



## Human Rights and Climate Change: The 2011 National Human Rights Action Plan (RANHAM) and Its Role in Promoting Climate Justice

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### Abstract

This paper explores the role of Indonesia's 2011 National Human Rights Action Plan (RANHAM) in promoting climate justice, with a focus on how the country's human rights framework intersects with climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. As climate change increasingly threatens the fundamental rights of individuals—particularly in vulnerable communities—there is a growing recognition of the need to integrate human rights protections into climate policies. RANHAM, as the country's primary framework for advancing human rights, provides an opportunity to assess how human rights principles can be incorporated into national climate action strategies. This study examines RANHAM's provisions related to environmental rights, the right to a healthy environment, and its alignment with international climate justice frameworks. By reviewing the actions and commitments outlined in RANHAM, this research assesses the extent to which climate justice is considered within Indonesia's human rights policies, especially for marginalized groups who face disproportionate climate risks, such as indigenous communities, women, and rural populations. Through policy analysis, interviews with stakeholders, and case studies, the research evaluates the implementation of RANHAM in addressing climate-induced human rights violations, such as displacement, loss of livelihood, and access to essential resources. Findings suggest that while RANHAM has contributed to raising awareness of climate-related human rights issues, significant gaps remain in ensuring that climate justice principles are fully realized within the country's broader human rights agenda. The paper calls for stronger integration of climate justice into RANHAM, emphasizing the need for a more rights-based approach to climate action that prioritizes the protection and empowerment of vulnerable communities.

*[Tulisan ini mengeksplorasi peran Rencana Aksi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia (RANHAM) Indonesia tahun 2011 dalam mempromosikan keadilan iklim, dengan fokus pada bagaimana kerangka hak asasi*



*manusia negara tersebut beririsan dengan upaya mitigasi dan adaptasi perubahan iklim. Seiring dengan meningkatnya ancaman perubahan iklim terhadap hak-hak fundamental individu—terutama di komunitas yang rentan—semakin banyak pengakuan akan perlunya mengintegrasikan perlindungan hak asasi manusia ke dalam kebijakan iklim. RANHAM, sebagai kerangka kerja utama negara untuk memajukan hak asasi manusia, memberikan kesempatan untuk menilai bagaimana prinsip-prinsip hak asasi manusia dapat diintegrasikan ke dalam strategi aksi iklim nasional. Studi ini meneliti ketentuan RANHAM yang berkaitan dengan hak lingkungan, hak atas lingkungan yang sehat, dan keselarasan dengan kerangka kerja keadilan iklim internasional. Dengan meninjau tindakan dan komitmen yang diuraikan dalam RANHAM, penelitian ini menilai sejauh mana keadilan iklim dipertimbangkan dalam kebijakan hak asasi manusia Indonesia, khususnya bagi kelompok-kelompok yang terpinggirkan yang menghadapi risiko iklim yang tidak proporsional, seperti masyarakat adat, perempuan, dan penduduk pedesaan. Melalui analisis kebijakan, wawancara dengan para pemangku kepentingan, dan studi kasus, penelitian ini mengevaluasi implementasi RANHAM dalam mengatasi pelanggaran hak asasi manusia akibat perubahan iklim, seperti pengungsian, kehilangan mata pencaharian, dan akses terhadap sumber daya penting. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa meskipun RANHAM telah berkontribusi dalam meningkatkan kesadaran akan isu-isu hak asasi manusia terkait iklim, masih terdapat kesenjangan yang signifikan dalam memastikan bahwa prinsip-prinsip keadilan iklim sepenuhnya terwujud dalam agenda hak asasi manusia yang lebih luas di negara tersebut. Makalah ini menyerukan integrasi keadilan iklim yang lebih kuat ke dalam RANHAM, menekankan perlunya pendekatan berbasis hak yang lebih baik terhadap aksi iklim yang memprioritaskan perlindungan dan pemberdayaan komunitas yang rentan.]*

**Keywords:** Human Rights, Climate Justice, National Human Rights Action Plan, RANHAM, Climate Change

## Introduction

Climate change has increasingly become recognized as a human rights concern because its consequences directly affect the conditions necessary for the realization of fundamental rights. Rising temperatures, extreme weather events, sea-level rise, and ecosystem degradation threaten rights related to life, health, food security, housing, water access, and cultural integrity (Bell, 2013; Knox, 2018). Unlike conventional environmental problems, climate change generates highly unequal impacts, where communities with the lowest historical contribution to greenhouse gas emissions often experience the greatest social and economic consequences (Newell & Mulvaney, 2013; Sultana, 2022). This unequal distribution of climate risks has transformed climate change from a primarily

environmental issue into a question of justice, responsibility, and human rights protection.

