



Indonesia's Contribution to Maritime Security and Climate Justice in the Global South

Tri Wibowo

Department of International Law, Faculty of Law, Universitas Diponegoro, Indonesia

triwibowo260602@gmail.com

*Corresponding Author

Article Info

Article history:

Received : November 19, 2024

Revised : July 2, 2025

Accepted : April 31, 2026

Keywords:

Climate Justice,
Defense,
Global South,
Indonesia,
Maritime Security

Abstract

As a prominent maritime power in the Global South, Indonesia holds strategic potential to shape global maritime governance. Through the Global Maritime Axis (GMA) launched in 2014, Indonesia reaffirmed its commitment to safeguarding maritime stability. However, the existing GMA framework remains overly centered on traditional threats such as sovereignty protection and military defense, overlooking the growing impact of non-traditional challenges, particularly those related to climate change. To enhance its maritime resilience, Indonesia's maritime security framework must evolve to incorporate the climate-security nexus. This study employs a qualitative descriptive-analytical approach to explore the interrelationship between maritime security and climate justice, drawing from nationally and internationally indexed literature. Findings underscore that the ocean's role in regulating the global climate necessitates inclusive, collaborative governance that transcends traditional boundaries. Climate justice, as a normative framework, demands the recognition of shared but differentiated responsibilities, especially for vulnerable maritime nations like Indonesia. Within the context of the Archipelagic and Island States (AIS) Forum, Indonesia has emerged as both an initiator and host, advancing principles of ocean collaboration, innovation, and sustainability. By reconceptualizing maritime security to include environmental protection, equitable resource governance, and marine biodiversity conservation, Indonesia can lead a transformative approach to climate justice. This repositioning enables Indonesia to protect its ecological and geopolitical interests while serving as a model for other developing maritime states. Ultimately, fostering climate resilience through maritime cooperation enhances regional stability and contributes meaningfully to global climate goals.

DOI:

<https://dx.doi.org/10.33172/jp.v12i1.19788>

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INTRODUCTION

Maritime security and climate justice are two interconnected issues that hold significant impact for sustainable development, especially within the sovereign territory of Global South. As the world faces increasingly complex maritime and environmental challenges, there is an urgent need to address security and climate-related risks in a coordinated manner (Farhan et al., 2023). Maritime security encompasses a broad range of concerns, including national security, environmental protection, economic stability, and human security (Räisänen et al., 2021). Each of these facets contributes to a holistic approach to safeguarding oceans and coastlines, which is essential for achieving sustainable development goals. In parallel, climate justice advocates for the fair distribution of responsibilities and resources to counter the adverse effects of climate change, especially for vulnerable countries that contribute least to carbon emissions but bear disproportionate impacts (Nguyen et al., 2023).

The Global South, which includes regions such as Southeast Asia, Southern Africa, Latin America, and parts of the Middle East, is home to maritime territories that face unique security challenges (Hussainzad & Gou, 2024). These regions are disproportionately affected by illegal activities, resource exploitation, and regional disputes, issues that are further intensified by the impacts of climate change (Birkmann et al., 2023). Rising sea levels, marine biodiversity loss, and more extreme weather patterns have profound effects on maritime security (Lincoln et al., 2021), as they disrupt ecosystems, livelihoods, and economies. In this context, climate justice serves as an essential framework for understanding the unique needs of developing countries in mitigating and adapting to these threats.

Domestically speaking, Indonesia, as the world's largest archipelagic country with 17,504 islands, stands out as a crucial role in addressing these dual challenges of maritime security and climate justice (Nugraha & Chen, 2023). Strategically positioned along key global shipping routes, such as the Strait of Malacca, the Lombok Strait, and the Sunda Strait Indonesia oversees approximately 40% of the world's trade passage, giving it a vital role in maintaining regional stability and ensuring safe maritime traffic (Marco, 2023). Its location within the Coral Triangle, a globally recognized center of marine biodiversity, also makes Indonesia an ecological hotspot. With an array of marine resources that support local livelihoods, Indonesia's ecosystems are essential for biodiversity conservation, sustainable fishing, and food security.

Beyond its geographical significance, Indonesia's political influence within international forums further underscores its commitment to both maritime security and climate justice. As a prominent member of ASEAN and the G20, Indonesia has become a leading advocate for sustainable ocean governance, combatting illegal fishing, and promoting international cooperation to address shared security risks (Shekhar, 2018). Within the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) framework, Indonesia's diplomatic and economic partnerships help reinforce a stable maritime order, benefiting both regional and global stakeholders. Indonesia's stance on climate change is integral to its maritime security strategy, as the country faces rising sea levels, coral reef degradation, and increasing natural disasters, which threaten coastal communities and ecosystems.

Indonesia's leadership on climate issues includes a call for increased adaptation funding and shared accountability, particularly from larger carbon-emitting nations.

Indonesia has undertaken a robust approach to enhance its position as a global maritime axis, grounded in the belief that the country's foreign policy should reflect its geographic, historical, geopolitical, and geostrategic characteristics (Gindarsah et al., 2015). This ambition resonates with Indonesia's historic stance as stated in the Juanda Declaration (1957), the Nusantara Vision, and its commitment to UNCLOS 1982. Building the maritime axis involves several strategic pillars: fostering Indonesia's maritime culture, safeguarding marine resources with a focus on food sovereignty through the fishing industry, prioritizing maritime infrastructure and connectivity (such as sea tolls, deep seaports, logistics, and marine tourism), enhancing maritime diplomacy to prevent conflicts like illegal fishing, sovereignty violations, territorial disputes, piracy, and marine pollution, and strengthening maritime defense to protect sovereignty and safety at sea.

