



ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER MITIGATION ON REMPANG ISLAND : EVALUATION AND CANCELLATION OF NATIONAL STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

ANALISIS MITIGASI BENCANA LINGKUNGAN DI PULAU REMPANG: EVALUASI DAN PEMBATALAN KEBIJAKAN PEMBANGUNAN STRATEGIS NASIONAL

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Abstract

The conflict surrounding the Rempang Eco-City National Strategic Project (PSN) on Rempang Island, Batam City, Riau Islands Province, is one of the most complex development policy crises of the past decade. This study analyzes the neglected environmental disaster mitigation dimensions in the acceleration of the Rempang Eco-City PSN from nine environmental perspectives, while evaluating whether the cancellation of this strategic development policy is a normatively and empirically justifiable choice. Using a qualitative research approach with a case study design, the study combines regulatory analysis based on legal documents including Laws, Government Regulations, Presidential Regulations, Ministerial Regulations, Environmental Impact Assessment (AMDAL) documents, and the Batam City Spatial Plan (RTRW) with field data from secondary sources compiled between 2023–2025. The findings reveal four main conclusions: (1) regulatory incoherence exists between Permenko Ekuin No. 7/2023 and Law No. 32/2009 on Environmental Protection and Management (PPLH) as well as Law No. 27/2007 on Coastal Zone Management; (2) the AMDAL process was carried out procedurally without participatory substance and was only initiated after the conflict erupted; (3) environmental impacts including threats of deforestation of protected forests, mangrove ecosystem degradation, and sea sand exploitation have not been adequately mitigated; and (4) resistance from approximately 80% of affected residents indicates a failure of the Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) principle. The most recent development shows that through Presidential Regulation (Perpres) No. 12 of 2025, signed by President Prabowo Subianto on February 10, 2025, Rempang Eco-City is no longer listed among the 77 national strategic projects. This study recommends a comprehensive policy evaluation for Rempang Island development based on an independent AMDAL review, fulfillment of the rights of the Malay indigenous community, and a moratorium on all construction activities until legal certainty is established.

Keywords : Environmental Disaster Mitigation, National Strategic Project, Rempang Eco-City, Public Policy, PSN Cancellation.

Abstrak

Konflik seputar Proyek Strategis Nasional (PSN) Kota Ekologi Rempang di Pulau Rempang, Kota Batam, Provinsi Kepulauan Riau, merupakan salah satu krisis kebijakan pembangunan paling



kompleks dalam dekade terakhir. Studi ini menganalisis dimensi mitigasi bencana lingkungan yang terabaikan dalam percepatan PSN Kota Ekologi Rempang dari sembilan perspektif lingkungan, sekaligus mengevaluasi apakah pembatalan kebijakan pembangunan strategis ini merupakan pilihan yang dapat dibenarkan secara normatif dan empiris. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan penelitian kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus, studi ini menggabungkan analisis regulasi berdasarkan dokumen hukum termasuk Undang-Undang, Peraturan Pemerintah, Peraturan Presiden, Peraturan Menteri, dokumen Penilaian Dampak Lingkungan (AMDAL), dan Rencana Tata Ruang Kota Batam (RTRW) dengan data lapangan dari sumber sekunder yang dikumpulkan antara tahun 2023–2025. Temuan tersebut mengungkapkan empat kesimpulan utama: (1) terdapat inkonsistensi regulasi antara Permenko Ekuin No. 7/2023 dan UU No. 32/2009 tentang Perlindungan dan Pengelolaan Lingkungan Hidup (PPLH) serta UU No. 27/2007 tentang Pengelolaan Zona Pesisir; (2) proses AMDAL dilakukan secara prosedural tanpa substansi partisipatif dan baru dimulai setelah konflik meletus; (3) dampak lingkungan termasuk ancaman penggundulan hutan lindung, degradasi ekosistem mangrove, dan eksploitasi pasir laut belum dimitigasi secara memadai; dan (4) penolakan dari sekitar 80% penduduk yang terdampak menunjukkan kegagalan prinsip Persetujuan Bebas, Awal, dan Terinformasi (FPIC). Perkembangan terbaru menunjukkan bahwa melalui Peraturan Presiden (Perpres) No. 12 Tahun 2025, yang ditandatangani oleh Presiden Prabowo Subianto pada 10 Februari 2025, Kota Ekologi Rempang tidak lagi termasuk dalam 77 proyek strategis nasional. Studi ini merekomendasikan evaluasi kebijakan komprehensif untuk pengembangan Pulau Rempang berdasarkan tinjauan AMDAL independen, pemenuhan hak-hak masyarakat adat Melayu, dan moratorium terhadap semua kegiatan konstruksi hingga kepastian hukum ditetapkan.