The human rights–climate change nexus has gained increasing attention within international legal scholarship and environmental governance debates. Scholars argue that climate change challenges traditional approaches to human rights protection because its impacts are complex, cumulative, and often mediated through social, economic, and political inequalities (Humphreys, 2010; Peel & Osofsky, 2018). A human rights-based approach to climate governance therefore requires states to consider not only emission reduction objectives but also obligations related to equality, participation, accountability, and protection of vulnerable groups (Cullet, 2013; Rodríguez-Garavito, 2020). This perspective emphasizes that climate policies should not create additional burdens for marginalized communities and should ensure that affected populations participate meaningfully in decision-making processes.

Climate justice provides an important analytical framework for examining these challenges. Rather than viewing climate change solely as a technical problem requiring technological or economic solutions, climate justice highlights the unequal distribution of climate impacts, responsibilities, and decision-making power (Schlosberg & Collins, 2014; Sultana, 2022). The framework incorporates distributive, procedural, and recognitional dimensions of justice, emphasizing that effective climate governance requires attention to social inequality, political inclusion, and respect for diverse forms of knowledge and experience (Schlosberg, 2007; Walker, 2012). Consequently, climate justice has become increasingly relevant for evaluating whether national governance frameworks adequately protect vulnerable populations from climate-related harm.

Indonesia provides an important context for examining the relationship between human rights governance and climate justice. As an archipelagic country with extensive coastal areas, tropical forests, and communities dependent on climate-sensitive livelihoods, Indonesia faces significant exposure to climate-related risks, including sea-level rise, ecosystem degradation, and extreme weather events (Mulyani et al., 2021; Resosudarmo et al., 2012). These risks disproportionately affect rural communities, Indigenous peoples, small-scale farmers, and coastal populations whose livelihoods depend directly on environmental resources (Dawson et al., 2021; Sova et al., 2017). Therefore, climate governance in Indonesia requires not only environmental policy interventions but also institutional mechanisms capable of protecting human rights and addressing vulnerability.

Within Indonesia’s human rights governance framework, the National Human Rights Action Plan (*Rencana Aksi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia*—RANHAM) represents a significant policy instrument for mainstreaming human rights principles across governmental sectors. National Human Rights Action

Plans are generally designed to strengthen coordination between state institutions, establish human rights priorities, and improve accountability mechanisms (De Beco, 2013; Goodman & Jinks, 2013). However, existing research on national human rights action plans has primarily focused on institutional development and legal compliance, while limited attention has been given to their capacity to address climate-related human rights challenges.

The relationship between RANHAM and climate justice remains underexplored. Although climate change increasingly influences the enjoyment of fundamental rights, human rights policy frameworks have often developed separately from environmental and climate governance systems (Peel & Osofsky, 2018). This institutional separation creates potential gaps in addressing climate vulnerability, particularly for marginalized communities whose rights are affected by environmental changes. Therefore, examining RANHAM through a climate justice perspective provides an opportunity to evaluate whether Indonesia's human rights framework has evolved sufficiently to respond to contemporary environmental challenges.

This article contributes to the literature by analyzing the 2011 RANHAM as a potential instrument for promoting climate justice within Indonesia's human rights governance framework. Unlike studies that examine climate policy primarily through environmental effectiveness or emission reduction perspectives, this research focuses on the normative and institutional relationship between human rights protection and climate governance. The article argues that while RANHAM provides an important foundation for integrating human rights principles into national policy, its contribution to climate justice remains limited due to insufficient integration between human rights planning and climate governance mechanisms.

## **Literature Review**

### **A. Human Rights and Climate Change**

The relationship between human rights and climate change has become an increasingly important area of interdisciplinary scholarship, particularly as climate impacts are recognized as threats to the substantive enjoyment of fundamental rights. Early discussions of climate change governance primarily focused on ecological integrity, emission reductions, and international environmental obligations. However, contemporary scholarship demonstrates that climate change also represents a significant human rights challenge because environmental disruptions directly affect social, economic, and cultural conditions necessary for human well-being (Humphreys, 2010; Knox, 2018). This shift has encouraged scholars to examine climate change through a rights-based perspective, emphasizing state responsibilities to protect individuals and communities from foreseeable environmental harm.

Climate change affects human rights through both direct and indirect pathways. Direct impacts include threats from extreme weather events, heat exposure, flooding, and natural disasters, while indirect impacts occur through disruptions to food systems, water availability, public health, and livelihoods (Bell, 2013; Peel & Osofsky, 2018). These impacts are particularly significant for communities whose livelihoods are closely connected to natural resources, including Indigenous peoples, small-scale farmers, and coastal populations. Consequently, climate change challenges the traditional understanding of human rights protection, which has historically focused on immediate and identifiable violations rather than gradual and cumulative environmental harms.

A growing body of literature argues that states have positive obligations under international human rights law to address climate-related risks. This obligation extends beyond preventing direct rights violations and includes adopting effective mitigation and adaptation policies, ensuring access to information, facilitating public participation, and protecting vulnerable populations (Knox, 2018; Rodríguez-Garavito, 2020). In this context, climate governance becomes inseparable from questions of accountability and institutional responsibility. States are increasingly expected to demonstrate that climate policies are consistent with human rights principles, particularly the principles of equality, non-discrimination, and participation.