Indonesia's maritime policy does not solely address traditional security threats but also emphasizes the non-traditional risks posed by climate change (Hudaya & Putra, 2017). Understanding the ocean's crucial role in regulating the global climate, Indonesia advocates for effective marine resource management as a form of climate justice, particularly for vulnerable nations. Climate change issues transcend science, economy, and justice, demanding cross-sectoral approaches and inclusive policies. In the context of environmental justice, geographic conditions should be acknowledged respectfully, with the right to a healthy environment considered a fundamental human right.

This context reinforces the need for climate justice as a framework for ensuring fair and equitable access to environmental resources and the protection of human rights. Climate justice promotes the equitable distribution of responsibilities and burdens, emphasizing that wealthier, high-emission countries must be held accountable for their disproportionate contribution to climate change. These countries must also support low-emission, poorer nations that bear the brunt of climate-related impacts despite contributing minimally to the problem (Sultana, 2022). According to the Dictionary, (2023), climate justice holds that nations with greater historical emissions should take responsibility for environmental damage by providing financial and technological support to less developed, more vulnerable communities. This approach goes beyond technical solutions by addressing the systemic inequalities embedded in fossil fuel-driven economies.

Climate justice is essential to achieving a just transition toward a sustainable future (McCauley & Heffron, 2018). A just transition aims to shift from fossil fuels to greener energy sources in ways that are fair and inclusive, without leaving behind vulnerable groups such as local communities, informal workers, and marginalized populations. These groups can experience economic, social, and environmental harms during the transition if their needs are not adequately protected. For instance, the demand for minerals needed for green technologies, like batteries for electric vehicles, has led to concerns about human rights abuses in mining practices, often affecting impoverished communities in resource-rich regions. Without safeguards, the rush to adopt sustainable technologies could inadvertently cause social harm, undermining the very goals of climate justice.

Fundamentally, climate justice seeks to correct long-standing socioeconomic, structural, and intergenerational inequalities. It ensures that those who have contributed least to climate change are given the resources and support necessary to adapt and thrive in a warming world (Porter et al., 2020). It calls for an equitable distribution of responsibilities, where countries and industries with the largest carbon footprints contribute more significantly to climate mitigation and adaptation efforts. This approach aims to rectify historical imbalances, create resilient communities, and promote long-term environmental sustainability by acknowledging and addressing the root causes of climate-related disparities.

Given its vast archipelagic geography, Indonesia is uniquely positioned to serve as a model for integrating maritime security with climate justice. This integration aligns with Indonesia's ambition to become a global maritime axis, where maritime security encompasses not only defense and sovereignty but also the stewardship of marine ecosystems, role of Indonesia in mitigating the impact of climate change, and the sustainable use of ocean resources. Strengthening maritime capabilities in this context supports both national development and global environmental objectives.

Accordingly, this paper analyzes Indonesia's dual contributions to maritime security and climate justice within the Global South. By examining its strategic geography, political leadership, and ecological governance, the paper highlights Indonesia's role in shaping international discourses and policies. Ultimately, it offers valuable insights into how developing countries can address the intertwined challenges of ocean governance and climate resilience while advancing a sustainable development agenda.

METHODS

The research on Indonesia's contribution to maritime security and climate justice in the Global South employs a descriptive-analytical approach and qualitative methods. This method aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between maritime security and climate justice, focusing on the core research parameters: maritime security, climate justice, and Indonesia's role within the Global South. Data collection techniques are carried out through literature studies, with primary data sources derived from books and nationally and internationally indexed journal articles conducted by online search engines (Birkle et al., 2020). Through this approach, the research seeks to gather data grounded in conceptual and theoretical frameworks to provide an in-depth understanding of Indonesia's contributions to maritime security and climate justice as part of its responsibility toward global issues.

This study was conducted using a series of structured steps to ensure a comprehensive and systematic approach. The first step involved defining the key parameters of the study, including maritime security, climate justice, and a focus on Indonesia and other Global South countries. These parameters were established to outline the scope of the discussion and effectively guide the research process. Subsequently, a conceptual framework was developed to illustrate the general and specific relationships between the three main keywords: maritime security, climate justice, and their relevance to the Global South. This framework served as a tool to identify substantive connections

and interdependencies among these parameters, providing a clear foundation for the study.

Primary data sources were collected via online search engines to support a more fundamental, theoretical understanding. Keywords derived from the parameters were used to locate relevant journal articles, books, and reports. A total of 39 sources, including journal articles, books, and news reports, were carefully selected as primary references. The next step was to write the manuscript, where the collected data and insights were synthesized into a cohesive narrative. This process ensured that the findings were clearly articulated, the research objectives were addressed, and the relationships among maritime security, climate justice, and the Global South were identified.

Finally, the research culminated in the development of conclusions and recommendations. These emphasized Indonesia's role in maritime security and climate justice and proposed strategic steps to address the identified challenges.

Maritime Security

Bellamy (2020) further elucidated the concept: "maritime" refers to anything related to the sea, including activities such as navigation and shipping, resources such as fisheries and minerals, and regions such as coastal areas and exclusive economic zones (EEZs). The "security" domain implies a state of safety, stability, and freedom from threats. Thus, maritime security encompasses the protection of physical assets, such as ships, ports, and marine resources, as well as the enforcement of laws and norms that maintain order and peace at sea (Bueger, 2015). Maritime security encompasses various issues that transcend traditional military concerns. Non-traditional threats include piracy, human trafficking, illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, environmental crimes, and disputes over maritime boundaries. These issues have been empirically shown to undermine regional stability and limit the capacity of archipelagic states to sustainably manage and use their marine resources. By addressing both traditional and non-traditional threats, maritime security can more effectively contribute to national development and regional cooperation.