Kata Kunci : Mitigasi Bencana Lingkungan, Proyek Strategis Nasional, Kota Ramah Lingkungan Rempang, Kebijakan Publik, Pembatalan PSN.

1. INTRODUCTION

Economic development within the framework of National Strategic Projects (PSN) in Indonesia frequently places investment acceleration in direct opposition to environmental sustainability principles and the rights of local communities. In the context of public policy, the tension between macroeconomic interests and local ecosystem protection is not a new phenomenon. However, the case of Rempang Island has become the most vivid illustration of this contradiction, while simultaneously serving as an empirical laboratory to test the extent to which the state is capable of integrating environmental disaster mitigation principles into strategic development decision-making processes.

The urgency of this issue becomes even more pronounced when viewed against the broader national and global context. Indonesia is home to approximately 17,000 islands, many of which including Rempang are classified as small islands under national law, making them inherently more ecologically fragile and socially vulnerable than mainland development sites. At the same time, the Indonesian government has intensified its National Strategic Project program since 2016, with the number of designated PSNs expanding rapidly from 30 projects to over 200 by 2023, often accompanied by regulatory shortcuts that bypass standard environmental and social safeguards. The Rempang case is therefore not an isolated incident but rather a symptomatic expression of a systemic tension embedded within Indonesia's accelerated development model one in which the institutional architecture designed to protect the environment and indigenous communities has been progressively weakened in the name of investment competitiveness.

Since the designation of Rempang Eco-City as a PSN through the Regulation of the Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs No. 7 of 2023, the 165.83 km² area inhabited for centuries by indigenous and local Malay communities has been transformed into an arena of multidimensional conflict involving agrarian, environmental, human rights, and governance dimensions. Rempang Island, which geographically qualifies as a small island under the provisions of the Coastal Zone Management Law, possesses a coastal ecosystem that is highly vulnerable to the disruptions caused



by large-scale development. The area encompasses protected forests, mangrove ecosystems, traditional fishing zones, and 16 indigenous villages that have existed since 1834.

The tragedy of September 7, 2023, marked the escalation of the conflict when joint security forces used tear gas to disperse residents opposing land surveys an event that subsequently drew scrutiny from the National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM), the Indonesian Ombudsman, and various civil society organizations. Yet beyond a mere social conflict, the Rempang events fundamentally reflect a systemic failure to integrate environmental risk mitigation into the PSN planning and decision-making process. One of the most striking facts to emerge was that at the time the conflict erupted, a project worth hundreds of trillions of rupiah had not yet possessed a valid and participatory AMDAL document. The drafting of the AMDAL only commenced on September 27, 2023 after the violent conflict had already occurred a procedural anomaly that reflects how wide the gap is between regulation and development practice on the ground.

From the perspective of basic public policy concepts, this case demonstrates what Anderson (2011) describes as systemic policy failure: when a policy designed to achieve certain objectives instead produces consequences that are contrary to its original goals. Presidential Regulation No. 3/2016 on PSN aims to promote sustainable economic growth, yet its implementation in Rempang has instead created prolonged social instability, environmental damage, and a public trust crisis that threatens the investment climate itself.

The research gap identified in this study is that most existing studies on Rempang have focused on agrarian conflict and human rights violations, but no systematic analysis has simultaneously connected Indonesia's environmental legal framework, AMDAL procedures, disaster analysis from nine environmental perspectives, and the normative question of whether PSN cancellation constitutes a legitimate policy response. This study fills that gap while also reflecting the latest policy developments through Presidential Regulation No. 12 of 2025, which has factually removed Rempang Eco-City from the national PSN list.

