

VIEWPOINT

**ANIES BASWEDAN**

# With Collaboration, Jakarta Can Battle Climate Change



**Jakarta is sinking faster than any other big city. Despite this, Jakarta Governor Anies Baswedan is optimistic that collaboration, community action and a focus on transportation in Jakarta's climate mitigation and adaptation strategies will alleviate the threats of climate change to the city.**



## To tackle the unprecedented climate crisis, the Jakarta city government has introduced the Jakarta Regeneration Plan, a series of collaborative climate action strategies.



Climate change is a universal problem, and its scale and impact are unprecedented. As humans are responsible for the changing climate and its effects, we must ensure that our actions do not cause further damage to our environment. The clock is ticking—the time to act is now.

In our city of Jakarta, we are learning the lessons of climate change the hard way. Extreme weather and flooding have been a perennial problem for Jakarta, and over the years, they have become more frequent and severe. The longer-than-usual dry season (*musim kemarau*) degrades the air quality, and changes in weather patterns threaten our food supply and exacerbate sea level rise and flooding. Climate change also poses socio-economic risks such as disruptions to our children's school activities due to floods; such effects are not easily measured but they are critical to the long-term development and well-being of our people.

Jakarta is one of the largest cities in Southeast Asia, with 10 to 14 million residents commuting on a typical workday. As the capital city of Indonesia and the largest economic contributor

to the nation, it accounted for no less than 17% of the national GDP in 2019. This places great expectations on Jakarta, as other cities in Indonesia and the wider region look to it as a centre of economic activity and leadership.

### **Jakarta Regeneration Plan**

To tackle the unprecedented climate crisis, the Jakarta city government has introduced the Jakarta Regeneration Plan, a series of collaborative climate action strategies that build on the collective efforts of government, businesses, non-profit organisations and the community. The Plan seeks to transform our infrastructure and urban spatial policies to ensure sustainable community development, with a focus on the transportation sector, which contributes more than half of Jakarta's climate-damaging emissions.

First, the Plan aims to reduce private vehicle usage by transitioning from private vehicle-oriented development to transit-oriented development. This includes working with bus

and rail operators to expand and integrate all public transport modes into the one-fare Jak Lingko system. To date, public mini vans, minibuses and microbuses, which serve up to one million passengers daily, have gradually joined the integrated system. The public transport fleet and passengers have doubled since 2017, and the public transit coverage has risen to around 80% of the Jakarta area.

Second, we aim to reduce commuting time by providing more affordable high-rise housing near the city centre. Through the Zero Down Payment (DP 0) scheme, we are providing incentives to private developers to build affordable high-rise housing in the city centre. This will potentially shift the city's residential population from the peripheries closer to the city centre or to a public transport node, further reducing travel time and dependencies on private vehicles.

The third strategy is to address underinvestment in basic services such as access to clean water and waste management facilities. To reduce our dependency on the massive Bantar Gebang landfill site in Bekasi district, we aim to reduce waste production by 30% and increase waste treatment by 70% by 2025. Through the Samtama Movement (Joint Waste Responsibility), we are working with the central government, businesses,

community and other stakeholders to raise awareness on the concept of "reduce, reuse, recycle" in managing our waste.

The Jakarta Regeneration Plan also includes *kampung* development. We have introduced the concept of Community Action Planning, focusing on communal planning and execution to prepare residents for climate change mitigation. In South Jakarta's Cipete Selatan Village, for example, residents had worked together since 2012 to build 17 infiltration points along the road and in the housing estate. This helped alleviate flooding in 2020, when areas of the estate with infiltration wells were spared the widespread flooding that afflicted surrounding areas.

## The Way Forward

To date, Jakarta's initiatives for environmental improvement have produced some positive results. Our air quality has shown a noticeable decrease in PM2.5 concentration levels, with a reduction of 21.9% since 2017. This achievement was proudly celebrated by Jakarta residents through the popular #JakartaLangitBiru social media posts. Jakarta's efforts have also been welcomed by the central government of Indonesia.

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**The Plan includes *kampong* development and community action. In Cipete Selatan Village, residents worked together to build 17 infiltration points that spared the estate in the 2020 flood.**

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The success of this plan is certainly not solely through the efforts of the Jakarta government. Over the past two years, the Government of Jakarta has coordinated and collaborated with the central government, academics, and environmental organisations such as C40 Cities, WRI Indonesia, Institute for Transportation and Development Policy, Vital Strategies and ICLEI–Local Governments for Sustainability, among others.

But Jakarta's work is far from finished—much remains to be done, and our efforts must continue. Jakarta has committed to the Paris Agreement to keep global temperature rise below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. It takes a pooling of resources and considerable, concerted and continuous efforts to realise the Paris Agreement goals and beyond.

Climate change is a global existential challenge that affects every city, large or small, and solving the challenge requires collaboration with many parties. More than ever before, Jakarta and other cities across the globe must work together to face this urgent climate threat, and build a liveable, sustainable and healthy environment for all. Let us join hands to achieve our ambitious carbon emissions reduction targets and eradicate this global challenge together. 🌱