Therefore, the framework of maritime security requires a holistic approach that includes civilian, diplomatic, and regulatory measures in addition to military efforts.

Agastia (2021) emphasizes that effective maritime security requires the involvement of both national authorities and international cooperation. At the national level, civilian authorities, particularly coast guards, enforce maritime laws, conduct search-and-rescue operations, and respond to environmental hazards such as oil spills. At the international level, diplomacy enables states to address boundary disputes, develop common guidelines for maritime conduct, and establish cooperation mechanisms to respond to shared security threats. These efforts operate within the legal framework established by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which defines the rights and responsibilities of states in using and managing ocean spaces and resources. The framework covers key areas, including navigation, resource extraction, environmental protection, and the peaceful resolution of maritime disputes.

Maritime security will likely remain a fundamental concern, as underscored by ongoing geopolitical tensions and the ocean's growing economic importance. However, the effectiveness of maritime security measures may depend on countries' ability to align their national interests with shared, cooperative approaches. This alignment is crucial for ensuring secure trade routes, sustainable resource management, and regional stability, ultimately benefiting the global economy and the well-being of coastal communities. Future developments in maritime security will likely depend on legal frameworks that uphold national sovereignty while promoting shared responsibility for environmental protection and the sustainability of ocean resources.

Global South

The term “global south” broadly refers to countries in Africa, Latin America, and the developing regions of Asia (Kowalski, 2021). However, it has evolved into a complex, critical concept with multiple dimensions beyond its geographic meaning. Traditionally, the Global South has been used within intergovernmental development organizations, many of which emerged from the Non-Aligned Movement during the Cold War, to describe economically disadvantaged countries (Keethaponcalan, 2016). It also serves as a post-Cold War alternative to the term “Third World,” highlighting countries facing economic challenges without the outdated political connotations associated with Cold War alignments.

In recent years, the Global South has taken on a broader, post-national meaning, shifting from strictly geographic associations to a concept that represents spaces and populations negatively impacted by capitalist globalization. The second definition emphasizes the socioeconomic impacts and marginalization resulting from the global economic system. Here, the Global South is understood as a deterritorialized geography, a framework that goes beyond national borders to include subjugated or marginalized populations within wealthier countries. For example, economic disparities and social inequalities found within wealthy nations can reflect a type of “economic South” within the geographic North. Similarly, affluent, globally connected hubs within traditionally “Southern” countries can represent economic “Norths.”

In this expanded view, Pinheiro (2024) term “global” decouples the South from a strict geographic association, highlighting that the experiences of economic disadvantage and marginalization attributed to the Global South are not confined to specific regions. This reimagined Global South encompasses any community or demographic facing structural inequality stemming from global economic and political dynamics, underscoring a relational position shaped by the externalities of global capitalism and inequality rather than by physical location alone.

Geographically, Indonesia is located in the Southern Hemisphere. This position is highly strategic because countries in the Southern Hemisphere benefit from the Pacific and Indian Oceans, which enhance their resilience and connect them to other nations. Nevertheless, countries in the Global South, including Indonesia, still face several challenges, particularly in balancing economic growth with social equity and

environmental sustainability, as well as issues related to national and global environmental security and justice.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Indonesia's Maritime Security Status Quo

Indonesia's ambition to become one of the world's maritime powers is reflected in the concept of Indonesia as the Global Maritime Axis (GMA), introduced internationally by President Joko Widodo at the 9th East Asia Summit in November 2014. To make this concept succeed, Indonesia must focus on developing its maritime culture, marine resources, connectivity, maritime diplomacy, and naval development (Tukul Rameyo, 2018).

The Global Maritime Axis (GMA) is Indonesia's strategic initiative to strengthen its maritime identity and influence. Rather than viewing the country's island geography as a limitation, President Widodo sees it as a source of economic potential and national strength. The GMA aims to promote maritime connectivity and infrastructure through "sea highways," new deep seaports, and logistical networks, supporting local industries such as maritime tourism, fishing, and shipping (Sitanggang, 2021). It also emphasizes strengthening sovereignty and security by using maritime diplomacy to resolve border disputes, protecting resources within Indonesia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and fostering peaceful regional cooperation.

With a foreign policy focused on the Indo-Pacific, Indonesia seeks to assert its leadership in ASEAN, deepen regional partnerships, and support a stable security framework to prevent dominance by any single power (Alverdian, 2025). The GMA includes plans to shift from a "minimum essential force" defense strategy to a more ambitious approach, strengthening the regional navy to protect marine resources and essential trade routes. Finally, the GMA is a long-term commitment to building Indonesia's maritime power by advancing "maritime domain awareness" and fostering indigenous defense industries, addressing cultural and economic priorities (Supriyanto, 2013). As a comprehensive approach, the GMA underscores Indonesia's goal of reviving its archipelagic heritage and securing its position as a significant maritime power in the Indo-Pacific region.

Indonesia's maritime security is central to its foreign policy, with a focus on protecting territorial sovereignty and addressing threats within its vast maritime domain. The Jokowi administration has emphasized maintaining sovereignty against intrusions and engaging in diplomacy to settle boundary disputes with neighboring countries (Arif, 2021). However, three key issues challenge Indonesia's maritime stability: border disputes, illegal fishing, and maritime piracy (Fauzan et al., 2019).