The objectives of this study are: (1) to analyze the potential environmental disasters caused by the Rempang Eco-City PSN through a framework of 9 environmental perspectives; (2) to evaluate the level of compliance of the PSN planning process with national environmental legal instruments; (3) to examine the conflicts and policy controversies surrounding the Rempang PSN; and (4) to formulate normative and empirical arguments for the cancellation or comprehensive revision of the strategic development policy on Rempang Island. Ultimately, this study aspires to contribute not only to the academic discourse on environmental policy and strategic development governance in Indonesia, but also to the practical policy conversation that is urgently needed in the aftermath of Rempang Eco-City's removal from the national PSN list. The questions this research raises about how environmental mitigation should be embedded in strategic project planning, how indigenous community rights can be genuinely protected rather than procedurally circumvented, and how the state can rebuild legitimacy with communities that have been harmed by accelerated development are questions that extend well beyond Rempang Island itself. They speak to the fundamental challenge of governing development in a megadiverse, multiethnic archipelagic nation where the costs and benefits of economic growth are rarely distributed with equity or justice. In this sense, Rempang is not merely a case study; it is a mirror reflecting the deeper structural tensions within Indonesia's development trajectory that demand rigorous scholarly attention and courageous policy reform.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design using a case study approach as developed by Yin (2018). The qualitative approach was chosen because this research aims to gain a deep understanding of the policy dynamics, socio-environmental conflicts, and normative dimensions of the Rempang Eco-City PSN case a complex and contextual social phenomenon that cannot be adequately understood through quantitative data alone. Epistemologically, this study proceeds from a critical constructivist paradigm that views public policy as a product of power relations that can be



critically examined through legal, documentary, and empirical narrative analysis from various stakeholders.

The research data sources consist of two categories. Primary data sources are relevant regulatory documents, including: (a) Law No. 32/2009 on Environmental Protection and Management (PPLH); (b) Law No. 27/2007 on Coastal Zone Management; (c) Presidential Regulation No. 3/2016 and its amendments on PSN; (d) Permenko Ekuin No. 7/2023; (e) Government Regulation No. 42/2021 on PSN Facilitation; (f) Government Regulation No. 22/2021 on PPLH; (g) Batam City Spatial Plan (RTRW); (h) Presidential Regulation No. 12 of 2025 on the 2025–2029 National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN); and (i) publicly available AMDAL documents. Secondary data sources include WALHI Riau reports (2023–2024), findings and recommendations of Komnas HAM (2023), the Indonesian Ombudsman report (2023), factually verified media coverage, and various related academic studies.

Data collection was conducted through documentary research and regulatory content analysis. Data were systematically gathered from relevant primary and secondary sources and then classified based on predetermined thematic categories. Data analysis used three sequential approaches as recommended by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014): first, data reduction to filter relevant information from all collected documents; second, regulatory coherence analysis to identify normative conflicts between legal instruments; third, compliance analysis to assess the extent to which the PSN planning process meets environmental legal requirements; and fourth, argumentative synthesis to formulate evidence-based and normative policy recommendations. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation by comparing information from at least three different sources for each factual claim, as well as member checking through comparison with findings from independent institutions such as Komnas HAM and the Indonesian Ombudsman.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Chronology of Conflict Escalation and Policy Implications

The Rempang conflict did not emerge suddenly. It is an accumulation of tensions rooted in overlapping regulations that were left unresolved for two decades. Table 1 below reconstructs the escalation chronology from the issuance of the BP Batam HPL Decree in 2001–2002 through to the most recent developments in 2025.

Table 1. Chronology of PSN Rempang Eco-City Conflict Escalation (2001–2025)

Year	Key Events	Policy Significance
2001-2002	BP Batam HPL Decree issued	Beginning of land dispute
2004	Batam Mayor's Decree: Indigenous villages excluded from HPL	Partial recognition, not followed through
2019	1,406 indigenous village certificates distributed	Implicit recognition of residents' rights
2023 (April)	Rempang Eco-City launched at Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs	New project phase without public consultation
2024 (August)	Permenko No. 7/2023: Rempang designated as PSN	Acceleration without adequate SESA
2023 (September)	Rempang Tragedy: clash between residents and security forces, tear gas	11 casualties, critical escalation
2023 (September)	AMDAL drafting begins (after conflict)	Procedural AMDAL without substance
2024	MoU between BP Batam and PT MEG; conflict continues	Project proceeds; community resistance intensifies



2024 (December)	Attack on residents' post by PT MEG workers	Maladministration continues; 8 residents injured
2025 (February)	Perpres No. 12/2025 signed by President Prabowo	Rempang Eco-City not included in list of 77 PSNs
2025 (April)	Working Meeting of DPR Commission VI with Rempang residents	Residents continue to reject relocation in any form

Sources: Synthesized from WALHI Riau (2024), Komnas HAM (2023), Indonesian Ombudsman (2023), verified media, and Perpres No. 12/2025.