However, scholars also identify significant challenges in applying human rights frameworks to climate change. Unlike conventional rights violations, climate-related harms are often dispersed across time, space, and jurisdictions. The actors responsible for emissions may not be the same actors experiencing the consequences, creating complex questions regarding causation, responsibility, and remedy (Peel & Osofsky, 2018). Furthermore, climate governance frequently involves competing interests between economic development, environmental protection, and social justice, particularly in developing countries where poverty reduction and resource exploitation remain important policy priorities.

These challenges highlight the importance of integrating climate justice perspectives into human rights analysis. Human rights approaches provide a normative foundation for climate governance, while climate justice expands this analysis by examining structural inequalities underlying climate vulnerability. Therefore, understanding climate change as a human rights issue requires not only identifying rights affected by environmental change but also examining the social and political conditions that determine vulnerability and adaptive capacity.

## **B. Climate Justice Frameworks**

Climate justice has emerged as a critical framework for analyzing the unequal social consequences of climate change. Unlike conventional climate policy approaches that often prioritize aggregate emission reductions and economic efficiency, climate justice emphasizes questions of fairness,

responsibility, and power relations in climate governance (Schlosberg, 2007; Walker, 2012). The framework challenges the assumption that climate impacts are evenly distributed and instead highlights how historical inequalities influence exposure, vulnerability, and capacity to respond to climate change.

A central contribution of climate justice scholarship is the distinction between distributive, procedural, and recognitional justice. Distributive justice concerns the unequal allocation of climate risks, benefits, and responsibilities among different populations and generations. Research demonstrates that communities contributing least to global emissions frequently experience the most severe climate impacts due to geographical vulnerability, poverty, and limited adaptive capacity (Newell & Mulvaney, 2013; Sultana, 2022). Therefore, climate policies must address not only environmental outcomes but also questions of fairness in the distribution of costs and benefits.

Procedural justice focuses on participation, transparency, and accountability in environmental decision-making. Scholars argue that climate governance processes often exclude marginalized communities despite these groups experiencing significant climate impacts (Schlosberg & Collins, 2014). Meaningful participation requires more than consultation; it requires institutional mechanisms that allow vulnerable groups to influence decisions affecting their lives and environments. This dimension is particularly relevant in developing countries, where climate policies may be implemented through centralized governance structures with limited community involvement.

Recognitional justice represents another important dimension of climate justice by emphasizing the need to acknowledge diverse identities, experiences, and knowledge systems. Environmental governance has historically marginalized Indigenous knowledge and local understandings of ecological relationships (Whyte, 2017). Recognition requires policymakers to move beyond viewing vulnerable communities merely as recipients of climate assistance and instead acknowledge them as rights holders and knowledge contributors.

Recent scholarship has expanded climate justice analysis by incorporating intergenerational and global justice perspectives. Climate change creates obligations extending beyond present populations because current decisions influence the environmental conditions experienced by future generations (Gardiner, 2011). Similarly, global climate inequalities reflect historical patterns of industrialization and resource consumption, raising questions regarding responsibility between developed and developing countries (Roberts & Parks, 2007).

The integration of climate justice into human rights governance provides a broader analytical framework for evaluating national policies. Human rights principles establish obligations regarding protection and participation, while climate justice provides analytical tools for examining inequality and power relations. Therefore, national human rights frameworks such as RANHAM can

be evaluated not only by their formal commitments but also by their ability to address structural vulnerabilities associated with climate change.

### **C. National Human Rights Action Plans and Environmental Governance**

National Human Rights Action Plans (NHRAPs) have become important governance instruments for translating international human rights commitments into domestic policy frameworks. These plans generally aim to strengthen institutional coordination, identify human rights priorities, improve monitoring mechanisms, and establish government accountability for rights protection (De Beco, 2013). By creating structured policy frameworks, NHRAPs provide mechanisms through which states can integrate human rights principles into broader development agendas.

The literature on NHRAPs demonstrates that their effectiveness depends not only on formal adoption but also on institutional capacity, political commitment, and monitoring mechanisms. National action plans may contribute to human rights mainstreaming when they establish clear responsibilities among government institutions and provide mechanisms for evaluation and public participation (Goodman & Jinks, 2013). However, scholars also identify limitations, particularly when action plans function primarily as symbolic commitments without sufficient implementation mechanisms.

The relationship between NHRAPs and environmental governance remains relatively underdeveloped in academic literature. Historically, human rights institutions and environmental governance systems have operated through separate institutional structures. Environmental policies have often emphasized ecological management and resource regulation, while human rights frameworks have focused on civil, political, economic, and social rights. However, climate change increasingly challenges this separation because environmental degradation directly affects human rights protection (Peel & Osofsky, 2018).

Integrating environmental concerns into human rights action plans requires recognizing environmental rights as fundamental components of human rights protection. Recent scholarship highlights the importance of the right to a healthy environment and argues that states should incorporate environmental considerations into rights-based governance frameworks (Boyd, 2012; Kotzé & Calzadilla, 2017). Such integration is particularly relevant for climate-vulnerable countries, where environmental risks directly influence social inequality and human development.