Unresolved maritime borders are a top concern, as Indonesia faces disputes over three land borders and seven maritime regions. A significant portion of Indonesians see foreign military incursions and border violations as major threats. In response, the Jokowi administration has prioritized "maritime diplomacy" to resolve these boundary issues, seeking peaceful resolutions while protecting national interests.

Illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing poses another serious threat, with foreign fleets entering Indonesian waters as regional fish stocks dwindle. Illegal fishing costs Indonesia an estimated \$24 billion annually, primarily due to poaching by fleets from China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam (Suherman et al., 2020). President Widodo has taken a strict approach, ordering the sinking of foreign vessels caught illegally fishing. This hard-line stance has discouraged encroachment and demonstrated Indonesia's commitment to upholding its maritime laws, although measures have been tailored to avoid escalating regional tensions, especially with China.

Maritime piracy also challenges Indonesia's maritime security. Attacks on commercial vessels frequently occur in critical areas like the Malacca Strait and the South China Sea. As Djalal (2013) notes, while piracy remains a domestic security focus, Indonesia has been cautious about joining international anti-piracy agreements outside ASEAN, such as Japan's Regional Co-operation Agreement on Combating Piracy (ReCAAP). Instead, Indonesia recently strengthened domestic coordination by establishing the Maritime Security Agency (Bakamla), which unifies efforts across 12 maritime law enforcement agencies and enhances joint patrols to safeguard Indonesia's waters (Prasetyo et al., 2023). Through a combination of diplomacy, enforcement, and institutional strengthening, Indonesia is actively addressing complex challenges to secure its maritime domain and reinforce its sovereignty.

In response, ministries, agencies, and the Indonesian National Armed Forces have been assigned specific responsibilities based on their roles, functions, and duties. The following are the functions and responsibilities of these institutions based on their priority scale and role in maintaining maritime security in Indonesian waters.

Table 1. Ministries and key functions
(Morris et al., 2018)

Ministry	Key Functions
Indonesian Navy (TNI-AL)	- Responsible for defending Indonesia's territorial waters sovereignty from external threats. - Plays a prominent role in maritime law enforcement, sometimes overlapping with civilian agencies due to historical precedent.
Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF)	- Focuses on sustainable management of fisheries and marine resources. - Conducts enforcement against illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing within Indonesia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). - Collaborates with other agencies to protect marine biodiversity, promote conservation, and ensure food security from fisheries.

To support the functions of the ministries and the TNI-AL, there are several agencies that play a specific role in protecting and enhancing Indonesia's maritime security. In this context, they have particular responsibilities within the domestic locus of Indonesia's territorial sovereignty.

Table 2. Agency and key functions
(Morris et al., 2018)

Agency	Key Functions
Indonesia Search and	- Conducts search and rescue missions in maritime and coastal areas to save lives during emergencies.

Rescue Agency (BASARNAS)	-	Coordinates with national and international agencies to improve response efficiency in disaster situations.
Directorat General of Sea Transportation	-	Regulates and monitors sea transportation to ensure safety and secure maritime operations.
	-	Maintains and provides navigational aids and infrastructure for safe passage in Indonesian waters.
Directorate General of Immigration	-	Controls immigration at seaports to prevent illegal entry and strengthen border security.
	-	Screens and monitors individuals entering and leaving Indonesia to uphold national security.
Maritime Security Agency (BAKAMLA)	-	Coordinates maritime law enforcement activities among different government agencies.
	-	Conducts patrols and surveillance to secure Indonesia's maritime zones against illegal activities.
Indonesia Directorate of Customs & Excise	-	Enforces customs regulations to combat smuggling and ensure compliance with trade laws.
	-	Monitors and inspects goods entering and exiting Indonesian waters to protect economic interests.
Indonesia Water Police (POLAIR)	-	Provides law enforcement and security on Indonesian waters, focusing on public order and safety.
	-	Investigates and responds to maritime crimes, such as smuggling and piracy, in coordination with other agencies.

Despite these advancements, Indonesia's maritime security now faces a pressing need to integrate non-traditional security threats, particularly those linked to climate change and ocean sustainability. Rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and marine ecosystem degradation pose significant threats to Indonesia's coastal communities, fisheries, and marine biodiversity. These non-traditional threats could undermine food security, displace populations, and intensify resource conflicts, adding complexity to traditional security concerns.

To address these challenges, Indonesia's maritime policy should prioritize sustainability and climate resilience. Initiatives could include enhancing environmental surveillance, strengthening coastal defenses against natural disasters, and investing in sustainable fisheries management. Regional cooperation is crucial in addressing shared environmental concerns, such as overfishing and marine pollution, that transcend national borders. Collaborative efforts in climate adaptation, resource conservation, and sustainable ocean governance could become essential elements of Indonesia's maritime diplomacy, supporting long-term stability during climate impacts.

Indonesia has also begun focusing on blue carbon trading for two key blue carbon ecosystems: mangroves and seagrass beds. As the leading sector in this area, the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF) recognizes that serious efforts to protect blue carbon ecosystems not only help reduce Indonesia's emissions but also improve the well-being of local communities living around these ecosystems. Social and economic functions will support ecological functions while achieving climate justice for the surrounding communities.

Strengthening defense ties with Indian Ocean littoral nations, along with academic exchanges, is instrumental in helping Indonesia acquire expertise in both traditional defense and emerging environmental security. By aligning its maritime security policies with sustainability goals, Indonesia can lead efforts in ASEAN and the Indian Ocean region to address non-traditional threats, paving the way for a comprehensive, adaptive security framework that safeguards national interests and regional stability amid a changing climate.