Table 1 reveals a non-linear escalation pattern: a prolonged latent period (2001–2022) during which the conflict simmered beneath the surface without adequate policy response, followed by a sharp spike since the PSN designation in August 2023. This pattern is consistent with Kingdon's (2011) policy window theory: the acceleration of investment opened a policy window that subsequently converged the previously hidden streams of environmental, political, and social problems. The most significant development occurred on February 10, 2025, when President Prabowo Subianto signed Presidential Regulation No. 12 of 2025 on the 2025–2029 RPJMN. This regulation lists 77 national PSNs, and Rempang Eco-City is not among them. With the issuance of this regulation, the Rempang Eco-City project is no longer classified as a National Strategic Project a change that activists and civil society regard as an implicit acknowledgment of the policy's failure.

Residents of Rempang Island united under the Alliance of Rempang Galang Bersatu Communities (AMAR-GB), in a Public Hearing with DPR Commission VI, stated that the majority of residents continue to reject any form of relocation, including the local transmigration program offered by the government. What distinguishes Rempang from other PSN cases is that the policy window for mitigation was closed at precisely the same moment the investment window was thrown wide open. The decision to designate Rempang as a PSN without first conducting a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SESA), combined with a repressive approach to handling community resistance, created conditions in which halting the project actually became the more rational policy choice compared to continuing it.

2. Mapping Environmental Impacts: Analysis from 9 Environmental Perspectives

Rempang Eco-City was designed with a development footprint covering nearly the entire area of Rempang Island (165.83 km²). The plan encompasses the construction of an industrial zone, glass and solar panel factories (by investor Xinyi Glass from China), and an integrated tourism area. The chain of environmental impacts that can be identified is cumulative and mutually reinforcing. The following analysis employs the framework of 9 environmental perspectives as mandated in this research assignment:

Perspective 1 Forest Ecosystem and Biodiversity. Rempang Island possesses relatively well-preserved forest cover, including protected forest areas that function as habitat for various endemic species and as water catchment zones. Plans to develop an industrial zone covering more than 80% of the island's area will result in massive deforestation that could permanently eliminate the habitat of local flora and fauna. Large-scale forest conversion will also sever the ecological corridors connecting various ecosystems on the island. From a mitigation perspective, this threat is classified as irreversible, as the recovery of tropical forest ecosystems requires decades to centuries.

Perspective 2 Mangrove and Coastal Ecosystem. Rempang Island is surrounded by rich mangrove ecosystems that serve vital functions as nursery grounds for various fish species and marine life, as natural coastal defenses against abrasion and storm surges, and as significant blue carbon sinks. The primary concern of environmental activists is that the marine ecosystem will be damaged by coastal industrial development, while the raw materials for glass and solar panels quartz sand and silica will most likely be extracted from the coastal areas, sea, and small islands surrounding Rempang. Research shows that mangroves are blue carbon ecosystems capable of storing large amounts of



carbon and providing long-term carbon storage, such that mangrove destruction will directly contribute to increased greenhouse gas emissions.

Perspective 3 Marine Resources and Fisheries. The coastal zone of Rempang Island is a traditional fishing ground that has been in operation for centuries. The construction of a large-scale industrial zone, compounded by the potential extraction of sea sand as raw material for glass factories, will permanently destroy these fishing grounds. Sea sand mining is prohibited under Law No. 27/2007 as amended by Law No. 1/2014 on the Management of Coastal Areas and Small Islands, where Article 35 affirms the prohibition of sand mining if it may damage aquatic ecosystems. Thus, plans to extract raw materials for the glass factory from Rempang's coastal areas and surroundings are in direct conflict with applicable law.

