

How are political parties in Indonesia responding to the environmental crisis?

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Abstract. The environmental issues of living have become a crucial issue in the development of Indonesia in the last few decades. The issue of environmental management has been a narrative that has always been debated in political controversy events since the collapse of the Soeharto regime, and is still a very difficult homework to solve by the post-Suharto regime. Democracy also continues to push for improvements in environmental governance such as strengthening the role of civil society in overseeing state policies, increasingly sharp media role in investigating environmental damage and corrupt policies, and increasingly open public awareness. Environmental issues such as mining policies, the displacement of forests, the grinding of sea sand, mollusks and so on seem to be not very prominent in political party discussions. Even life-related issues are not central to political parties. Very few political parties put environmental issues in their vision and mission, which is why the study focuses on political narrative and how intensely political parties raise environmental themes in political party discussions in Indonesia. The political approach to the living environment is the basis of this study which is elaborated with netnographic studies to review the political narrative of the life environment by the party.

1 Introduction

After the New Order in Indonesia, there was a major change in the political narrative around environmental issues. Previously, during the New Order era under the Soeharto government, environmental issues often did not receive enough attention. The government focuses on economic development and industrial growth without paying much attention to the resulting environmental impacts. However, after the 1998 political reform and the fall of the New Order regime, there was a significant shift in the political approach to environmental issues in Indonesia. The problem is, the narrative about environmental issues in political campaigns is still low, political campaigns are still dominated by issues of corruption, the economy and infrastructure. The change in Indonesia's development paradigm has not yet led to political parties' concern for environmental issues. In fact, apart from being a means of political participation for citizens, the function of political parties is also a means of absorbing, gathering and

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channeling the political aspirations of the community (Article 11 of Law Number 2 of 2008). One thing that is never absent every year is aspirations related to environmental damage and the impact of environmental damage. The government also often promises to reduce the impact of environmental damage, but in fact, 684,000 hectares of forest are lost due to illegal logging, forest fires, forest encroachment and forest conversion every year [1].

However, what must be understood is that this issue is not a purely technical-neutral process, but rather a political process of actors related to natural resource interests. So, environmental change is a form of politicized environment, according to Bryant environmental damage can be seen from political resources, actor conflict conditions, and its impact on socio-economic inequality. The source of politics in the past was in the form of very centralized, anthropocentric and technocratic policies, which were reflected in the licensing mechanism for resource utilization [2]. Executive Director of the Bright Indonesia Foundation, Adhityani Putri, said that the environmental crisis and climate change are not on the agenda of political parties in Indonesia. According to him, environmental issues have always been a hidden agenda in Indonesian political discourse [3].

This reality should make political parties aware of the importance of awareness about environmental politics. Political parties play an important role in seeing the direction of development towards the environment. In this way, political parties can open up political space for marginalized voices and the same goes for environmental degradation which has been a symptom of structural repression and tends to remain silent. Therefore, the presence of a green party or at least a political party that focuses on monitoring environmental issues in Indonesia is very necessary because as a country with large natural resources, Indonesia must have a strong environmental political foundation. So far the weak impact of environmental politics can be seen from investment policy output. The government is too loose, giving capitalists the opportunity to enter and exploit Indonesia's nature without control. As a result, environmental damage occurs everywhere which is not directly proportional to the increase in people's welfare. Therefore, it is time for green politics and green parties that are pro-environment and natural balance to be present and take action in the midst of the Indonesian political system, because various environmental damage and disasters in Indonesia, which have given rise to poverty and many victims, require green power politics to solve it.

The agenda of political parties in Indonesia focuses more on five-year interests. Political parties tend to prioritize political narratives in campaigns with issues that are popular and easily accepted by the public as short-term issues. Short-term interests in political campaigns then reduce environmental issues in political contestation in Indonesia, the impact of which is that political party representatives in government are not accommodating to environmental issues. Even though the environmental crisis is very real and its impacts have been felt by various countries to this day. In several developed countries, environmental issues raised by parties are even able to encourage parties to become winners in elections or at least change the flow of voters. For example, in a study [4], he stated that the strengthening of the relationship between political affiliation and concern for the environment is mainly caused by partisan attitudes, not because of polarization on environmental issues. The Indonesian Political Indicator (IPI)

states that almost all political parties only achieved a score below 5% regarding their priorities in the agenda of discussing environmental cases [5].

