

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in June 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil constitutes a historical milestone which succeeded in uniting heads of state and government officials from around the world, along with delegates from United Nations agencies, international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The 179 participating countries at the conference clearly and firmly stated that environmental management and economic and social development must be seen as an inseparable whole. National commitment and global cooperation were recognized as essential in order to make societies and economies environmentally sustainable.

Indonesia actively participated in the two year preparatory process leading up to UNCED and the development of the global Agenda 21 and other proposed outputs. At the conference itself, the Government of Indonesia accepted a number of undertakings on behalf of Indonesia, and endorsed the following documents:

1. Rio Declaration on Environment and Development. The Rio Declaration is a set of 27 non-binding principles which emphasize the link between environment and development;
2. Statement of Principles on Forestry. Although this is a non-binding document, it recognizes that forests are essential for economic development as well as for carbon dioxide sequestration and for the preservation of biological diversity and watershed management;
3. Convention on Climate Change. This legally binding treaty is aimed at lowering emissions of carbon dioxide, methane, and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere;
4. Convention on Biological Diversity. This legally binding treaty is aimed at halting the destruction of biological diversity and at introducing standards of conduct in the sharing of research, information, profits, and technology in the area of genetic resources;
5. Global Agenda 21 document. This is a document of over 800 pages which contains comprehensive, non-binding action programs for sustainable development from now into the twenty-first century.

The global Agenda 21 document is considered by many as the most important output from the UNCED Conference. It contains actions that government and international organizations, as well as the private sector and the community can take to achieve lasting changes in the modes of human economic development. These actions recognize the impact of human behavior on the environment and on the sustainability of systems of production. The objectives of the 39 chapters contained in this document are no less than the alleviation of poverty, hunger and illiteracy worldwide while at the same time arresting the deterioration of the ecosystems on which humankind depends to sustain life.

In the wake of UNCED, the Government of Indonesia was quick to formulate a plan to comply with the principal environmental agreements and the broad objectives of implementing sustainable development. The vehicle chosen for the implementation of many of these objectives was a project funded by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and executed by the State Ministry for Environment. The project was known as the Post-UNCED Planning and Capacity Building Activities Project, and its key output was the development of a comprehensive national strategy for sustainable development. This document has been titled the Agenda 21-Indonesia, and is otherwise known or referred to as the Indonesian Agenda 21.

The Agenda 21-Indonesia, which took two years to complete, focuses on integrating economic, social and environmental development within a "one policy package," in order to make sustainable development, with an environmental perspective, a reality in Indonesia. The preparation process has involved over 1000 participants from both central and regional governments, private institutions, academic institutions and NGOs.

The document further provides a unified view and an inspiration of ideas which can be integrated into the planning process at every level of Indonesia's development, so that government agencies, private institutions and society at large can use this document as a reference for planning and program implementation. Furthermore, this document provides a set of suggested activities and implementation strategies for preparing such key documents as the National Planning Framework (GBHN) and Indonesia's Seventh Five-Year National Plan (REPELITA VII), and also provides recommendations for sectoral agencies, the private sector and NGOs at the central, provincial and district level.

The Agenda 21-Indonesia, as an "advisory" document, encompasses aspects of policy, strategy and program development, and embraces most areas of social, economic and environmental development planning. The document comprises 18 chapters which are divided into four sections: (i) Human Services, containing six chapters which analyze various social and economic aspects of national development in support of sustainable development; (ii) Waste Management, containing five chapters on national and local waste management strategies to help protect the global environment; (iii) Land Resource Management, containing four chapters on the sustainable management of land, forests, agricultural and water resources; and (iv) Natural Resource Management, containing three chapters which examine biodiversity conservation, biotechnology, and marine and coastal zone management.

Each of the 18 chapters contain a Background Section introducing the topic, followed by a number of specific Program Areas considered to be of priority importance for the implementation of sustainable development in Indonesia. The Program Areas are divided into two time frames (1998-2003 and 2003-2020), with specific achievement targets set for each time period.

Most of the Program Areas include the following four aspects: (i) Basis for Action, which briefly reviews the issue in the global and Indonesian context; (ii) Objectives, which outlines desired outputs to be achieved for each time period; (iii) Proposed Activities, including activities related to management, data and information, and international and regional cooperation; and (iv) Means of Implementation, which constitutes the proposed means for achieving the objectives of the Program Area, including financial aspects, scientific and technological development, human resource development, legal and institutional capacity development, and information for decision-making.

The final section of each chapter includes a summary section on the Role of Major Groups in the implementation of the stated Program Areas, and a general Human Resource Development Strategy to be pursued in furtherance of Indonesia's shift towards sustainable development.

The 18 chapters of the Agenda 21-Indonesia have been developed and scrutinized by sectoral experts, government officials, NGOs, academics and others. It is therefore hoped that this document can be viewed as a consensus document which reflects the thinking of a range of stakeholders in society. In this respect, it should be used as an important reference for developing and implementing the Seventh Five-Year Development Plan (Repelita VII), the remainder of Indonesia's Second Long-Term (25 Year) Development Plan (PJP II), as well as other sectoral and regional planning documents.

The release of the Agenda 21-Indonesia marks the end of an extensive period of consultation and networking regarding the course of action Indonesia should pursue to implement sustainable development. In another sense, however, the release of this document should mark the beginning of a period of national introspection and adjustment to a new development paradigm, as the process of implementation begins. This process will be successful only if the various top down and bottom up planning mechanisms are able to introduce aspects of sustainable development to organizations, communities and individuals at all levels of Indonesian society, and to integrate this concept into the daily activities at every work place and living space in the nation.