Perspective 4 Water Resources and Hydrology. Small islands have a hydrological balance that is highly sensitive to changes in land cover. Massive deforestation will reduce the soil's infiltration capacity, increase surface runoff, and threaten the availability of clean water for remaining residents. Industrial zone construction also risks contaminating surface water and groundwater through chemical waste from glass and solar panel production processes. In the context of a small island with limited area, water source contamination has far more severe impacts than on a large landmass, as there is no adequate buffer zone.

Perspective 5 Air Quality and Climate Change. Industrial-scale glass factory operations are a significant source of air pollutants, including fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), and greenhouse gases. In the context of a small island with limited air circulation, concentrations of these pollutants can reach levels that are dangerous to the health of surrounding residents. Furthermore, deforestation of forest areas that function as the island's lungs will reduce carbon absorption capacity, worsening the effects of local climate change.

Perspective 6 Land and Geology. Large-scale construction, dredging, and reclamation activities required to build an industrial zone on Rempang Island will fundamentally alter the topography and geological structure of the island. Small islands have a geological foundation that is more vulnerable to drastic changes than large landmasses. Large-scale excavation and dredging can trigger slope instability, massive soil erosion, and in the long term may threaten the physical integrity of the island itself, particularly in the context of sea level rise due to global climate change.

Perspective 7 Socio-Cultural and Indigenous Communities. The socio-cultural dimension is one of the most critical yet most frequently overlooked environmental perspectives in development impact analysis. The sixteen Malay indigenous villages that have inhabited Rempang Island since 1834 are not merely ordinary residential communities they are cultural entities with deep historical, spiritual, and ecological ties to the land and sea of Rempang. Forced displacement is not merely the physical act of relocation; it represents the destruction of social structures, local ecological knowledge systems, and cultural identity that cannot be restored. The resistance of approximately 80% of affected residents indicates a total failure of the Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) principle as guaranteed by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which Indonesia has ratified.

Perspective 8 Environmental and Community Health. The operation of glass and solar panel industries involves the use and production of various hazardous chemicals, including heavy metals such as lead, arsenic, and cadmium. In the context of an isolated island with limited health infrastructure, the potential for environmental contamination from industrial waste carries very serious health implications for surrounding communities. Case studies of similar industries in other countries show that pollution from large-scale glass factories can result in increased prevalence of respiratory diseases, neurological disorders, and various chronic health conditions in exposed populations.

Perspective 9 Environmental Governance and Regulation. The ninth perspective concerns the capacity of the governance system to ensure long-term environmental protection. Prioritizing economic objectives over environmental assessments sets a dangerous precedent that can lead to serious long-term consequences, as seen in the Rempang Eco-City case where efforts to attract



investors have influenced environmental oversight standards. The failure of environmental governance in the Rempang case is not merely an implementation problem; it reflects a more fundamental institutional design weakness: the absence of an effective check-and-balance mechanism to prevent investment acceleration from sacrificing environmental protection obligations.

3. Policy Conflict and Controversy: Political and Social Dimensions

The Rempang conflict cannot be understood solely as an ordinary land dispute; it is a manifestation of a deeper contest between fundamentally different development models between a paradigm of economic growth based on large-scale foreign investment versus a community-based development paradigm that respects indigenous rights and environmental sustainability. From a policy analysis perspective, at least three dimensions of controversy can be identified. The first dimension is procedural controversy, concerning how the PSN designation was carried out. The designation of Rempang as a PSN through a Ministerial Coordination Regulation a regulatory product subordinate to Law without meaningful public consultation and without a preceding SESA, created a fundamental procedural defect. The Indonesian Ombudsman in its report (2023) identified at least four acts of maladministration in the Rempang PSN acceleration process, including procedural deviations, neglect of legal obligations, and disproportionate repressive actions.

The second dimension is substantive controversy, concerning whether this project would genuinely deliver the promised benefits. The single dependence on investor Xinyi Glass from China raises serious questions about national economic sovereignty and long-term investment resilience. Xinyi Glass's track record at other locations, including South Bangka and Gresik, is marked by various unresolved environmental and social issues. Moreover, claims that the project will create jobs for local communities are difficult to verify, given that high-technology glass industries generally require skilled labor rather than the local workforce, the majority of whom are fishermen.

