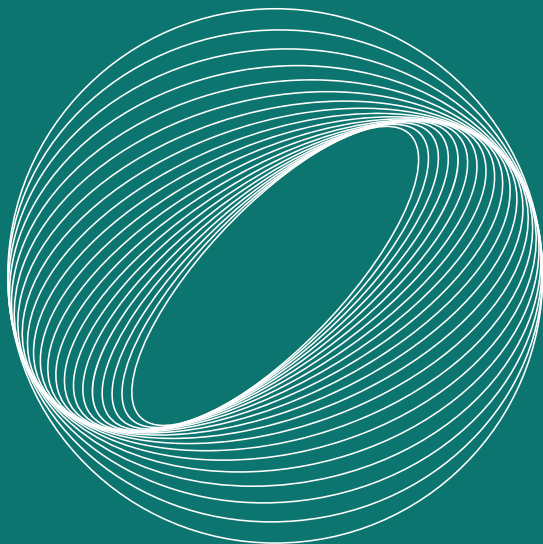




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INDONESIA AND THE WORLD MARKET CHALLENGES VIS-À-VIS EUDR DEFORESTATION STANDARDS

The implementation of the European Union Deforestation-free Regulation (EUDR) poses a significant challenge to the stability of Indonesia's primary commodity exports to the European market. This regulation demands strict evidence that products such as palm oil, coffee, and cocoa do not originate from deforested land after 2020. This context places Indonesia in a crucial position to immediately reform its supply chain governance to secure competitiveness in international markets (Meliany et al., 2025).

Problem analysis shows there is a significant risk of social exclusion for small farmers as a consequence of inaccurate global forest maps, which often fail to recognize traditional agroforestry systems as non-deforested land (van Noordwijk et al., 2025). The problem of technical verification and land legality has been the primary obstacle that can cut market access for millions of small farmers. Furthermore, a case study in Sumatra showed that the majority of community coffee plantations have actually fulfilled their sustainability standards (Fardinatri et al., 2024).

As a solution, research recommends the utilization of digital technology such as blockchain and artificial intelligence to strengthen transparent traceability systems (Iriyani & Raflesia, 2025). Regarding the recommendation, the government must collaborate with international research organizations to repair local spatial data accuracy. Strategic measures are very crucial for ensuring sustainability policies remain just and can protect the economic well-being of Indonesian small farmers. (Fikri Danang Himawan, Master Student, Forestry Science, Faculty of Forestry, Universitas Gadjah Mada)

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BETWEEN NORMATIVE POWER AND POST-NORMATIVE DIPLOMACY: IS INDONESIA'S REPUTATION AT STAKE?

In Indonesia's annual foreign policy address on 14th January 2026, the Foreign Minister stated that Indonesia would no longer place its national interests on multilateralism that "does not work" (Khalik, 2026). This statement reflects a shift toward what has been described as post-normative diplomacy, in which multilateralism is treated as a supporting instrument rather than the foundation of Indonesia's international interest (Khalik, 2026). While this approach responds to frustrations with ineffective global governance, it may affect how other states perceive Indonesia's rise in the international system.

Despite growing scepticism toward multilateral institutions, normative power remains central to Indonesia's diplomatic identity. Through multilateral forums such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), Indonesia has consistently promoted inclusivity, policy space flexibility, and equitable treatment for developing countries. These efforts have enabled Indonesia to shape negotiations in ways that accommodate Global South interests, reinforcing its reputation as a constructive and principled actor. Consequently, Indonesia's rising status has been built not merely on material capabilities, but on its ability to influence norms and rules (Santikajaya, 2016). This is evident in Indonesia's consistent advocacy for the preservation of the WTO's two-tier dispute settlement mechanism, which is currently under strain. Such a stance illustrates Indonesia's enduring commitment to strengthening the rules-based international trading system that has long underpinned the multilateral order.

Indonesia's role as a bridge builder in multilateral negotiations further demonstrates the strategic value of normative power. Indonesia has sought to mediate between developed and developing members, challenge Western dominance, and contribute to consensus-based outcomes (Narlikar, 2003). Such engagement has elevated Indonesia's international recognition and strengthened its position as an emerging power. Therefore, reducing emphasis on multilateralism risks undermining Indonesia's accumulated normative capital and may ultimately weaken its standing in the evolving global order. (Hasnatika Maziyyah, Ministry of Trade Republic of Indonesia)

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WHAT CHINA'S SOLAR TAX REBATE CUT MEANS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

As of April 2026, China will begin phasing out the Value Added Tax (VAT) rebate scheme for several solar energy export products (Xinhua, 2026). This policy potentially affects the global solar market's price structure, particularly for photovoltaic (PV) and battery products. In 2025, China's solar panel exports increased by 73%, underscoring the global market's high dependence on Chinese supply (Copsey et al., 2025; Maguire, 2026). The removal of the VAT rebate may raise the production costs, which could be passed on to importing countries through higher prices.

This shift opens the opportunities for local industries in importing countries to compete, although it will remain difficult to execute. China's entrenched dominance across the solar energy value chain—from raw materials to manufacturing—continues to constrain import substitution efforts (Ranghino et al., 2025). Through a neo-developmental perspective, this moment reinforces the importance of state intervention in steering market transitions through industrial policies. Rather than depending on low-cost product imports, developing countries can leverage the domestic PV and battery industries as part of a strategic import substitution approach (Tatangelo, 2025).

Even though China's policy adjustment will take effect in Q2 2026, early preparation is crucial. Strong regulatory frameworks, consistent industrial incentives, and close coordination between the state and business actors are essential to building a competitive domestic solar energy ecosystem. In this context, the biggest challenge lies in the state's capacity to ensure the initiative is not falling into a form of pseudo-sovereignty—a condition that seems independent but remains dependent on foreign investment from developed countries. (Ahmad Fajar Maulana, HI UGM 2023)

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WHAT DOES THE FOX(NEWS) SAY? GLOBAL WORRYNESS REGARDING PUBLIC PERCEPTION ON EMERGING AND TREATABLE DISEASES

Peck (2019) notes that Fox News' "cultural populism" resonates with the American working class. Today, this paradigm transcends pop culture, embedding itself into global health security. As a global norm-maker, the U.S. now exports a culture of doubt that empowers anti-science movements in the Global South. When the U.S. legitimizes skepticism at the cabinet level, it creates a new global standard that validates fringe theories abroad.

Under Secretary RFK Jr., U.S. health architecture has pivoted toward the "MAHA" movement, prioritizing skepticism over expertise. Key actions include defunding Gavi and shuttering USAID (Donaldson, 2026). Kennedy's framing of scientific consensus as a "feature of tyranny" rather than science has dismantled decades of health leadership, catalyzing global momentum for medical non-compliance.

In Indonesia, this manifested in the coordinated bashing of a cardiologist on X regarding GERD. This exemplifies medical populism, where "common sense" anecdotes are weaponized to antagonize medical establishments. Despite clinical evidence (Desandri, 2026) clarifying the lack of heart disease correlation, public reaction prioritized personal emotion over consensus. This reflects the "dark view" highlighted in the WEF Global Risks Report 2026, where misinformation and societal polarization are ranked as top-tier threats (WEF, 2026). Viral emotion now effectively silences medical authority, endangering long-term public health literacy.

Ultimately, communal skepticism constitutes a primary "Epistemic Insecurity." As COVID-19 demonstrated, such doubt erodes public health governance. This weaponized distrust acts as a systemic "cancer," destabilizing the global cooperation essential to mitigating emerging diseases and preventing future pandemic catastrophes. (Alexander Yudho Pratama, Junior Auditor at the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia)

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