

Editorial Note

Connecting Institutions, Communities, and Systems for Sustainable Development

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It is a pleasure to present the August 2026 issue of the Journal of Indonesia Sustainable Development & Planning (JISDEP). This issue brings together fifteen articles, comprising thirteen research articles, one policy paper, one commentary, and one book review, reflecting the breadth and interdisciplinary character of contemporary sustainable development and planning scholarship. Taken together, these contributions demonstrate that sustainability is not a single-sector agenda. It is simultaneously a question of infrastructure resilience, institutional capacity, fiscal policy, land governance, education, cultural preservation, food security, urban development, energy transition, and the distribution of power within global and local systems.

A distinctive feature of this issue is its strong engagement with the relationship between sustainable development and institutions. Several contributions show that development outcomes depend not only on the availability of resources or the design of policies, but also on how institutions coordinate, implement, and respond to the needs of communities.

The issue opens with a study of climate-resilient road infrastructure in Greater Honiara, Solomon Islands, in the Pacific Ocean. Using the Analytic Hierarchy Process and Multi-Criteria Analysis, the authors identify sustainable drainage systems as the highest-priority adaptation strategy across the study area. The article reminds us that climate resilience must be translated into concrete infrastructure decisions, particularly in vulnerable Small Island Developing States where extreme rainfall and flooding pose significant threats.

Institutional questions are also central to the study of the Jatigede Dam's land legacy issues. Applying the Institutional Analysis and Development framework, the authors examine compensation, relocation,

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and cultural heritage debates. Their findings reveal persistent power asymmetries between formal institutions and affected communities, emphasizing the importance of participation, locally grounded norms, and effective grievance mechanisms in managing the long-term consequences of major infrastructure projects.

The theme of evidence-based public policy continues in the study of Special Allocation Funds and stunting in West Java. Using panel data from 27 regencies and municipalities, the research finds no consistent statistically significant association between previous-year DAK ceilings and reported stunting. Rather than interpreting this result simply as a failure of fiscal intervention, the study points toward the importance of coordinated planning, verified local needs, implementation readiness, and monitoring of actual service functionality.

At the urban and spatial scale, this issue presents a hedonic analysis of land-price variation in Syiah Kuala District, Banda Aceh. The study demonstrates the relevance of accessibility to essential services in explaining peri-urban land values, while also showing that disaster risk does not necessarily translate directly into observed land-price differences. Its findings open an important avenue for further investigation into risk perception, institutional trust, and adaptive capacity in post-disaster urban development.

Sustainable development, however, cannot be separated from questions of education and cultural continuity. One article offers a critical reinterpretation of the Malin Kundang folktale, questioning fear-based approaches to moral education and proposing a more dialogical model emphasizing empathy, children's agency, forgiveness, and mutual recognition. The proposed concept of Critical Folklore Literacy connects cultural narratives with the goals of inclusive and non-violent education under SDG 4.

A complementary contribution explores the use of technology to preserve cultural heritage through Batik Quest, an educational role-playing game designed to introduce young people to traditional Indonesian batik motifs. The preliminary results are encouraging: the game received an overall User Acceptance Testing score of 86.60 percent, while a small preliminary knowledge assessment showed an increase in mean scores after gameplay. Importantly, the authors appropriately caution that the small sample does not establish causal educational effectiveness.

Digital transformation is also examined through the study of institutional readiness for Amdalnet implementation in East Java. With an overall readiness score of 75.34 percent, the province is categorized as ready, although organizational capacity remains the weakest dimension. The study therefore highlights a familiar challenge in digital government: technological adoption requires more than platforms and formal compliance; it also requires capable personnel, coordination, financing, and institutional consolidation.

The question of local development and governance is further explored through research on Madura Island and Bojonegoro. The Madura study compares conventional ordinal logistic regression with machine-learning approaches to classify village development, finding K-Nearest Neighbors to have the highest predictive accuracy while retaining the interpretability of conventional statistical analysis. The findings reinforce the importance of health facilities and equitable access to schooling in strengthening village development.

Meanwhile, the Bojonegoro study examines intergovernmental collaboration through the Village Recognition of Prior Learning programme. The programme expanded access to higher education for 999 scholarship recipients, but also exposed challenges involving financial responsibilities, institutional authority, scheduling, digital readiness, and village participation. In response, the authors propose a Capacity-Centred Intergovernmental Collaboration Model that emphasizes role clarity, shared resources, competency-based assessment, adaptive learning, and collaborative monitoring.

The issue also invites readers to reflect critically on the politics of sustainability itself. The article on sustainability as a global norm examines Indonesia–European Union tensions over palm oil and argues that sustainability standards may reproduce asymmetric power relations between the Global North and Global South. By foregrounding norm-making, regulatory power, economic instruments, and implementation, the study reminds us that sustainability is not merely a technical objective; it is also embedded in international political economy.

At the community level, the study of Kasepuhan Gelaralam provides another important perspective on sustainability. Traditional rice cultivation, communal labour, customary regulation, and collective storage practices are shown to support multiple dimensions of food security. At the same time, vulnerabilities remain in non-rice food commodities. The article thus demonstrates the value of bringing indigenous knowledge and culturally grounded institutions into contemporary food-security policy.

Urban governance receives further attention in the proposed Seamless City framework for Bandung. Drawing on public sentiment data and natural-language processing, the study identifies governance coordination and transport fragmentation as major areas of citizen concern. It proposes adaptive indicators across governance, mobility, economy, and environment, aligned with international urban standards and the Sustainable Development Goals. The contribution is particularly relevant to the ongoing transition from fragmented Smart City platforms toward integrated, citizen-centered urban services.

The issue closes its research section with a contribution on sustainable bioavtur development in Indonesia. Recognizing projected growth in aviation fuel demand, the study examines feedstock availability, emissions reduction, process technologies, and policy requirements. Crude palm oil, used cooking oil, and organic-phase municipal solid waste, together with HEFA and FT technologies, emerge as priorities for further development. The study underscores the need to combine technological choices with feedstock security, investment incentives, and credible decarbonization policies.

Beyond these research articles, this issue includes a timely commentary, “One Test Cannot Serve Two Masters,” which critically examines the proposed integration of Indonesia's National Assessment and Academic Ability Test. The commentary raises a fundamental measurement concern: instruments designed for different purposes may not generate valid evidence when their functions and consequences are conflated. It therefore adds an important methodological and policy dimension to the issue's broader discussion of evidence-based governance.

Finally, the book review of Charles Montgomery's *Happy City: Transforming Our Lives Through Urban Design* brings the discussion back to the ultimate purpose of planning: improving human well-being. The review highlights Montgomery's emphasis on public space, mobility, social interaction, inclusion, and human-centered urban design, while also noting the book's more narrative and inspirational character.

Across these diverse contributions, a common message emerges. Sustainable development is fundamentally about connecting systems that are too often treated separately: infrastructure with climate adaptation, fiscal policy with service delivery, technology with institutional capacity, culture with education, local knowledge with food security, mobility with happiness, and national development with global sustainability norms.

For JISDEP, this diversity is not incidental. It reflects our conviction that sustainable development and planning require dialogue across disciplines, scales, institutions, and communities. The articles in this issue do not offer a single pathway to sustainability. Instead, they offer evidence, critical perspectives, methodological innovations, and practical propositions to help policymakers, planners, researchers, and communities navigate the complex choices ahead.

We hope that this August 2026 issue will stimulate further research and constructive debate, while contributing to a more inclusive, resilient, evidence-based, and human-centered approach to sustainable development and planning in Indonesia and beyond.