

# INDONESIA RESEARCH SHOWCASE 2026

## Program

**Tuesday 27 October 2026 | 9:00am–2:00pm**

Lecture Theatre 026, New Law Building Annex (F10A)
The University of Sydney

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Sydney Southeast Asia Centre

# Program

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| **9:00am** | **Registration** |
| **9:15am** | **Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country \| A/Prof Sandra Alday, Deputy Director (Partnerships), Sydney Southeast Asia Centre (SSEAC)**<br><br>**Introduction, A/Prof Jeffrey Neilson, Indonesia Country Convenor, SSEAC** |
| **9:30-10:30** | **SESSION 1: NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT** |
| **9:30** | **A/Prof Luke Hespanhol** \| *Waste to Resilience: Sanitation Against Stunting and Climate Vulnerability in Informal Coastal Areas* |
| **9:40** | **Ardiyanto Nugroho** \| *Capital City Relocation Plan in Indonesia: Impacts on Land Access Arrangements* |
| **9:50** | **Dr Sabin Zahirovic** \| *From the Wallace Line to Critical Minerals: Open-Source Earth Models for Indonesia* |
| **10:00** | **Dr Bing Lin** \| *Causes and Correlates of Unsustainable Scuba Diving Tourism on Coral Reefs* |
| **10:10-10:30** | **Panel discussion and audience Q&A \| Moderator: A/Prof Sophie Webber** |
| **10:30-10:50** | **Morning tea and coffee** |
| **10:50-11:50** | **SESSION 2: SOCIETY AND POLITICS** |
| **10:50** | **Dr Udiana Dewi** \| *Digital Migration and Information Ecology among Indonesian Working Holiday Makers in Australia* |
| **11:00** | **Fani Pramuditya** \| *Breaking or Building Dependency? Post-Program Entrepreneurial Behavior Among Female Microentrepreneurs in Indonesia* |
| **11:10** | **Ayu Siantoro** \| *Sexual Violence Against Girls: Governance and Policy Reform* |
| **11:20** | **Benni Hasbiyalloh and Prof Michele Ford** \| *Maritime Exceptionalism in Action: Jurisdictional Uncertainty and Inter-agency Competition in Indonesia's Commercial Fishing Sector* |
| **11:30-11:50** | **Panel discussion and audience Q&A \| Moderator: Nick Dobrijevich** |
| **11:50-12:50** | **Indonesian social lunch and networking** |
| **12:50-1:50** | **SESSION 3: HEALTHY AND RESILIENT SOCIETIES** |
| **12:50** | **Elizabeth K. Kirkwood** \| *Transforming Village Decision-Making Through Digital Empowerment of Female Health Cadres: GEDSI Approaches from the Puspadaya Project in Indonesia* |
| **1:00** | **Erni Astutik** \| *Women's Empowerment to Protect Children's Health from Climate Change in Indonesia* |
| **1:10** | **Lucie Downer** \| *Understanding Quality of Life for People Living with Dementia and Family Carers in Indonesia: Preliminary Findings* |
| **1:20** | **Michelle Harrison** \| *From Surveillance to Genomics: The Contribution of NeoSEAP Indonesia to Global Neonatal Vaccine Research* |
| **1:30-1:50** | **Panel discussion and audience Q&A \| Moderator: Prof Mu Li** |
| **1:50-2:00** | **Closing remarks and wrap-up** |

# Session 1: Natural Resources and the Environment

## Luke Hespanhol

*School of Architecture, Design and Planning*

### Waste to Resilience: Sanitation Against Stunting and Climate Vulnerability in Informal Coastal Areas

This project examines the intersection of child malnutrition, climate vulnerability, and water and sanitation crises in Kampung Cangkol, an informal coastal settlement in Cirebon. The community experiences high levels of open defecation, childhood stunting and poor water sanitation alongside long-established waste reclamation practices. Flooding, erosion and sea-level rise damage sanitation infrastructure and deepen poverty and health risks, while irregular land tenure can exclude residents from government water and sanitation programs. The research maps relationships among infrastructure deficiencies, climate hazards and socioeconomic conditions, and assesses pathways linking inadequate water and sanitation to stunting. It also develops co-designed, scalable and community-led interventions intended to strengthen climate resilience in informal coastal communities across Southeast Asia.

**Short bio**

Associate Professor Luke Hespanhol is Head of Design at the University of Sydney's School of Architecture, Design and Planning. His research encompasses social design, civic participation, digital placemaking, technology-mediated interaction and cross-cultural education, with extensive engagement in the Indo-Pacific.

