al. (2021) argue, adaptation policies may inadvertently reinforce existing inequalities when institutional capacity and resource accessibility vary significantly across communities. In Indonesia, marginalized populations frequently experience barriers related to land tenure insecurity, limited access to public services, and inadequate institutional representation.

Consequently, adaptation measures designed to enhance resilience may simultaneously reproduce existing patterns of socioeconomic exclusion.

Furthermore, the empirical findings reveal a mismatch between national adaptation priorities and local livelihood realities. Government adaptation programs primarily emphasize environmental protection and disaster management, whereas community stakeholders consistently identified livelihood security, income diversification, education, and healthcare access as equally important components of climate resilience. This divergence illustrates that resilience extends beyond physical infrastructure to encompass broader social and economic capabilities, consistent with the adaptive capacity framework proposed by Adger (2006).

3. *Impacts on Marginalized Groups*

Climate change does not affect all social groups equally, and the findings confirm that vulnerability in Indonesia is strongly mediated by socioeconomic status, gender, ethnicity, geographic location, and institutional access. Indigenous peoples, coastal communities, rural farmers, women, and informal workers experience disproportionately higher exposure to climate hazards while simultaneously possessing fewer economic and political resources for adaptation.

For indigenous communities, climate change interacts with long-standing issues of land rights, resource governance, and environmental degradation. Forest conversion, peatland degradation, and extractive industries not only reduce ecological resilience but also undermine traditional livelihoods and cultural identities. These findings correspond with recognition justice theory, which argues that justice requires acknowledging diverse cultural values, traditional ecological knowledge, and indigenous governance systems rather than treating all communities as homogeneous beneficiaries of climate policy (Fraser, 2008; Schlosberg, 2007).

Gender-related disparities also emerged as a significant dimension of climate justice. Women remain disproportionately affected because of unequal access to productive assets, financial resources, education, and political representation. Although Indonesian climate policies increasingly reference gender mainstreaming, implementation remains inconsistent across sectors and regions. Women's participation frequently occurs through consultation rather than decision-making, limiting their capacity to influence adaptation priorities. Similar implementation gaps have been identified across Southeast Asia, where gender-sensitive climate policies often exist at the national level but encounter institutional constraints during local implementation (UN Women, 2022).

Perhaps the most important finding concerns procedural justice. Interviews consistently revealed that community participation remains largely consultative rather than collaborative. Local stakeholders are commonly invited to validate predetermined policy priorities instead of actively shaping climate strategies

from the outset. Arnstein's (1969) theory of citizen participation characterizes such arrangements as tokenistic because participation occurs without meaningful transfer of decision-making authority. Consequently, climate governance remains predominantly top-down despite increasing recognition of participatory approaches within national policy discourse.

4. *Institutional and Governance Challenges*

The implementation of climate justice in Indonesia is constrained by institutional fragmentation across ministries responsible for environmental management, national development, forestry, agriculture, marine affairs, disaster management, and regional governance. Although climate change is inherently cross-sectoral, institutional mandates continue to operate largely within sector-specific planning frameworks. This fragmentation reduces policy coherence and complicates coordination between mitigation, adaptation, and sustainable development initiatives.

The findings indicate that governance fragmentation is reinforced by Indonesia's decentralized administrative system. While decentralization enhances local autonomy, it also produces substantial differences in institutional capacity, technical expertise, financial resources, and policy implementation across provinces. Consequently, climate adaptation outcomes vary considerably between regions, creating uneven patterns of resilience and social protection. Similar governance challenges have been documented in other decentralized developing countries, where local institutional capacity becomes a critical determinant of adaptation effectiveness (IPCC, 2023).

Another significant challenge concerns monitoring and accountability. Existing evaluation frameworks predominantly measure emissions reductions, environmental restoration, and infrastructure development while paying comparatively limited attention to equity outcomes, participation, or social inclusion. The absence of justice-sensitive performance indicators makes it difficult to assess whether climate investments actually reduce vulnerability among marginalized populations. As Newell et al. (2021) argue, climate justice cannot be achieved without institutional mechanisms capable of monitoring distributive, procedural, and recognition outcomes alongside environmental performance.

B. Discussion on Indonesia's Sustainable Development

1. *Evaluating Indonesia's Sustainable Development Framework Through a Climate Justice Lens*

The findings suggest that Indonesia has made substantial progress in mainstreaming climate considerations into national development planning; however, the integration of climate justice remains incomplete. Existing policies demonstrate strong commitment to sustainable economic growth, emissions

reduction, and climate resilience, yet these objectives continue to dominate over explicit considerations of equity and justice.

Applying Schlosberg's (2007) multidimensional justice framework reveals important asymmetries. Distributive justice receives moderate policy attention through adaptation funding and poverty reduction initiatives. Procedural justice is partially addressed through stakeholder consultations, although decision-making authority remains centralized. Recognitional justice represents the weakest dimension because indigenous knowledge systems, gender-specific vulnerabilities, and local cultural contexts are only partially incorporated into climate governance.