Linking the Contribution of Maritime Security and Climate Justice in Indonesia in the Global South

As the world's largest archipelagic state, Indonesia's focus on maritime security and diplomacy is a logical and essential policy direction, especially under the leadership of President Joko Widodo (Norlyanti, 2024). Indonesia's ambition to assert itself as a significant maritime power aligns with its national and regional interests. The Jokowi administration emphasized strengthening Indonesia's naval capabilities, fostering maritime diplomacy, and prioritizing the protection of its territorial sovereignty, all while committing to peace and stability in Southeast Asia (Simatupang, 2023). In the context of the Global South, Indonesia's role as a maritime leader holds significant influence, especially within the ASEAN and among Indian Ocean-Pacific countries that share similar aspirations for independence, sustainable development, and regional stability (Pandalai, 2022).

Indonesia's strategic location at the crossroads of the Indian and Pacific Oceans makes it a critical player in addressing maritime security challenges, from territorial disputes in the South China Sea to transnational threats such as piracy, illegal fishing, and environmental degradation (Khan et al., 2024). Indonesia understands that a secure and stable maritime environment is essential to its economic growth. The government is strengthening its naval capabilities to safeguard its marine resources and ensure open sea lanes for international trade. Under President Widodo's leadership, Indonesia is developing a "green-water" navy equipped with offshore patrol vessels, air defense systems, maritime surveillance, and anti-submarine warfare capabilities (Chandramohan, 2016).

This shift toward a green-water navy not only reinforces Indonesia's maritime sovereignty but also enables it to function as a dependable security partner for fellow Global South nations. Many developing maritime countries face similar non-traditional threats and resource constraints; Indonesia's model offers a practical, collaborative framework. Through maritime training, joint patrols, intelligence sharing, and multilateral cooperation, Indonesia can foster regional trust and maritime resilience. By aligning its naval development with climate and sustainability goals, Indonesia strengthens its identity as a stabilizing force and an advocate for equitable maritime governance in the Global South. By aligning its naval development with climate and sustainability goals, Indonesia strengthens its identity as a stabilizing force and an advocate for equitable maritime governance in the Global South.

In line with this, Indonesia has shown an interest in countering transnational challenges, such as radicalism and maritime crime, through cooperative frameworks. Although it resists certain multilateral anti-piracy arrangements, Indonesia supports joint exercises, training, and material transfers to strengthen maritime safety. The country is also keen to develop defense industrial partnerships, reduce dependence on arms imports by nurturing indigenous shipbuilding, and create job opportunities that contribute to economic development. This strategic approach not only builds Indonesia's defense self-sufficiency but also enables the country to set an example in the Global South on balancing national security with sustainable economic growth.

Indonesia's maritime vision extends beyond national maritime security to regional stability and environmental stewardship. Indonesia is asserting itself as a stabilizing force and a global champion of sustainable maritime governance by fortifying its naval capabilities and fostering partnerships in Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean. This commitment aligns with broader efforts to protect the marine environment and uphold regional autonomy in an era where the influence of global superpowers is increasingly felt.

The status quo of Indonesia's national maritime security was discussed previously. In the discussion on this topic, international cooperation, whether bilateral, regional, or international, is essential to assess the contributions Indonesia has made in maintaining the integrity of maritime security and its efforts in preserving stability and climate justice on a global scale. Several factors need to be considered in relation to their existence and their role in generating academic responses to understand the link between maritime security and climate justice. When discussing global maritime issues, we must also examine domestic issues in countries in the Global South. Do they face the same threats? How far do these challenges hinder climate justice?

Domestically, countries in the Global South share common maritime security challenges, such as piracy, maritime terrorism, the rise of narco-terrorism and the terrorism-crime nexus, illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, mining security, maritime pollution, oil-related environmental disasters, human trafficking, military disputes, and other non-traditional threats (Ichimi, 2023). These issues should not be viewed merely as domestic but as global or cosmopolitan problems acknowledged by Global South countries. Thus, mutual cooperation is clearly needed to form a framework for addressing these challenges.

As climate change and environmental degradation are recognized as global, systemic issues that transcend borders and sectors, maritime stability and security have become increasingly essential to the long-term sustainability of both the climate system and marine ecosystems. The ocean covers over 70% of the Earth's surface and acts as a vital climate regulator, absorbing approximately 25% of anthropogenic CO₂ emissions and over 90% of excess heat from global warming (Kumar & Pooja, 2020). Thus, marine environments are central to climate action and resilience.

In this broader understanding, maritime security must be reconceptualized. It no longer pertains solely to military readiness, sovereignty, or the control of sea lanes; rather, it encompasses a holistic approach that includes environmental protection,

equitable resource governance, and marine biodiversity defense. In this framework, the question is no longer how to secure the seas from human threats but how nations can secure the health of marine ecosystems for everyone's survival.

This shift aligns with the principles of climate justice, which demand that the most vulnerable coastal and island communities be protected not only from the direct effects of climate change, such as sea-level rise and ocean acidification, but also from structural inequalities that prevent them from adapting and participating in decision-making processes (Okamoto & Doyon, 2024). Climate justice reframes marine protection as an issue of rights, equity, and sustainability (O'Neill et al., 2025).

