

# **The role of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in enhancing environmental sustainability: With special reference to Indonesia**

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The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has emerged as the leading global authority addressing environmental governance and climate action, notably under the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 13 on Climate Action. This research investigates UNEP's role in advancing environmental sustainability, mainly focusing on Indonesia, a country confronting significant environmental challenges. Employing a qualitative methodology, this research analyses secondary data sources to provide an in-depth understanding of UNEP's role. The study intends to adopt Green Theory as the key theoretical framework and analytical method, mainly emphasises three principles, ecocentrism, limits to growth, and decentralisation. These principles are used to critically evaluate UNEP's environmental policies and actions within the Indonesian context. Through this analytical lens, the study assesses the extent to which UNEP has addressed the complex challenges associated with environmental sustainability in Indonesia. Findings reveal that UNEP's role extends beyond agenda-setting to active legal and policy support through its Legal Division, which assists in shaping Indonesia's environmental legislation and operationalising the 2030 Agenda for environmental sustainability. The decentralisation concept, grounded in Green Theory, is evident as UNEP's global environmental mandates are localised in Indonesia's governance structures. UNEP's influence is notably reflected in Indonesia's adoption of sustainable environment policies and participation in initiatives like the Green Customs Program, facilitating enhanced climate change mitigation and environmental governance capacity. In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of global-local linkages in achieving sustainable development and underscores UNEP's pivotal role in addressing complex environmental challenges through legal, policy, and governance mechanisms. However, in some cases, addressing environmental issues with the national interest and domestic policies of states may clash. For instance, Indonesia was the fourth largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world in 2015, mainly due to their economic policies. Therefore, strengthening UNEP's role and legal authority is crucial for effective global-local environmental sustainability and institutional capacity, legal frameworks, and multi-sector cooperation.

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