Political parties in the environmental narrative are trapped in sectoral issues related to the interests of voters in the short term [6]. Political parties play an important role in developing effective national climate policies in democratic countries. At the same time, there is practical and academic debate about whether political parties matter in policy outcomes [7]. Political parties on the other hand, have a significant role in encouraging change in a country and therefore global strategic issues [8].

Political parties' campaigns on environmental issues are less popular with voters because voters prefer issues that are directly related to short-term needs, such as issues of infrastructure, poverty, employment and issues related to religion, customs and other populist campaigns. This tendency has an impact on the lack of presence of environmental issues in political contestation in Indonesia. Political parties that are trapped in short-term campaigns also have to deal with pressure from NGOs, they ultimately choose the middle path by simply calling on the public to care about environmental issues.

2 Materials and methods

This research can be seen as research that analyzes how changes in political and sociological behavior are occurring in political parties today. Then, what mechanisms must be followed and carried out by political parties regarding the development of information technology which contains various information regarding party political phenomena, especially regarding environmental issues. Therefore, the method used is Netnography which focuses on describing a social issue through media access, namely internet technology. This method itself basically works in the realm of illuminating new issues in the realm of social science studies. Netnography itself is a form of participant observation research method which is based on the online or digital realm. Furthermore, the use of the netnography method will represent the recognition of the importance of computer (digital) media relations and connections which include the completeness of data between online and offline in society [9]. Kozinets concludes that netnography provides a qualitative research technique that allows researchers to conduct studies of cyberculture and virtual communities.

3 Discussion

Political parties in Indonesia have experienced a long metamorphosis from regime to electoral regime. Since the beginning of the general election until now, it has been very difficult to find political parties that are concerned about environmental issues. Political parties tend to play it safe by following popular issues so as not to be left behind by voters. This condition is experienced by almost all political parties in Indonesia. Since the first election was held in Indonesia until the next election, narratives about environmental issues by political parties are very difficult to find in digital windows. The digital footprint of political parties discussing environmental issues is quite difficult to trace. The

following presentation of the results of netnography analysis explains the role of political parties in environmental political narratives.

3.1 Political changes in political structure and development of environmental political narratives

Changes in the political structure in Indonesia after the New Order regime encouraged the birth of many political parties [10]. The euphoria of political freedom opened up space for the emergence of new political forces which were not possible during the New Order era. There has been a fundamental change in the political activities of industrialized countries which has changed the dominant political issues and agenda which has also encouraged changes in the pattern of environmental movements. These changes have caused the split of political parties and given rise to new political currents. This situation caused the party system to be reorganized by replacing it with a new political party [11].

- Beginning of press freedom
- Granting permission to establish new political parties and labor unions
- Release of political prisoners
- Limiting the presidential term of office to two five-year terms
- Decentralization of power to regions

After 1955, Indonesians had to wait 44 years to witness another example of free and fair parliamentary elections [12]. In the 1999 General Election, people voted for political parties, not individuals. Since there is no limit to the formation of political parties (as part of the reform program), Indonesia is witnessing the mushrooming of new parties. No less than 48 parties were allowed to participate in the 1999 elections, although most of these parties played an insignificant role. Most political parties can only rely on a little support from the public. In modern Indonesian politics, a political party is basically a political vehicle for a particular individual and not an institution that expresses a shared ideology or vision. The principle of self-government through political parties, the cornerstone of democracy [13]. Because only a few people could count on public support during the 1999 elections, most political parties were destined to receive few votes.

The conversation to encourage change, which initially occurred in relatively limited circles, gained important momentum when "reform" was used as a term that was believed to represent the wider public's will to demand more fundamental political change. Such reforms require strong political support [14]. In a relatively short time, very important changes occurred: the conversation turned into a more massive although less organized movement, the reform agenda turned into street action demanding change, and ultimately academic discourse turned into institutionalized practice. Among political analysts, the five-year democratic transition in Indonesia was marked by what they conceptualized as "deficit democracy". One of the most important parts of the analysis of this issue highlights the role of political parties which are considered less serious in carrying out the reform agenda for democratic purposes. In general, political parties in Indonesia have lost their true ideological orientation for meaningful change, including in the issue of monitoring environmental issues as a national development agenda.