Under the Paris Agreement (2015), signatory countries committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing adaptation and resilience despite climate-related impacts. Notably, Article 7 of the Agreement calls for a “country-driven, gender-responsive, participatory, and fully transparent approach” to climate adaptation, which echoes the core values of climate justice. Increasingly, countries are interpreting these provisions to include ocean-based climate solutions such as blue carbon ecosystems (mangroves, seagrasses, and salt marshes), sustainable fisheries, and marine protected areas.

As an archipelagic nation with a vast marine territory, Indonesia is uniquely positioned to demonstrate leadership in aligning maritime security with climate justice. Indonesia can integrate ocean health into climate commitments, enhance cross-border cooperation on marine conservation, and advocate for the rights of coastal and island populations within multilateral frameworks by emphasizing the need to protect marine ecosystems as part of national security. In conclusion, climate justice offers a transformative pathway for marine environmental protection, moving beyond technocratic solutions toward inclusive, equity-based frameworks. Maritime security, reimagined in this light, becomes a multidimensional tool not only for defense and sovereignty but also for fostering sustainable, resilient, and just ocean governance in an era of ecological crisis.

Moreover, natural factors, such as ocean currents, that cross countries' administrative borders significantly affect the countries they pass through, particularly in relation to climate change. Through various mechanisms, ocean currents play a crucial role in maintaining global climate stability. One of their main roles is to distribute heat from tropical regions to polar regions, which helps maintain the planet's temperature balance (Dundas et al., 2020). For example, Heezen & Stommel (1960) wrote that the Gulf Stream carries warm water from the Atlantic Ocean to the coast of Europe, making the region warmer than it would otherwise be. Ocean currents also influence weather patterns and climate in different parts of the world. Natural events such as El Niño and La Niña in the Pacific Ocean, caused by changes in ocean currents, can significantly alter rainfall patterns and temperatures, affecting climate conditions in various countries (Mukherjee et al., 2023). Ocean currents also help absorb CO₂ from the atmosphere, thereby reducing the effects of greenhouse gases. Ocean currents carry this carbon into the deep ocean, storing it for long periods and reducing atmospheric carbon concentration. Furthermore, ocean currents play a role in the nutrient cycle by distributing nutrients throughout the oceans, supporting plankton, key producers of oxygen and absorbers of carbon dioxide (B-Béres et al., 2023). Ocean currents help regulate the balance of oxygen and CO₂ in the atmosphere by maintaining plankton populations.

Ocean currents help maintain the stability of marine ecosystems by creating environments suitable for various marine species, including coral reefs and fish

populations that support marine biodiversity. With these diverse roles, ocean currents function as a natural cooling and balancing system for the Earth. Without stable ocean currents, climate change could accelerate and have more severe impacts on the global environment.

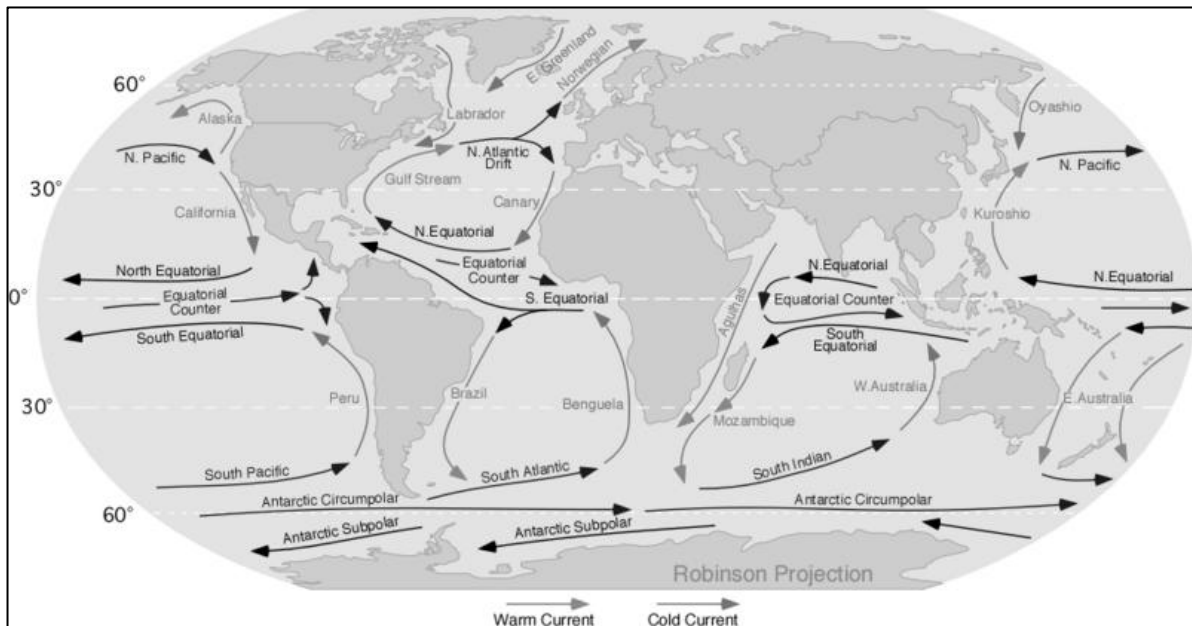


Figure 1. Ocean surface currents
(Physical Geography, 2017).

Based on the distribution map of world ocean currents above, small countries geographically located in the southern regions are directly affected by the adverse environmental impacts of climate change. Indonesia, the largest archipelagic country, is already experiencing significant impacts from climate-change-driven sea-level rise. For example, the northern part of Jakarta is predicted to be submerged by 2050, and several districts in Demak have already been submerged during heavy rainfall and severe climatic conditions (Setiadi et al., 2020).