The third dimension is distributive controversy, concerning who bears the costs and who reaps the benefits of development. In the Rempang case, the indigenous Malay communities that have inhabited the island for centuries are forced to bear enormous social, ecological, and cultural costs the loss of ancestral land, livelihoods, and cultural identity while the benefits of investment will be enjoyed primarily by foreign investors and the national business elite. This distributive imbalance constitutes a violation of the social justice principle mandated by Article 33 of the 1945 Constitution, which affirms that Indonesia's land and natural resources must be used for the greatest benefit of the people. All three dimensions of controversy overlap and mutually reinforce one another, creating a legitimacy crisis that ultimately contributed to the Prabowo administration's decision not to include Rempang Eco-City in the national PSN list through Presidential Regulation No. 12/2025.

4. Normative Arguments for Policy Cancellation or Revision

Based on the above findings, this study constructs a layered normative argument in support of the cancellation or comprehensive revision of the Rempang Eco-City PSN, operating at three levels: Procedural Defects: The PSN designation through Permenko No. 7/2023 was carried out without a preceding Strategic Environmental Assessment (SESA), as required by Articles 15–18 of Law No. 32/2009 for policies, plans, and programs with the potential to cause significant environmental impacts. This is not an ordinary administrative violation it constitutes a departure from imperative environmental legal norms. This procedural defect legally undermines the legal basis for all subsequent actions, including forced relocations, land surveys, and the MoU with PT MEG.

Second Level Substantive Incoherence: The provisions of Government Regulation No. 42/2021 granting environmental licensing exemptions for PSNs are substantively contrary to the spirit of Law No. 32/2009. In the legislative hierarchy (Law No. 12/2011), Laws take precedence over Government Regulations. Accordingly, there is a strong legal argument that the exemption clauses in Government Regulation No. 42/2021 cannot be used to override the AMDAL obligations mandated by the Law. This incoherence reflects a more systemic problem in PSN regulatory production, which tends to prioritize investment convenience over the environmental legal framework that has been built over decades.



Policy Objective Failure: The objectives of the PSN as stated in Presidential Regulation No. 3/2016 namely sustainable economic growth and equitable development cannot be achieved if the implementation process creates prolonged social conflict, threatens ecosystem sustainability, and triggers a public trust crisis. Within this framework, PSN cancellation or revision is not only a legal demand but also a rational decision from a policy management perspective. Members of DPR Commission VI have affirmed that the status of Rempang Eco-City as a National Strategic Project has been officially revoked under Presidential Regulation No. 12 of 2025 on the 2025–2029 RPJMN. Komnas HAM in its recommendations (2023) had requested that the government review the Development of Rempang Eco-City Island as a PSN. The Indonesian Ombudsman identified four acts of maladministration in the PSN acceleration process. Both findings from these independent state institutions substantively support the argument that this policy had fundamental defects, not merely poor implementation.

5. Alternative Mitigation Model A Development Framework Without Displacement

If full cancellation is deemed politically infeasible, this study proposes an alternative mitigation framework built on four pillars. Participatory Rezoning: Revise the RTRW and PSN masterplan to exclude indigenous village areas and ecological buffer zones from development. Indigenous villages occupy only approximately 10% of the total area of Rempang Island, meaning development can proceed without forced relocation, provided there is a genuine commitment to respecting the boundaries of indigenous territories. Independent Cumulative AMDAL: Commission a truly independent AMDAL team free from investor interests to conduct a long-term cumulative impact assessment, including the impacts of sea sand mining, deforestation of protected forests, and industrial waste contamination risks on coastal ecosystems and public health.

Standardized FPIC Mechanism Implement a consultation process that meets UNDRIP standards before proceeding with any development phase, with Malay indigenous institutions involved as formal partners in every decision-making process concerning their territory and resources. Investment Model Diversification Reconsider the sole dependence on Xinyi Glass investment whose track record at other locations has been assessed as problematic and open space for more inclusive partnership models with local communities, such as fishermen's cooperatives based on sustainable marine resource management, or community-based ecotourism development that leverages Rempang Island's natural beauty without sacrificing its ecosystems and culture.