## Ardiyanto Nugroho

*School of Geosciences*

### Capital City Relocation Plan in Indonesia: Impacts on Land Access Arrangements

This study examines how Indonesia's new capital city affects land arrangements, access, exclusion and sense of place in five villages in Sepaku Subdistrict, East Kalimantan. Using interviews, focus groups, media analysis and GIS, it traces successive layers of territorialisation: customary access arrangements among Paser communities before the 1960s; state forest designation and transmigration from the 1970s; administrative restructuring in the 1980s; and later expansion of oil palm and coal mining. The establishment of the IKN capital territory has involved both production forest and non-state land. The findings identify Paser communities as especially vulnerable to exclusion and dispossession associated with the new capital's development.

**Short bio**

Ardiyanto Nugroho is a final-year PhD student from Indonesia. His research focuses on human geography, social aspects of forestry and conservation. He is also a researcher working for the National Research and Innovation Agency of Indonesia (BRIN).

## Sabin Zahirovic

*School of Geosciences*

### From the Wallace Line to Critical Minerals: Open-Source Earth Models for Indonesia

Indonesia's geological history reflects the collision of major tectonic plates, which formed islands, altered ocean gateways and climate, and shaped the movement of plants and animals across the Wallace Line. This presentation explains how open-source "digital Earth" tools reconstruct that history. GPlates models continental and island movements; CitcomS simulates mantle flow; Badlands and goSPL model erosion and sedimentation; and PlaSim-GENIE recreates past climates. Used together, these tools help researchers test when land bridges emerged and evaluate the formation and preservation of mineral deposits relevant to the transition toward net-zero emissions. Because the software is freely available, Indonesian researchers, students and agencies can adapt it without costly licences, strengthening local capability and sovereignty over knowledge of the country's natural heritage and resources.

**Short bio**

Dr Sabin Zahirovic is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Geosciences and co-leads the Quantitative Earth Systems Lab. His research connects plate tectonics, mantle flow, landscapes and climate through computational modelling, and he is SSEAC's Grand Challenge Champion for Digital Transformation and AI.

### Bing Lin

*School of Geosciences*

#### Causes and Correlates of Unsustainable Scuba Diving Tourism on Coral Reefs

Indonesia's coral reefs are major tourism destinations but face growing pressures from scuba diving. Using video-assisted observation and post-dive questionnaires, this study compared observed and self-reported reef contacts, damage and attitudes among 732 divers in Indonesia and the Philippines. A small number of divers accounted for disproportionately high contact rates, while unnoticed or unintentional behaviour comprised most damaging contacts. Divers commonly overestimated their abilities and substantially underestimated their reef contacts. Cameras and other accessories, operator eco-certification, peer behaviour and wildlife encounters were important correlates of reef contact. Contacts more than doubled when nearby divers touched the reef, while wildlife sightings increased intentional, unintentional and damaging contact. The findings reveal a tourism paradox in which encounters with wildlife can encourage behaviours that harm the habitats on which that wildlife depends.

**Short bio**

Bing Lin is an interdisciplinary conservation scientist in the Thriving Oceans Research Hub at the University of Sydney. His research combines conservation ecology, behavioural science and environmental policy to better understand the drivers of conservation outcomes, with a particular focus on coral reefs. Originally from Bandung, Indonesia, he completed his PhD in Science, Technology, and Environmental Policy at Princeton University in 2024.

## Session 2: Society and Politics

### Udiana Dewi

*School of Architecture, Design and Planning*

#### Digital Migration and Information Ecology among Indonesian Working Holiday Makers in Australia

This presentation examines how Indonesian Working Holiday Makers use digital technologies to imagine, prepare for and navigate migration to Australia. Digital ethnography, interviews and fieldwork trace an information ecology linking social media, search engines, AI tools, government websites, influencers and migrant-run WhatsApp, Telegram and Facebook groups. Government sources provide authoritative information, while search tools, AI and peer networks help migrants interpret and verify it. These pathways are shaped by language barriers, uneven digital literacy, platform algorithms and commercialised migration content. Digital infrastructures also operate as infrastructures of care: migrants use them to maintain relationships, cope with loneliness, challenge misleading narratives and support later arrivals. The research argues that digital migration must be understood through both information systems and the cultural practices through which knowledge becomes trusted and shared.

**Short bio**

Dr Udiana Puspa Dewi is a Research Fellow at the University of Sydney and a member of the ARC Centre of Excellence for Automated Decision-Making and Society. Her research focuses on linguistic anthropology, digital media, migration and cultural diversity.