Natural disasters, rising sea levels, and climate change cannot be addressed solely through military power, but countries' role in supporting maritime security is crucial to tackling these issues (Germond & Mazaris, 2019). However, despite the GMA concept introduced by President Joko Widodo in 2014, Indonesia has not explicitly demonstrated its leadership in maintaining maritime stability and a sustainable marine environment. This needs reconsideration, since as an archipelagic state, Indonesia's contribution to maintaining maritime environmental stability is vital, especially as a small carbon emitter compared to northern states.

Diplomatically, Indonesia is actively involved in international forums such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the G20, and South-South Cooperation. In these forums, Indonesia often advocates for more equitable climate action, where developed countries are expected to provide financial and technological support to developing nations that are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

Indonesia's contribution to international cooperation is also evident in its commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and protecting tropical forests, which serve as the world's lungs. Indonesia has set emission-reduction targets through its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement, with the ambition to reach net-zero emissions by 2060 or earlier with international support (Haryanto et al., 2023). Additionally, Indonesia collaborates with countries in the Global South to share experiences and technologies related to climate change mitigation and adaptation. For example, in sustainable forest management, Indonesia shares best practices with countries in Southeast Asia, Latin America, and Africa through initiatives like REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) (Enrici & Hubacek, 2018).

In various international meetings, Indonesia frequently urges developed countries to enhance their commitments to climate finance and technology transfer. Cooperation with Global South countries enables Indonesia to strengthen solidarity among developing nations in demanding greater climate justice and ensuring that the global energy transition does not leave developing countries behind. Thus, Indonesia's diplomatic role and contribution in international climate cooperation reflect its commitment to achieving inclusive and sustainable global solutions for all.

Indonesia's involvement in achieving climate justice is also evident through its memberships in international organizations focused on the Global South. One such example is Indonesia's role in ASEAN. Indonesia's role in ASEAN in maintaining marine climate justice and maritime defense is vital, given its position as the largest archipelagic state and a key ASEAN member (Anwar, 2020). On marine climate justice, Indonesia actively promotes regional cooperation to address climate change impacts on marine ecosystems. The country has helped formulate climate change adaptation and mitigation policies and supports marine conservation programs in the Coral Triangle region, involving other ASEAN countries.

On the maritime defense front, Indonesia plays a key role in maintaining maritime stability within ASEAN, helping address threats such as piracy, illegal trade, and the impact of climate change on marine resource resilience. Through forums like the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM), Indonesia strengthens maritime security cooperation and supports the peaceful resolution of South China Sea disputes based on international law (Agastia, 2021). Furthermore, Indonesia shares experiences and technologies with other ASEAN countries to build capacity in marine environmental monitoring. With its multilateral diplomatic approach, Indonesia leads efforts to advance marine climate justice and maritime defense in the region.

Indonesia has made significant contributions to preserving climate justice, the marine environment, and maritime security under the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), a regional organization dedicated to enhancing cooperation across the Indian Ocean region (Elisabeth, 2018). As an archipelagic state, Indonesia has actively advocated for climate justice, particularly for small island developing states (SIDS) and vulnerable coastal nations in the region. It has emphasized the importance of equitable climate action, urging developed countries to provide financial support, technology, and capacity

building to help vulnerable nations adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change (Prasetya & Estriani, 2018). Additionally, Indonesia has been a strong proponent of marine environmental protection, addressing issues such as marine pollution, coral reef degradation, overfishing, and habitat loss. Through IORA, the country has encouraged sustainable fisheries management, marine biodiversity conservation, and reduced ocean plastic pollution, aligning with the global goal of conserving marine ecosystems.

In maritime security, Indonesia has played a crucial role in addressing threats such as illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, piracy, and other maritime challenges that threaten both the environment and regional security. It has pushed for stronger regional cooperation to combat these threats, advocating information sharing, joint maritime patrols, and enhanced capacity-building among IORA member states. Recognizing the importance of free and safe navigation for global trade, Indonesia has underscored the need for maritime stability in the Indian Ocean. Overall, Indonesia's leadership in IORA has been pivotal in fostering cooperation to protect the marine environment, ensure maritime security, and advocate for climate justice, making the country a key player in addressing the region's shared challenges.

Thus, Indonesia has played a central role in the Archipelagic and Island States (AIS) Forum as both the initiator and host. This forum serves as a strategic platform for 51 archipelagic and small island states to address global maritime issues, including the impacts of climate change, marine resource management, and sustainable development (AIS Forum, 2023). Through the 2023 theme, "Fostering Collaboration, Enabling Innovation for Our Ocean and Our Future", Indonesia reaffirmed its commitment to advancing international cooperation and innovation as key foundations for achieving climate stability and preserving ocean health (Tim Komunikasi dan Media AIS Forum, 2023).

Indonesia's active engagement in the AIS Forum reflects a progressive maritime diplomacy approach that places climate justice at the center of non-traditional security agendas. The country emphasizes not only the protection of marine environments as a matter of sovereignty and national security but also advocates for a fair distribution of global responsibilities, in line with the principles of the Paris Agreement. Through this forum, Indonesia strengthens its position as a global leader in sustainable ocean governance and establishes the AIS Forum as a concrete platform for mainstreaming the voices of developing nations in the collective effort to address the climate crisis.