These findings indicate that Indonesia's sustainable development framework reflects what Leach et al. (2018) describe as "inclusive sustainability" in principle but not consistently in practice. The persistence of development priorities centered on economic expansion illustrates the enduring challenge of reconciling environmental sustainability with distributive equity. Without stronger institutional mechanisms for addressing structural inequalities, climate policies risk improving aggregate resilience while leaving existing social disparities largely unchanged.

2. Inclusivity and Participation in Climate–Development Governance

The findings emphasize that effective climate governance depends not only on technical expertise but also on institutional inclusiveness. Meaningful participation enhances policy legitimacy because local communities possess valuable contextual knowledge regarding environmental change, livelihood adaptation, and resource management (Ostrom, 2010). However, participation in Indonesia remains predominantly government-led, limiting opportunities for collaborative governance and shared decision-making.

Community-based adaptation initiatives examined in this study demonstrate that integrating local ecological knowledge with scientific expertise improves both policy effectiveness and public acceptance. Indigenous resource management practices, traditional agricultural systems, and locally developed disaster response mechanisms provide important adaptive capacities that complement national planning. These findings support growing international evidence that locally led adaptation represents one of the most effective approaches for achieving equitable climate resilience (Eriksen et al., 2021).

Strengthening procedural justice therefore requires moving beyond consultation toward genuine co-production of climate policy, where government agencies, civil society, indigenous communities, academic institutions, and local governments jointly participate throughout the policy cycle. Such collaborative governance arrangements are likely to enhance transparency, accountability, and long-term policy sustainability.

3. *Broader Implications for Climate Justice and Sustainable Development*

Indonesia's experience illustrates broader governance challenges confronting many climate-vulnerable developing countries. First, integrating climate action into development planning is necessary but insufficient unless accompanied by explicit mechanisms addressing equity and vulnerability. Second, institutional coordination must extend beyond environmental ministries to include social welfare, health, education, finance, and regional development agencies. Third, climate justice should be operationalized through measurable indicators that evaluate distributive outcomes, procedural inclusiveness, and recognition of marginalized communities.

Theoretically, this study contributes to climate justice scholarship by demonstrating that justice is not merely an ethical principle but also an institutional condition influencing policy effectiveness. Climate policies that neglect social inequalities are likely to generate uneven resilience outcomes and reduce public legitimacy. Conversely, integrating distributive, procedural, and recognition justice into sustainable development planning strengthens adaptive capacity while supporting inclusive economic transformation (Newell et al., 2021; IPCC, 2023).

Overall, the Indonesian case reinforces the argument that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the objectives of the Paris Agreement requires moving beyond technocratic climate governance toward governance systems explicitly grounded in social justice, institutional accountability, and inclusive development. Such an approach is likely to produce more equitable, resilient, and sustainable climate outcomes, both within Indonesia and across the broader Global South.

Conclusion

A. Summary of Key Findings

This study assessed the extent to which climate justice is embedded within Indonesia's sustainable development framework by examining national climate and development policies through the analytical dimensions of distributive, procedural, and recognition justice. The findings demonstrate that Indonesia has made considerable progress in integrating climate change into national development planning through initiatives such as the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN), the Low Carbon Development Initiative (LCDI), the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and the National Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation (RAN-API). These policy frameworks reflect increasing governmental recognition that climate resilience, environmental sustainability, and socioeconomic development are mutually reinforcing objectives consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2015; IPCC, 2023).

However, the analysis also reveals a substantial gap between policy ambition and implementation practice. Although national policies frequently emphasize equity, inclusiveness, and resilience, these principles remain only partially operationalized within governance structures and implementation mechanisms. Climate justice is generally framed as a supporting objective rather than a central organizing principle of development planning. Consequently, distributive justice is constrained by unequal access to adaptation finance and institutional resources, procedural justice is limited by predominantly top-down decision-making processes, and recognition justice remains insufficiently reflected in the inclusion of indigenous knowledge, gender perspectives, and the lived experiences of socially marginalized communities (Schlosberg & Collins, 2014; Newell et al., 2021).

The findings further indicate that climate vulnerability in Indonesia is shaped not only by environmental exposure but also by structural socioeconomic inequalities. Indigenous peoples, rural communities, women, and low-income households continue to experience disproportionate climate risks while possessing comparatively limited access to decision-making processes and adaptation resources. These inequalities suggest that improving climate resilience requires addressing the underlying institutional, economic, and social conditions that produce differential vulnerability rather than focusing exclusively on technical adaptation measures (Adger, 2006). Furthermore, fragmented institutional responsibilities, inconsistent interagency coordination, and limited monitoring of justice-related outcomes continue to constrain the effectiveness of climate governance. These challenges highlight that achieving sustainable development requires governance systems capable of integrating environmental objectives with principles of social equity and democratic participation.