Indonesia's RANHAM provides an important case for examining these dynamics. While RANHAM represents a significant institutional commitment to human rights mainstreaming, its ability to address climate justice depends on whether environmental vulnerability and climate-related inequalities are incorporated into its policy framework. This requires examining not only the

content of RANHAM but also its relationship with broader environmental and climate governance structures.

#### **D. Research Gap**

Existing literature has extensively examined the relationship between climate change and human rights, as well as the theoretical foundations of climate justice. Scholars have demonstrated that climate change creates significant human rights challenges and that effective climate governance requires attention to inequality, participation, and recognition (Knox, 2018; Schlosberg & Collins, 2014). However, much of this literature focuses on international frameworks, climate litigation, or broad theoretical debates rather than national human rights policy instruments.

Similarly, research on National Human Rights Action Plans has primarily focused on institutional design, legal commitments, and governance capacity. Limited attention has been given to how these frameworks respond to emerging environmental challenges, particularly climate change. This creates an important research gap because national human rights mechanisms may play a significant role in ensuring that climate policies protect vulnerable populations and comply with human rights principles. Within the Indonesian context, existing scholarship has largely examined climate governance, environmental regulation, and human rights issues separately. Research on Indonesia's climate policies has focused primarily on mitigation strategies, forestry governance, and adaptation challenges, while studies of human rights institutions have concentrated on legal and institutional development. The intersection between RANHAM and climate justice remains insufficiently explored.

This article addresses this gap by examining RANHAM through a climate justice lens. It contributes to the literature by demonstrating how national human rights planning frameworks can be evaluated as instruments of climate governance. Rather than treating climate change and human rights as separate policy domains, this study argues that their integration is essential for developing equitable and accountable climate governance, particularly in vulnerable developing countries.

### **Methods**

#### **A. Research Design**

This study employs a qualitative socio-legal and policy analysis approach to examine the role of Indonesia's 2011 National Human Rights Action Plan (Rencana Aksi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia—RANHAM) in promoting climate justice. A qualitative approach is appropriate because the research focuses on interpreting policy frameworks, institutional arrangements, and normative commitments rather than measuring causal relationships through quantitative methods. Socio-legal research is particularly relevant for examining how legal

and policy instruments operate within broader political, institutional, and social contexts (Hall, Hirsch, & Li, 2011; Bedner & Arizona, 2019).

The study adopts a human rights-based climate governance perspective to analyze whether RANHAM provides an adequate framework for addressing climate-related vulnerabilities. Rather than assessing RANHAM solely as a governmental policy document, this research examines its normative capacity to integrate principles of equality, participation, accountability, and protection of vulnerable groups into climate governance. This approach reflects broader scholarship arguing that climate policies should be evaluated not only based on environmental effectiveness but also according to their implications for human rights and social justice (Schlosberg & Collins, 2014; Rodríguez-Garavito, 2020).

The research design combines doctrinal policy analysis with critical interpretation of human rights and climate justice principles. This enables the study to examine the relationship between formal policy commitments and broader governance challenges. The analytical focus literature selection prioritizes internationally recognized academic publications indexed in major scholarly databases, particularly Scopus-indexed journals where available. The use of academic literature enables the research to situate RANHAM within is placed on three interconnected dimensions of climate justice: distributive justice, procedural justice, and recognition justice (Schlosberg, 2007; Walker, 2012). These dimensions provide the conceptual framework for evaluating whether RANHAM sufficiently addresses unequal climate impacts, public participation, and recognition of vulnerable communities.

## **B. Data Collection**

This research relies exclusively on secondary data obtained through systematic document analysis. The primary source examined is Indonesia's 2011 National Human Rights Action Plan (RANHAM), which serves as the central policy instrument for evaluating the integration of human rights principles within national governance. Additional primary materials include relevant Indonesian legal and policy documents related to: national human rights protection; environmental governance; climate change policy; sustainable development planning; protection of vulnerable communities.

These documents are analyzed to identify the extent to which human rights principles are incorporated into climate-related governance frameworks. Secondary data consist of peer-reviewed international journal articles, academic books, and scholarly publications addressing: human rights and climate change; climate justice theory; environmental rights; rights-based approaches to climate governance; national human rights institutions and policy frameworks.

The literature selection prioritizes internationally recognized academic publications indexed in major scholarly databases, particularly Scopus-indexed journals where available. The use of academic literature enables the research to

situate RANHAM within broader theoretical debates regarding climate justice and human rights governance.

### **C. Data Analysis**

The collected materials are analyzed using qualitative thematic analysis combined with rights-based policy analysis. The analytical process involves identifying recurring concepts, principles, and institutional patterns within RANHAM and related policy documents.