3.2 Political parties and failure to develop environmental issues

Although political parties promote public participation in decision making around environmental issues. They support transparency, listen to community aspirations, and collaborate with NGOs and environmental groups in policy formulation. This change reflects increased awareness of environmental issues in Indonesian society after the New Order. Although there are still challenges in implementing environmental policies, these steps demonstrate efforts to change the political narrative to be more oriented towards environmental preservation and sustainability in an effort to achieve a balance between economic growth and environmental protection. There are several reasons why some political parties may not fully focus on environmental issues or pay enough attention to them:

- **Other Priorities:** Political parties have a variety of issues that they must consider in their political platforms. Issues such as the economy, education, health and security often dominate political debates because they have a direct impact on the daily lives of citizens. Political parties may feel the need to balance these issues and may place environmental issues below other priorities.
- **Economic Considerations:** Some political parties may view environmental protection measures as an obstacle to economic growth or job creation. They may worry that strict regulation of industries that have a large impact on the environment will harm economic growth.
- **Industry Influence:** Political parties may receive financial support from certain industries that may not be interested in strict environmental policies. In this case, political parties may have an incentive not to take action that could harm the industry's interests.
- **Population Demands:** Sometimes, political parties follow population demands. If the majority of voters do not consider environmental issues to be a top priority, political parties may not allocate many resources or attention to those issues.
- **Lack of understanding or low awareness:** Some political parties may lack understanding of environmental impacts and the importance of environmental conservation measures. Low environmental awareness among political party members or a lack of knowledge about environmental issues can be a factor that hinders their attention to these issues.

Political parties' views and priorities may change over time, especially if there is increased public awareness of environmental issues and pressure from environmental groups and voters. Some political parties have also increased their focus on environmental issues in response to changing circumstances. In a democracy, public participation and voter influence have a very important role in shaping political parties' attention and actions on certain issues [15].

Various political parties in Indonesia have included environmental issues in their political platforms. However, it is important to note that political parties' views and commitments may change over time, depending on leaders and recent political developments. The following are several political parties that are known to pay attention to environmental issues in Indonesia:

- Indonesian Green Party (Indonesian Green Party): As a party founded specifically to promote environmental issues, the Indonesian Green Party naturally has a main focus on environmental protection and various related issues, such as forest preservation, plastic waste reduction, and resource management sustainable natural resources.
- Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P): PDI-P, led by the current President of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, has shown concern for environmental issues during his administration. They have achieved several steps to address deforestation and other environmental problems [16].
- Gerindra Party (Greater Indonesia Movement): Gerindra green party, including protecting forests and biodiversity, as well as promoting sustainable economic development [17].
- National Mandate Party (PAN): PAN has also spoken about environmental issues in its political platform, with an emphasis on wise management of natural resources and environmental protection [2].
- Democratic Party: The Democratic Party has emphasized the importance of environmental protection and climate change in its political platform. They also support efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions [18].
- New Indonesian Association Party (Perindo): The Perindo Party has also highlighted environmental issues in its political agenda, including efforts to preserve the environment and better manage natural resources.
- Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI): PSI has a focus on the younger generation and future issues, including environmental issues. They have talked about stricter environmental policies, such as reducing the use of single-use plastics.

3.3 Criticism of political parties regarding environmental issues

In the 2019 Indonesian legislative general election, a number of political parties included climate change and environmental issues in their programs, for example the Democratic Party, Gerindra Party, NasDem Party, Golkar Party and Perindo Party. However, in practice, fulfilling these promises still depends on how high a priority political parties give to the issue of climate change. In some cases regarding political party priorities, the issue of climate change may not be a top priority for political parties, making it difficult to gain their support for climate change action. It is these obstacles that have become the forerunners that have taken root within political parties so that harmony regarding understanding the issue of climate change has not been explored in depth. The complexity in understanding the issue of climate change is an inhibiting factor in political parties themselves, this is caused by a lack of understanding of the issue of climate change which is the main focus for political parties to introduce to their members. So, it is hoped that political party members who will go out into the community will be able to provide awareness about the issue of climate change. Political parties have strong involvement with the community and voters, so that their existence can help increase public awareness and participation on climate change issues. Political parties in Indonesia have received a lot of criticism regarding their handling of environmental issues. Here are some common criticisms often leveled at them:

- **Lack of Seriousness:** Many political parties in Indonesia are considered less serious in dealing with environmental issues. They tend to focus more on political and economic issues than on environmental protection.
- **Low level of sustainable development:** Critics believe that political parties often support massive development projects without considering significant environmental impacts. Examples include coastal reclamation and large infrastructure projects that can damage natural ecosystems.
- **Neglect of Sustainable Agriculture:** The issue of sustainable agriculture is also often ignored by political parties. Subsidies for environmentally damaging agriculture or support for monoculture agriculture can damage the natural environment and the welfare of farmers.
- **Links to Business and Corporations:** Critics accuse some political parties of having close ties to large companies that have a large impact on the environment, such as mining companies and palm oil plantations. This can lead to conflicts of interest in environmental policy making.
- **Inadequate Environmental Regulation:** Political parties are often seen as not being active enough in formulating and pushing for strict and effective environmental regulations. This can result in increased environmental degradation.
- **Not Prioritizing Environmental Issues in Campaigns:** During general elections, political parties often focus on other issues such as the economy, social welfare, and identity politics. Environmental issues often do not receive enough attention in their campaign platforms.
- **Non-transparency in Political Funding:** Concerns have also arisen regarding the funding sources of political parties, especially in terms of how funds from large corporations can influence the environmental policies adopted by these political parties.

Not all political parties in Indonesia share the same views on environmental issues [19], and some parties may have a stronger commitment to this than others. This criticism should be considered as encouragement to increase awareness and action in protecting Indonesia's rich and important environment. Exploring further the results of a survey conducted by the Indonesian Political Indicators (IPI) in 2021 states that political parties in Indonesia are below 5%, this shows that political parties in Indonesia are not serious enough and do not have special attention to strategic issues regarding change climate. The foundational milestones of political parties need to be questioned because they are considered to ignore the issue of climate change, the impact of which is increasingly real, for the benefit of the lives of the Indonesian people. A pattern of political parties is starting to emerge in raising the issue of climate change only for the sake of attracting young people's votes in general elections, so that the issue of climate change is only considered as part of the mere rhetoric of political narratives, there needs to be concrete steps that are put forward in programs for the community and political party synergy in Indonesia by realizing the presence of this problem, as a collaborative effort in improving the environment and people's lives in Indonesia.

Internal political support plays an important role in overseeing the issue of climate change in Indonesia. Political parties are considered to have a very vital role in the political arena in Indonesia, underlining that they are a link between society and the government, and political parties also have access to natural resources and political power to influence policies and regulations. On that basis, to overcome the challenges of climate change, political parties must strengthen their internal capabilities by improving the quality of human resources and effective internal management systems. Of course, when monitoring the issue of climate change, you will always be faced with challenges and obstacles that go hand in hand, such as a lack of understanding, conflicting political priorities, as well as a lack of public oversight and transparency in monitoring the policies that have been made. However, because environmental issues are less sexy than economic and infrastructure issues, political parties prefer to prioritize these popular issues [20].

3.4 Party political narratives on environmental issues

The environmental approach is a narrative that is developed amidst the current economic, infrastructure and employment narratives. Political parties in Indonesia are starting to emphasize the importance of preserving Indonesia's rich natural resources, including tropical forests, peatlands and biodiversity. They spoke about the need to stop deforestation, promote sustainable forest management and protect unique ecosystems. Political parties are also starting to recognize the impact of climate change on Indonesia and understand the state's responsibility in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. They support Indonesia's participation in international agreements such as the Paris Agreement to reduce carbon emissions [21]. Several political parties have included environmental commitments in their political platforms. They spoke about the need for stricter policies to reduce air and water pollution, and manage rubbish and waste more efficiently. This issue is also linked to the issue of community welfare. They argue that environmental protection is key to improving the quality of life of citizens, including through the development of sustainable tourism and a green economy [22].

However, very few parties specifically mention the environment as a whole issue. Environmental issues in the vision and mission of political parties tend to be attached to economic issues. Usually, they mention the phrase building a national economic system that is just, environmentally friendly and oriented towards strengthening the people's economy by utilizing and developing natural resources in an efficient and efficient manner. It also opens up business opportunities and the widest possible employment opportunities to increase people's income and welfare. At the national level, compared to economic issues and social services, environmental issues are not considered important. When they asked respondents what their main problem was, the answer was, basic food prices 23.67%, poverty 19.29%, employment 14.74%, health services and costs 10.26%, corruption 7.55%. Then, income inequality was 7.04%, low purchasing power was 5.36%, education was 4.29%, only 1.63% answered questions about environmental damage, 1.02% didn't know or didn't answer [23].