The four-pillar alternative mitigation framework proposed above reflects a pragmatic yet principled approach to resolving the Rempang deadlock. Each pillar addresses a specific failure point identified in the preceding analysis, and together they constitute a coherent policy package that could in theory reconcile development objectives with environmental and human rights obligations. The participatory rezoning pillar directly responds to the procedural defect of designating the PSN without meaningful community consultation or a Strategic Environmental Assessment. By limiting the development footprint to exclude indigenous village areas, which represent only approximately 10% of the island's total area, this approach demonstrates that economic development and community rights are not inherently irreconcilable. However, the political feasibility of this pillar depends heavily on the willingness of both BP Batam and PT MEG to renegotiate the existing MoU a willingness that, based on developments through April 2025, has not been clearly demonstrated.

The independent cumulative AMDAL pillar addresses perhaps the most egregious procedural failure in the entire Rempang case: the commencement of a project worth hundreds of trillions of rupiah without a valid environmental impact assessment. An independent AMDAL one genuinely free from investor influence would not merely fulfill a legal requirement; it would serve as the empirical foundation for all subsequent policy decisions. Without this, any continuation of development, even in a scaled-back form, risks reproducing the same pattern of selective compliance that has characterized the project from the outset. The standardized FPIC mechanism pillar carries the greatest normative weight. The persistent rejection by approximately 80% of affected residents, even after the project's removal from the national PSN list, signals that the legitimacy deficit of this project runs far



deeper than a regulatory technicality. Genuine implementation of FPIC standards as defined by UNDRIP requires not only consultation but the actual power of communities to say no. This fundamentally challenges the prevailing model of PSN governance in Indonesia, where community consent has too often been treated as a box to check rather than a substantive prerequisite for development.

The investment model diversification pillar points to a structural vulnerability that extends beyond Rempang itself. The over-reliance on a single foreign investor, particularly one with a contested environmental record, exposes the entire development initiative to systemic risk. A more diversified investment model incorporating community-based fisheries cooperatives, sustainable ecotourism, and locally appropriate industries would distribute both economic benefits and environmental risks more equitably, while also building the social capital that large-scale external investment has consistently eroded in this case. Taken together, these four pillars represent more than a technical mitigation strategy; they constitute a normative reorientation of how strategic development should be conceived and implemented in ecologically sensitive, socially complex settings such as Rempang Island. Whether the current political environment following the removal of Rempang Eco-City from the PSN list but in the absence of concrete legal guarantees for residents is conducive to implementing such a framework remains an open and critical question for future policy and research.

4. CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that the problems of Rempang Island far exceed an ordinary agrarian conflict. It is a manifestation of systemic failure in integrating environmental mitigation into Indonesia's PSN policy framework. Four answers to the research objectives can be formulated as follows. First, the Rempang Eco-City PSN poses potential environmental disasters that are cumulative and long-term in nature across nine environmental perspectives, encompassing deforestation of protected forest areas, degradation of mangrove and coastal ecosystems, large-scale sea sand exploitation, water resource contamination, air quality deterioration, geological destabilization of the small island, destruction of the indigenous socio-cultural order, environmental health threats, and governance failure all of which have not been adequately mitigated in available planning documents. Second, the Rempang Eco-City PSN planning process exhibits a pattern of systemic selective compliance: high compliance with regulations that accelerate investment, but consistently low compliance with environmental protection and community rights instruments. This incoherence is not merely an administrative oversight; it reflects a policy design that privileges short-term economic growth over long-term sustainability. Third, the policy conflict and controversy surrounding the Rempang PSN has three interconnected dimensions: procedural defects in regulatory designation, substantive controversy over promised benefits, and distributive injustice in the allocation of development costs and benefits. Fourth, the normative argument for the cancellation or comprehensive revision of the Rempang Eco-City PSN can be constructed in layers: procedural defects (absence of SESA), substantive incoherence (Government Regulation No. 42/2021 vis-à-vis Law No. 32/2009), and policy objective failure. President Prabowo's decision through Presidential Regulation No. 12/2025 not to include Rempang Eco-City in the national PSN list is a welcome first step, but it must be followed by concrete legal certainty for the Rempang community: guaranteed land rights, cessation of all construction activities, and an equal dialogue process.

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