Recently, Indonesia successfully hosted the 10th World Water Forum (WWF). Indonesia's role in the World Water Forum is strategically important in maintaining marine climate justice and maritime defense stability, particularly concerning water management and the sustainability of marine ecosystems. With its vast maritime territory and heavy dependence on marine natural resources, Indonesia plays a key role as both a host and a leader in global initiatives to ensure the sustainability of water and the environment as a whole. In the context of climate change, Indonesia has introduced four important missions in WWF 10, including strengthening water resilience, addressing the impacts of climate change, and promoting environmental research related to maritime issues (Gangga et al., 2023). These four missions are not only relevant to Indonesia but

also to other countries in the Asia-Pacific region, which face similar challenges in ensuring clean water sustainability and addressing climate change-related disasters such as floods, droughts, and rising sea levels.

Indonesia's roles in various international organizational forums have demonstrated its commitment to supporting marine sustainability and climate justice. In the context of Indonesia's national politics, the election of Prabowo Subianto as the new president, succeeding Joko Widodo, presents a significant opportunity for Indonesia to lead Global South powers on maritime resilience and climate change.

Balancing Development with Sustainability

Balancing development and sustainability for maritime security and climate justice is a critical priority amid growing global challenges. Ocean resources are dynamic and transboundary, so threats and challenges to them affect multiple countries and require collaborative solutions. These challenges, such as marine pollution, illegal fishing, maritime terrorism, and climate-induced changes, are influenced by a range of factors, including geographic location, socio-economic conditions, military capabilities, and diplomatic relations. Effective maritime governance thus demands sectoral cooperation across national, regional, and international levels to establish rules that address shared problems. Collaborative approaches to rule-setting and enforcement, alongside an understanding of local contexts, can support a balanced development agenda in which economic growth aligns with environmental stewardship (Cashore et al., 2021).

One essential component of sustainable maritime management, particularly for countries in the Global South, is a clear understanding of their own maritime resources and vulnerabilities. As the saying goes, "We cannot protect what we do not know." Therefore, states need comprehensive maritime domain awareness of what occurs in their waters and a proactive approach to resource management. Maritime security is more than a military issue; it includes preventive and mitigating measures that involve ecological, economic, and policy responses. For instance, countries could benefit from preventive measures such as marine conservation zones and pollution-control efforts, and compensatory measures like financial penalties for environmental damage. Maritime security must prioritize sustainability as much as sovereignty to preserve resources for future generations.

For maritime governance to be effective, local governments must take an active role in law enforcement and ensure accountability not only for individuals but also for organizations and public officials involved in illegal activities. Protecting marine ecosystems requires strong regional collaboration, as unlawful practices often extend beyond national borders. Enforcement efforts should prioritize targeting major illegal operators and financial backers rather than focusing solely on small-scale offenders. Regional bodies can help establish common standards for sustainable practices, ensuring that maritime industries operate without harming the environment. Legal frameworks should reinforce these efforts by providing training in enforcement, ocean sustainability, and adaptive governance to respond effectively to environmental shifts.

International cooperation is particularly vital, as ocean challenges are increasingly global in scope. With 80% of the world's trade moving by sea, responses to maritime crimes and environmental degradation must be cohesive and cooperative. Ocean security matters not only to coastal nations but also to landlocked countries that depend on maritime trade. Climate change and marine pollution impact approximately 9.4 million fishers and 2 million seafarers worldwide, making a healthy marine environment essential for these populations (UNITAR, 2024). To maintain peace, freedom of navigation, and the safety of ocean-dependent workers, international maritime governance must promote sustainable practices that counter illegal and environmentally destructive behaviors.

Moreover, sustainable ocean practices are essential to preserve resources for future generations. The ocean provides critical ecosystem services, such as carbon storage, climate regulation, and biodiversity maintenance, all of which are necessary for future global health. Sustainable ocean use helps marine ecosystems remain resilient to climate change impacts and other anthropogenic pressures, securing food, livelihoods, and clean water for future populations. By prioritizing sustainability now, we ensure that future generations inherit an ocean capable of supporting life and economic activity. Collaborative, intergenerational approaches to ocean governance are essential for both present and future security, ensuring that the benefits of ocean resources are available for generations to come.

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND LIMITATIONS

To understand Indonesia's contribution to maritime security and climate justice, a philosophical approach is required one that recognizes the global responsibility in maintaining the balance of marine ecosystem health. In this context, climate justice is not solely concerned with protecting human rights, but also encompasses the rights embedded within marine ecosystems. This broader perspective aims to achieve justice for all nations that rely on and benefit from these ecosystems. Maritime security, within the framework of climate justice, must therefore be reconceptualized to incorporate approaches that prioritize environmental protection, equitable resource governance, and the defense of marine biodiversity beyond traditional threats.

To further enhance maritime security and sustainability, Indonesia must integrate climate justice into its GMA framework. Expanding policies to include climate resilience measures such as protecting coastal communities, managing climate-induced migration, and preserving marine ecosystems will ensure long-term security. Additionally, Indonesia should take a more active role in global climate agreements by advocating for maritime security as an integral component of climate policy. Hosting international forums and championing climate justice initiatives will strengthen its position as a leader in sustainable maritime governance.

Despite its potential, this research faces several limitations. The study primarily focuses on Indonesia's existing maritime policies and does not provide an in-depth assessment of their effectiveness in real-world applications. Additionally, the role of private sector engagement in climate justice and maritime security remains

underexplored. Future research should examine the challenges of implementing climate justice in maritime security and explore data-driven approaches to assess policy impact.

By addressing these limitations, Indonesia can further refine its maritime strategy, ensuring that climate justice is not only recognized as a policy priority but also effectively implemented. Strengthening diplomatic efforts, investing in research, and fostering regional cooperation will be key to achieving a resilient and sustainable maritime future for Indonesia and the Global South.

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