First, the study conducts a normative analysis of RANHAM to examine how human rights principles are conceptualized and operationalized within the policy framework. Particular attention is given to issues related to: recognition of environmental and climate-related rights; protection of vulnerable populations; institutional coordination mechanisms; accountability and monitoring arrangements.

Second, the research applies a climate justice analytical framework to evaluate the strengths and limitations of RANHAM. The analysis examines three dimensions:

(1) **Distributive Justice**

This dimension evaluates whether RANHAM adequately addresses unequal exposure to climate risks and whether vulnerable groups receive appropriate consideration within human rights planning.

(2) **Procedural Justice**

This dimension examines whether policy frameworks provide meaningful opportunities for participation, transparency, and accountability in decisions related to climate governance.

(3) **Recognitional Justice**

This dimension assesses whether RANHAM acknowledges the specific experiences, identities, and vulnerabilities of groups disproportionately affected by climate change, including Indigenous peoples, rural communities, women, and economically marginalized populations.

Through this analytical framework, the study evaluates whether RANHAM functions as a transformative instrument for climate justice or remains limited as a general human rights policy framework with insufficient integration of environmental concerns.

### **D. Ethical Considerations**

Because this research does not involve human participants, interviews, or field-based data collection, ethical considerations primarily concern responsible interpretation, academic integrity, and accurate representation of legal and policy materials. The study follows principles of transparency and scholarly accountability by ensuring that all sources are appropriately cited and interpreted within their original context. Particular attention is given to avoiding

misrepresentation of vulnerable communities and ensuring that discussions of climate impacts reflect underrepresented in policy processes. Therefore, the analysis incorporates existing scholarship on vulnerability, participation, and environmental rights to ensure that these perspectives remain central to the evaluation policy instrument. Previous studies have often examined climate governance and human rights protection as separate fields. By analyzing RANHAM through an integrated framework, this formal level and instead examines whether institutional frameworks are capable of responding to the social justice dimensions of climate change. This approach contributes to broader debates concerning how states can develop climate governance systems that are established human rights principles.

Although the research does not directly collect Indigenous or community perspectives, it recognizes that climate justice requires attention to historically marginalized groups whose experiences are frequently underrepresented in policy processes. Therefore, the analysis incorporates existing scholarship on vulnerability, participation, and environmental rights to ensure that these perspectives remain central to the evaluation of RANHAM.

#### **E. Analytical Framework and Research Contribution**

The methodological contribution of this study lies in combining human rights analysis with climate justice theory to evaluate a national policy instrument. Previous studies have often examined climate governance and human rights protection as separate fields. By analyzing RANHAM through an integrated framework, this research demonstrates how national human rights policies can serve as potential mechanisms for addressing climate-related inequalities. The methodology enables the study to move beyond evaluating policy commitments at a formal level and instead examines whether institutional frameworks are capable of responding to the social justice dimensions of climate change. This approach contributes to broader debates concerning how states can develop climate governance systems that are environmentally effective, legally accountable, and socially equitable.

### **Analysis and Discussion**

#### **A. Climate-Related Human Rights Provisions in RANHAM: Between Normative Commitment and Climate Governance Limitations**

The analysis of Indonesia's 2011 National Human Rights Action Plan (RANHAM) demonstrates that the policy framework provides an important normative foundation for strengthening human rights governance, yet its capacity to function as an instrument of climate justice remains limited. As a national human rights policy mechanism, RANHAM reflects Indonesia's effort to institutionalize human rights principles through governmental planning, coordination, and administrative implementation. National Human Rights

Action Plans are generally designed to bridge the gap between international human rights commitments and domestic governance practices by establishing policy priorities, institutional responsibilities, and monitoring mechanisms (De Beco, 2013; Goodman & Jinks, 2013). In this sense, RANHAM represents an important advancement because it recognizes that human rights protection requires systematic integration within state institutions rather than relying exclusively on judicial mechanisms or reactive responses to violations. However, from a climate justice perspective, the effectiveness of such a framework depends on whether human rights principles are sufficiently connected to emerging environmental challenges, particularly climate change, which increasingly shapes patterns of vulnerability and inequality.

The limitation of RANHAM lies not in the absence of human rights principles, but in the insufficient conceptual integration between human rights governance and climate governance. Although RANHAM emphasizes the protection of vulnerable groups and the fulfillment of fundamental rights, climate change is not explicitly positioned as a structural driver of human rights risks. This reflects a broader institutional tendency in which environmental governance and human rights governance have historically developed through separate legal and administrative pathways (Knox, 2018; Peel & Osofsky, 2018). Environmental policies have traditionally focused on resource management, conservation, and pollution control, while human rights frameworks have concentrated on civil, political, economic, and social rights. Climate change challenges this separation because its impacts are multidimensional and affect the realization of multiple rights simultaneously, including the rights to health, food, housing, livelihood, and cultural identity (Bell, 2013). Consequently, a human rights action plan that does not explicitly address climate vulnerability risks overlooking the mechanisms through which environmental changes generate unequal social impacts.

