

# CONCLUSION

## Shaping Nusantara

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“The future is neither predicted, nor forecasted. The future is shaped.”  
*The Many Faces of Foresight*, Miles et al. (2008)

This book has provided a collection of academic writings examining the various aspects of the historic and momentous relocation of Indonesia’s capital city from Jakarta to Nusantara. In this sense, this edited volume serves as the first academic summation of the myriad challenges and opportunities involved in the IKN’s transfer, and simultaneously, as a call to Indonesia’s policymakers and leaders to build or develop their new capital in a more balanced, more inclusive, and more sustainable fashion.

From the key takeaways and policy recommendations provided by the authors, there are a few central themes. First, as the overall level of practitioner and research knowledge on the IKN’s relocation and development is still limited, this volume will hopefully inspire other researchers and organizations to conduct more detailed and focused studies on all aspects of the IKN’s future development. This is particularly for areas related to the IKN’s human and social capital, including the livelihoods and well-being of East Kalimantan’s local and indigenous communities, the proposed physical and infrastructural development, existing and future environmental and ecological concerns and threats, and evolving social dynamics. Any future studies will need to be sensitive to the potential for unintended or unexpected consequences of IKN development, including widening socio-economic inequality and environmental degradation.

The editors hope that the present volume provides some direction for how the above themes and research questions might pan out, especially if certain recommendations are ignored or dismissed prior to the actual transfer of the national capital from Jakarta to Nusantara.

Generally, development initiatives need three frameworks for execution: a regulatory and policy framework, an institutional framework, and a system to trace and enforce accountability. While Indonesia's IKN Law is a start, the regulatory and policy framework and the actual implementation of the transfer still need regulations to operationalize the move at the ground level. Likewise, while the establishment of the IKN Authority marked the development of the IKN's institutional framework, this Authority is not fully operational yet and its accountability mechanism is not developed. This book calls for the Indonesian government to address these challenges; the three frameworks need to be put in place given the complexity of the transfer and the IKN's overall development. To succeed, the IKN will require multiple levels and stages of intricate construction and development projects, and above all, financing. The necessary bureaucracy or state apparatus also needs to be set up, to ensure the smooth running of related processes.

As the authors of several chapters have warned, the central government's consultation and engagement with East Kalimantan or the proposed Nusantara's local communities and groups including CSOs, and local or subnational government and society, have been and are minimal if not non-existent. For Nusantara to fairly and adequately manage the real concerns of locals, especially the indigenous communities who might be most affected by the expected influx of newcomers from Jakarta and other parts of Indonesia when the IKN is up and running, much more needs to be done on this front.

It is an open question whether subsequent administrations after Joko Widodo's will show the same political commitment to continue with the IKN's development. From the view of the private sector, certainty in politics and the external environment must improve before investment can be pledged. At the same time, civil servants in Jakarta are rightfully concerned about how the physical transfer of their service might affect their future career trajectory and even their children's education and personal well-being, given the lack of existing infrastructure and facilities in East Kalimantan and the proposed IKN zone. Given this, some incentives must be carefully designed for the private sector as well as civil servants to support the IKN's development.

In an ideal scenario, the IKN transfer will eventually create a new Indonesian civilization and not a mere city. How will Nusantara's identity and

social fabric evolve and strengthen? How will local and central governance be conducted when the new capital city emerges from the forest lands? These are longer-term questions that will await answers and analyses from future researchers and scholars.

Last, as the IKN's highly complex development will likely span the next three to four or even five decades, Indonesia's leaders and policymakers might consider proactively mapping megatrends, anticipating changes and identifying drivers, and developing scenarios and potential roadmaps to shape the IKN's future. This is important as the megaproject embodies and affects various perspectives, including socio-economic, cultural, and environmental trajectories and discourses. Lively and open engagement, including that of scholars and experts knowledgeable about local developments as IKN's construction proceeds apace, will help to secure future political and financial commitment to ensure the continuation of IKN development. It will also address challenges during the transition to a new capital city and perhaps even help to pre-empt and resolve serious risks like potential environmental degradation and human rights violations before they are unmanageable. All this can be an opportunity for growth, rather than be seen as limitations.

We hope this book will be a resource for all who are interested in and care about the future of Nusantara and Indonesia. The findings and recommendations of the authors who have contributed to this volume are among the first published scholarly reflections on this broad subject. May the path that they have forged lead more to follow.

## Reference

Miles, I., J. Cassingena, L. Georghiou, M. Keenan, and R. Popper. 2009. "The Many Faces of Foresight". In *The Handbook of Technology Foresight: Concepts and Practice*, edited by L. Georghiou. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd.