Overall, this study demonstrates that Indonesia's sustainable development framework has established a solid institutional foundation for climate action but has yet to fully institutionalize climate justice as a guiding principle of policy formulation and implementation. Without stronger mechanisms for equitable resource allocation, inclusive participation, and institutional accountability, climate policies risk reinforcing existing patterns of social inequality despite achieving environmental objectives.

B. Policy Recommendations

The findings of this study provide several policy implications for strengthening climate justice within Indonesia's sustainable development framework.

First, climate justice should be explicitly integrated into national development planning rather than treated as an implicit component of climate adaptation policy. Future revisions of the RPJMN, NDCs, and sectoral climate strategies should incorporate measurable indicators of distributive, procedural,

and recognitional justice alongside conventional environmental and economic performance indicators. Establishing justice-sensitive monitoring frameworks would enable policymakers to evaluate whether climate interventions effectively reduce social vulnerability while promoting equitable development (Newell et al., 2021).

Second, institutional coordination should be strengthened across climate, environmental, social, and economic sectors. Climate governance currently involves multiple ministries and administrative levels with overlapping responsibilities, often resulting in fragmented implementation and inconsistent policy outcomes. Developing integrated governance mechanisms, harmonized planning procedures, and interagency accountability systems would improve policy coherence while reducing institutional duplication (Ostrom, 2010).

Third, participatory governance should become a central feature of climate policy implementation. Moving beyond consultative approaches toward collaborative decision-making would enhance procedural justice by enabling indigenous peoples, local governments, women, civil society organizations, and vulnerable communities to participate meaningfully throughout the policy cycle. Greater recognition of local ecological knowledge and community-based adaptation practices would improve both policy legitimacy and long-term resilience (Eriksen et al., 2021).

Fourth, adaptation strategies should place greater emphasis on addressing structural socioeconomic vulnerability. Investments in climate-resilient infrastructure remain essential but should be complemented by policies that strengthen livelihood diversification, education, healthcare access, social protection systems, and secure land tenure. Such integrated approaches would enhance adaptive capacity while reducing the underlying inequalities that amplify climate risks (IPCC, 2023).

Finally, monitoring and evaluation systems should expand beyond environmental performance to include social justice outcomes. Indicators measuring community participation, equitable access to climate finance, gender inclusion, indigenous representation, and distributional impacts would provide a more comprehensive assessment of climate policy effectiveness and strengthen institutional accountability.

C. Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations should be acknowledged when interpreting the findings of this study. First, the research adopts a qualitative approach based primarily on policy analysis, stakeholder interviews, and selected case studies. While this methodology provides rich contextual insights into governance processes and institutional dynamics, it does not quantify the magnitude of climate justice outcomes across different regions or population groups. Future studies could complement qualitative findings with quantitative analyses using climate

vulnerability indices, social equity indicators, or spatial assessments of adaptation investment.

Second, this study focuses specifically on Indonesia's national sustainable development framework. Although Indonesia represents an important case due to its high climate vulnerability and ambitious development agenda, the findings may not be directly generalizable to other developing countries with different political, institutional, and socioeconomic contexts. Comparative cross-country analyses involving Southeast Asia or the broader Global South would provide valuable insights into common governance challenges and context-specific policy innovations.

Third, the analysis primarily evaluates policy frameworks at the national level. Climate justice is ultimately experienced within local communities where governance outcomes are shaped by regional institutions, cultural contexts, and community participation. Future research should therefore adopt longitudinal and community-centered approaches that examine how climate justice evolves over time and how different stakeholder groups experience the implementation of adaptation and development policies. Participatory action research and mixed-methods studies involving indigenous communities, women, youth, and other marginalized populations would contribute to a more nuanced understanding of justice in practice.

Finally, future research should explore the interactions between climate justice and emerging policy priorities, including nature-based solutions, just energy transitions, climate finance, loss and damage mechanisms, and digital governance. Examining these intersections would further strengthen understanding of how sustainable development frameworks can simultaneously promote environmental sustainability, social equity, and institutional resilience in increasingly climate-vulnerable societies. In conclusion, climate justice should no longer be regarded as a supplementary consideration within sustainable development policy but rather as a foundational principle that shapes climate governance, resource allocation, and institutional decision-making. Indonesia has established a strong policy foundation for addressing climate change; however, realizing a truly just and sustainable development pathway requires transforming climate governance from a predominantly technocratic exercise into an inclusive, equitable, and accountable process that prioritizes the rights, capacities, and aspirations of all citizens. Such a transformation is essential not only for achieving Indonesia's national development objectives but also for advancing the broader global agenda of sustainable and climate-resilient development.

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Climate change is happening now and to all of us. No country or community is immune. And, as is always the case, the poor and vulnerable are the first to suffer and the worst hit.

– **António Guterres**

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