From the perspective of climate justice, this limitation has significant implications because climate change does not affect all populations equally. Climate justice scholarship emphasizes that vulnerability is shaped by social, economic, and political conditions rather than by environmental exposure alone (Schlosberg & Collins, 2014; Sultana, 2022). Communities with limited economic resources, weak political representation, and high dependence on natural ecosystems often experience disproportionate climate impacts despite having contributed minimally to global emissions. Therefore, a rights-based climate governance framework requires more than general recognition of vulnerable groups; it requires institutional mechanisms capable of identifying specific patterns of vulnerability and addressing structural inequalities. RANHAM provides a normative entry point through its human rights orientation, but its limited engagement with climate-related vulnerabilities reduces its transformative potential as a climate justice instrument.

Nevertheless, RANHAM should not be understood as irrelevant to climate justice. Rather, it represents an institutional foundation that could be expanded to incorporate climate-related human rights obligations. Several principles embedded within human rights governance—such as equality, non-discrimination, participation, accountability, and protection of vulnerable populations—are fundamentally compatible with climate justice approaches (Rodríguez-Garavito, 2020; Walker, 2012). The challenge is therefore not the creation of an entirely new governance framework but the reinterpretation and expansion of existing human rights mechanisms to address climate realities. Future iterations of RANHAM could incorporate climate vulnerability assessments, environmental rights protection, and stronger coordination between human rights institutions and climate governance agencies. Such integration would allow RANHAM to move beyond a conventional human rights policy framework toward a more comprehensive rights-based climate governance instrument capable of addressing the unequal social consequences of climate change.

## **B. Institutional Fragmentation and the Challenge of Integrating Climate Justice into Human Rights Governance**

A second major finding concerns the problem of institutional fragmentation between human rights governance and climate policy institutions. Although climate change increasingly requires integrated governance responses, many national governance systems continue to operate through fragmented institutional arrangements in which environmental agencies, development institutions, and human rights bodies function through separate mandates and administrative structures. This fragmentation creates challenges because climate-related human rights impacts rarely fit within the boundaries of a single policy sector. For example, climate-induced livelihood disruption may simultaneously involve environmental degradation, economic inequality, social protection, land governance, and rights protection issues. The absence of institutional coordination may therefore limit the ability of governments to respond comprehensively to climate-related human rights risks (Peel & Osofsky, 2018; Biermann & Kim, 2020).

In the Indonesian context, RANHAM operates primarily as a human rights mainstreaming mechanism, while climate governance is largely developed through environmental and development policy frameworks. This institutional separation creates a potential governance gap because climate policies may prioritize technical objectives, such as emission reduction or adaptation planning, without sufficiently addressing questions of justice, participation, and accountability. Conversely, human rights policies may recognize vulnerable groups in general terms without incorporating the specific environmental processes that produce climate vulnerability. The result is a fragmented

governance structure where climate change and human rights are acknowledged as important policy areas but are not fully integrated into a unified framework of rights-based climate action.

From a climate justice perspective, institutional fragmentation creates particular challenges for procedural justice. Climate governance decisions often involve complex technical processes that can exclude communities lacking access to information, institutional resources, or political representation. Procedural justice requires that affected communities are not merely informed about policy decisions but are provided meaningful opportunities to participate in shaping those decisions (Schlosberg, 2007; Walker, 2012). Without institutional mechanisms linking human rights accountability with climate decision-making, participation may remain symbolic rather than transformative. This concern is particularly important in contexts where vulnerable communities face historical patterns of exclusion from environmental governance processes.

Furthermore, fragmented institutions may weaken accountability mechanisms. Human rights frameworks traditionally provide mechanisms for monitoring state obligations, while climate governance often relies on policy targets and administrative implementation. Integrating these approaches would allow climate commitments to be evaluated not only according to environmental outcomes but also according to their social and rights implications. A rights-based climate governance approach would therefore require institutions such as RANHAM to develop stronger connections with climate monitoring systems, environmental agencies, and mechanisms for public accountability.

The institutional challenge identified in this study suggests that strengthening climate justice within RANHAM requires governance integration rather than simply expanding policy language. Future human rights action plans should establish clearer relationships between human rights obligations and climate responsibilities, including institutional coordination, climate-related rights indicators, and mechanisms for monitoring vulnerable groups' protection. Such reforms would transform RANHAM from a general human rights policy framework into a more effective instrument for addressing the social dimensions of climate change. This transformation is consistent with broader scholarly arguments that climate governance must move beyond environmental management toward integrated systems that recognize climate change as a fundamental issue of justice and human rights (Newell & Mulvaney, 2013; Rodríguez-Garavito, 2020).

### **C. Vulnerable Communities and the Recognition Dimension of Climate Justice**

A central concern within climate justice scholarship is the recognition that climate vulnerability is not merely a consequence of environmental exposure but is deeply connected to historical, social, economic, and political inequalities.