3.5 What can political parties do to address the environmental crisis?

The environmental crisis is one of the urgent and complex global issues that affects the entire planet. This issue covers various problems, such as climate change, ecosystem damage, biodiversity loss, air and water pollution, and excessive use of natural resources. The response to the environmental crisis is very important, and political parties have a large role in shaping policies and commitments regarding this issue. Several things can be seen as ways for political parties to overcome the environmental crisis and show their commitment to this issue:

- **Integrate Environmental Issues in Party Platforms:** Political parties can integrate environmental issues in their platforms as one of the main focuses. This could include formulating policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, protect natural ecosystems, and encourage renewable energy.
- **Push for Strict Environmental Regulations:** The Party can push for the creation and enforcement of strict regulations related to the environment, including regulations on pollutant emissions, waste management, and protection of natural habitats.
- **Promotion of Sustainable energy:** Political parties can support the transition to renewable and sustainable energy sources such as solar, wind and hydro energy. This can help reduce dependence on fossil fuels that contribute to climate change.
- **Environmental Awareness Campaigns:** Parties can carry out environmental education and awareness campaigns to motivate people to be more aware of environmental issues and change their behavior.
- **Partnerships with Non-Governmental Environmental Organizations:** Political parties can collaborate with non-governmental environmental organizations to identify problems and appropriate solutions and ensure effective policy implementation.
- **Sustainability Commitment:** Political parties must demonstrate their commitment to environmental issues by creating sustainable policies and continuously monitoring developments and impacts.
- **Participation in International Meetings:** Political parties can also play a role in international environmental negotiations such as the UN Climate Conference (COP) to ensure that their countries comply with international agreements aimed at addressing climate change.

The party's commitment to the environmental crisis could have a significant impact on global efforts to safeguard the planet for future generations [24]. In politics, environmental issues are increasingly becoming a focus of attention, and parties that take proactive action in this regard can gain broader support from voters who care about the environment.

3.6 Political party campaigns on environmental issues in Indonesia

Political party campaigns on environmental issues are an effective way to raise public awareness about environmental problems and to propose solutions that can be implemented by the government [25]. A political party's high commitment to environmental issues can help various stakeholders and society monitor environmental governance. Based on searches using the netnography method, several steps can be taken in political party campaigns regarding environmental issues:

- **Research and Understanding Environmental Issues:** First of all, political parties need to conduct in-depth research on environmental issues that are relevant and significant in their region [26]. This includes an understanding of climate change, pollution, biodiversity, natural resource management, and other environmental issues.
- **Formulate Policies:** Political parties must formulate clear and implementable policies to overcome environmental problems [27]. These policies should include efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, protect ecosystems, promote renewable energy, and reduce plastic waste, among other things.
- **Clear Communication:** The campaign must have a clear and easy to understand message for the public [28]. This message should explain the environmental problems being faced and how the party's policies will help address those problems. Use statistics, scientific facts, and concrete examples to support arguments.
- **Mobilize Support:** Political parties must work to gain support from the public, environmental organizations, and concerned individuals [24]. This may include holding meetings, seminars, press conferences, and organizing demonstrations to support campaign goals.
- **Social Media and Technology:** Take advantage of social media and technology to campaign environmental messages [29]. Create powerful online campaigns via website, blog, social media platforms and email. This allows political parties to communicate directly with potential voters.
- **Debates and Discussions:** Organize open debates and discussions on environmental issues with other political parties [30]. This can help clarify differences between party policies and create better understanding among voters.
- **Commitment to Real Action:** Political parties must show commitment to environmental issues with real action [31]. This could include adopting sustainable practices in party offices, using renewable energy, and supporting pro-environmental policies in areas they control.
- **Education:** Conduct educational campaigns to teach the public about how they can contribute to protecting the environment [32]. This includes sustainable practices, reducing waste, and saving energy.
- **Transparency:** Remain transparent in your political party's campaigns and actions [33]. Inform the public about policy developments and actions taken.

Political party campaigns on environmental issues must focus on real efforts to protect and preserve nature and improve the quality of the environment for future generations. Political parties must realize that the narrative in campaigns can no longer be about short-term temporary issues, political parties' concerns about environmental issues must be described in vision, mission and strategic programs which in turn encourage the making of public policies through their representatives in the executive and legislative.

4 Conclusion

Changes in Indonesia's political structure after the New Order are acknowledged to have created a fairly competitive and open democratic climate. Post-New Order democracy also encouraged the growth of political parties and non-state organizations in various forms and ideologies. However, in national political contestations, political parties are less able to prioritize environmental issues because short-term electoral interests are more priority than long-term environmental issues. In the political narratives developed during political campaigns in post-New Order Indonesia, there are very few digital traces of parties that raise environmental issues. Political parties tend to play it safe with short-term temporary issues in order to gain voter sympathy, in the end environmental issues are marginalized by themselves.

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