Climate change does not affect societies uniformly; rather, its impacts are mediated through existing patterns of marginalization, unequal access to resources, and differences in institutional protection (Schlosberg & Collins, 2014; Sultana, 2022). This perspective is particularly relevant for evaluating the role of human rights frameworks such as RANHAM because the effectiveness of human rights governance depends not only on recognizing universal rights but also on acknowledging the differentiated experiences of groups that face disproportionate risks. A universal approach to rights protection may relationship with their environments. Indigenous peoples, rural communities, women, and resource-dependent populations frequently possess ecological knowledge systems developed through long-term interactions with their territories and ecosystems provide formal equality, but without recognition of structural differences, it may fail to address substantive inequalities experienced by vulnerable communities.

The recognition dimension of climate justice emphasizes that marginalized groups should be understood not merely as vulnerable populations requiring protection but as rights holders with specific knowledge, experiences, and forms of relationship with their environments. Indigenous peoples, rural communities, women, and resource-dependent populations frequently possess ecological knowledge systems developed through long-term interactions with their territories and ecosystems (Whyte, 2017; Dawson et al., 2021). However, conventional governance approaches often marginalize these forms of knowledge by prioritizing technical expertise and centralized decision-making structures. Within climate governance, with existing social vulnerabilities. For example, communities dependent on agriculture, fisheries, forests, and traditional ecological systems may experience climate change through livelihood disruption, declining resource availability, and threats to cultural continuity. These impacts cannot be adequately addressed through generalized climate policies because they involve specific relationships between communities, this creates a risk that adaptation and mitigation policies may reproduce existing inequalities by excluding communities from meaningful participation in decisions affecting their livelihoods and cultural identities.

From a human rights perspective, recognition is closely linked with principles of equality, non-discrimination, and cultural rights. Climate-related human rights protection requires states not only to provide general environmental protection but also to consider how climate impacts interact with existing social vulnerabilities. For example, communities dependent on agriculture, fisheries, forests, and traditional ecological systems may experience climate change through livelihood disruption, declining resource availability, and threats to cultural continuity. These impacts cannot be adequately addressed through generalized climate policies because they involve specific relationships between communities, environments, and governance systems (Whyte, 2020;

Kotzé & Calzadilla, 2017). Therefore, integrating recognition into human rights planning requires institutional mechanisms that identify differentiated vulnerabilities governance, it does not sufficiently develop mechanisms for addressing climate-specific vulnerabilities. The absence of explicit climate justice considerations limits the ability of RANHAM to recognize how environmental changes generate unequal rights consequences. In particular, climate vulnerability requires a shift from viewing vulnerable groups as passive recipients of state protection toward recognizing them as active participants in climate governance. This transformation is consistent with broader developments in environmental rights scholarship, which emphasize that and incorporate affected communities' perspectives into policy processes.

The analysis of RANHAM reveals that although the framework acknowledges the importance of vulnerable groups within human rights governance, it does not sufficiently develop mechanisms for addressing climate-specific vulnerabilities. The absence of explicit climate justice considerations limits the ability of RANHAM to recognize how environmental changes generate unequal rights consequences. In particular, climate vulnerability requires a shift from viewing vulnerable groups as passive recipients of state protection toward recognizing them as active participants in climate governance. This transformation is consistent with broader developments in environmental rights scholarship, which emphasize that effective climate governance requires meaningful participation, recognition of local knowledge, and respect for diverse relationships between communities and ecosystems (Boyd, 2012; Walker, 2012).

Consequently, strengthening RANHAM's contribution to climate justice requires expanding its understanding of vulnerability beyond traditional human rights categories. Future human rights action plans should incorporate climate vulnerability assessments that identify groups facing disproportionate environmental risks and establish mechanisms for their meaningful participation. Such an approach would align RANHAM with contemporary climate justice principles by ensuring that human rights governance addresses not only formal legal protection but also the structural conditions that determine who is most affected by climate change. In this sense, recognition becomes a central element in transforming RANHAM from a general human rights policy instrument into a framework capable of responding to the unequal realities of climate change.

#### **D. Reframing RANHAM as a Rights-Based Climate Governance Instrument**

The findings of this study suggest that the future relevance of RANHAM depends on its capacity to evolve from a conventional human rights policy framework into a broader instrument of rights-based climate governance. While RANHAM provides an important institutional foundation for mainstreaming

human rights principles within government policies, its current framework remains limited in addressing the complex relationship between climate change, inequality, and human rights. Climate change requires governance mechanisms that move beyond reactive protection against rights violations and toward preventive approaches capable of identifying and reducing structural vulnerabilities before can produce social consequences that must be evaluated through human rights principles. Climate mitigation and adaptation measures are often presented as harm occurs (Knox, 2018; Rodríguez-Garavito, 2020). Therefore, integrating climate justice into RANHAM should not be understood as an additional policy component but as a necessary transformation of how human rights obligations are interpreted in the context of environmental change.

A rights-based climate governance approach requires recognizing that climate policies themselves can produce social consequences that must be evaluated through human rights principles. Climate mitigation and adaptation measures are often presented as universally beneficial, yet scholarship demonstrates that environmental interventions may generate unequal outcomes when they fail to consider local social contexts and power relations (Fairhead, Leach, & Scoones, 2012; Newell & Mulvaney, 2013). For example, policies related to conservation, energy transition, or resource management may unintentionally restrict access to livelihoods or relationship between human rights bodies and environmental governance institutions. The effectiveness of rights-based climate action depends on coordination between agencies responsible for climate policy, environmental regulation, development planning, and human rights protection. Without such coordination, climate governance may continue to prioritize technical and economic objectives while insufficiently addressing questions of justice and rights protection. Institutional integration would allow human rights principles to function not exclude communities from decision-making processes. Therefore, human rights frameworks such as RANHAM can provide essential safeguards by requiring climate policies to incorporate participation, accountability, and protection of vulnerable groups.

Reframing RANHAM as a climate governance instrument also requires strengthening the institutional relationship between human rights bodies and environmental governance institutions. The effectiveness of rights-based climate action depends on coordination between agencies responsible for climate policy, environmental regulation, development planning, and human rights protection. Without such coordination, climate governance may continue to prioritize technical and economic objectives while insufficiently addressing questions of justice and rights protection. Institutional integration would allow human rights principles to function not merely as normative commitments but as operational criteria for evaluating climate policies and programs (Peel & Osofsky, 2018; Biermann & Kim, 2020).

Furthermore, integrating climate justice into RANHAM would contribute to broader debates concerning the role of human rights frameworks in addressing global environmental challenges. The climate crisis has demonstrated the limitations of governance models that separate environmental sustainability from social justice. A more comprehensive approach requires recognizing that environmental protection, human dignity, and social equality are interconnected objectives. By incorporating climate justice principles, RANHAM could contribute to a more transformative model of governance in which climate action is evaluated according to both ecological effectiveness and human rights outcomes.

From this perspective, the contribution of RANHAM to climate justice should be understood as a question of institutional transformation rather than policy replacement. The existing human rights framework already contains important principles that are compatible with climate justice, including equality, participation, accountability, and protection of vulnerable populations. The challenge is to operationalize these principles within climate governance structures. Strengthening RANHAM through explicit climate integration would enable Indonesia to develop a more coherent approach to climate governance, one that recognizes climate change not only as an environmental challenge but also as a fundamental issue of human rights and justice.

## **Conclusion**

This study examined the role of Indonesia's 2011 National Human Rights Action Plan (RANHAM) in promoting climate justice by analyzing its relationship with human rights governance and climate change policy. The analysis demonstrates that RANHAM provides an important normative foundation for integrating human rights principles into state governance, particularly through its emphasis on institutional responsibility, protection of vulnerable groups, and human rights mainstreaming. However, when evaluated through a climate justice perspective, RANHAM remains limited because climate change has not been sufficiently incorporated as a structural human rights challenge. The separation between human rights policy and climate governance reflects a broader institutional challenge in which environmental risks are often addressed through technical and administrative approaches rather than through justice-oriented frameworks. Consequently, while RANHAM contributes to strengthening the human rights architecture in Indonesia, its current framework does not yet fully address the distributive, procedural, and recognitional dimensions of climate justice (Knox, 2018; Schlosberg & Collins, 2014; Sultana, 2022).

This study argues that strengthening RANHAM's contribution to climate justice requires a transformation from a general human rights policy instrument into a more integrated rights-based climate governance framework. Such transformation requires explicit recognition of climate change as a human rights

issue, stronger institutional coordination between human rights and environmental governance bodies, and the incorporation of climate vulnerability considerations into national human rights planning. In particular, future human rights action plans should place greater emphasis on protecting communities disproportionately affected by climate change, including Indigenous peoples, rural populations, and other socially marginalized groups. Integrating principles of participation, accountability, and recognition would ensure that climate governance does not merely pursue environmental objectives but also addresses questions of fairness and social inequality. This approach is consistent with broader climate justice scholarship, which emphasizes that effective climate action must address not only ecological outcomes but also the unequal distribution of climate risks, responsibilities, and decision-making power (Walker, 2012; Rodríguez-Garavito, 2020).

Despite its contribution, this study has several limitations. As a non-empirical socio-legal analysis, it focuses primarily on the normative and institutional dimensions of RANHAM and does not examine implementation practices through field-based research or community-level perspectives. Future studies could extend this research by conducting comparative analyses of national human rights action plans across climate-vulnerable countries, examining how different governance models integrate human rights principles into climate policies. Further empirical research could also investigate how climate-related rights concerns are experienced by vulnerable communities and how institutional reforms influence their protection. Nevertheless, this study contributes to the emerging literature on human rights-based climate governance by demonstrating that national human rights frameworks can play a significant role in advancing climate justice when environmental protection and human rights obligations are treated as interconnected dimensions of sustainable governance.

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“The climate crisis is not just an environmental crisis, it is a human rights crisis.”

**Greta Thunberg**

Swedish climate activist and environmental advocate

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