### Ayu Siantoro

*PhD candidate, The University of Sydney*

#### Sexual Violence Against Girls: Governance and Policy Reform

In 2022, Indonesia enacted a progressive anti-sexual-violence policy reform, the Law on Sexual Violence Crimes (UU TPKS). However, scholarly accounts argued that legal reform falls short of solving the "problem" of sexual violence against girls. Most of the accounts evaluate policy efficacy against unexamined representations of sexual violence, while overlooking how anti-sexual-violence policies construct the very "problems" they aim to solve. This study employs the "What's the problem represented to be?" (WPR) approach to critically examine UU TPKS, as well as social development policies and government data reports on sexual violence against girls. Preliminary findings suggest that while UU TPKS has reformed the criminal representation of sexual violence "problem", non-progressive problem representations continue to exist within the legal reform itself and other anti-sexual-violence policy documents.

**Short bio**

Ayu Siantoro is a PhD candidate in Policy Studies at the Sydney School of Education and Social Work. Her research focuses on poststructural analysis of anti-sexual-violence activism, governing and policy reform in Indonesia.

### Fani Pramuditya

*University of Sydney Business School*

#### Breaking or Building Dependency? Post-Program Entrepreneurial Behavior Among Female Microentrepreneurs in Indonesia

Mentoring programs are widely used to support women entrepreneurs, but their longer-term effects after formal support ends are less understood. Drawing on an ongoing study of participants in Indonesia's IDEAS mentoring program, this research examines why some female microentrepreneurs continue, adapt or discontinue entrepreneurial and digital business activities. An exploratory abductive approach combines semi-structured interviews with evidence from participants' online business activities and program records. The analysis considers motivation, entrepreneurial identity, household responsibilities, resilience and continuing relationships with mentors. Rather than asking only whether mentoring works, the study identifies the conditions under which program benefits become sustained entrepreneurial practice. The findings aim to inform the design of more effective support for women-led microenterprises in Indonesia.

**Short bio**

Fani Pramuditya is an LPDP-supported PhD candidate in Strategy, Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the University of Sydney Business School. She is also a lecturer at Universitas Gadjah Mada, and her research focuses on entrepreneurship, innovation and digitalisation in Indonesia.

### Benni Hasbiyalloh and Michele Ford

*International Relations / School of Languages and Cultures*

#### Maritime Exceptionalism in Action: Jurisdictional Uncertainty and Inter-agency Competition in Indonesia's Commercial Fishing Sector

International and national regulators have developed industry-specific standards for seafarers and fishers based on the idea that sea-based work requires specialised rules. Drawing on an analysis of Indonesia's regulatory framework and 137 interviews with government officials, labour unionists and NGO activists at national level and in five port cities, this research examines the consequences of that approach. It finds that maritime exceptionalism has produced jurisdictional uncertainty and competition among the ministries responsible for fisheries, transportation and labour. This has fragmented oversight of employment contracts, wages, occupational safety and dispute resolution. Although commercial fishing creates genuine challenges for institutions designed around land-based work, the study argues that specialised standards can also hinder fishers' ability to access labour rights by dispersing authority and accountability across agencies.

**Short bios**

Benni Hasbiyalloh is a Lecturer at the International Relations Department at Paramadina University in Indonesia and a PhD candidate in International Relations at the University of Sydney. Michele Ford is Professor of Asian Studies at the University of Sydney and a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia. Her research focuses on labour politics and trade unions with a current project on Indonesia's commercial fishing industry.

## Session 3: Healthy and Resilient Societies

### Elizabeth K. Kirkwood

*Sydney School of Public Health*

#### Transforming Village Decision-Making Through Digital Empowerment of Female Health Cadres: GEDSI Approaches from the Puspadaya Project in Indonesia

Indonesia's approximately 780,000 community health cadres, most of whom are women, provide essential maternal, child health and nutrition services but often have limited influence in village decision-making and receive little financial recognition. The DFAT KONEKSI-funded Puspadaya Project is grounded in a transformative Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) approach in Banyuwangi and Central Maluku. Indonesian and Australian partners are co-designing a real-time digital nutrition information system that improves data quality while strengthening cadres' skills in interpretation, presentation and negotiation. The system visualises data disaggregated by sex, disability and ethnicity and is designed for varied literacy and digital capability. Rather than simply digitising data, the project seeks to shift power relations, increase women's influence over nutrition planning and resource allocation, and improve recognition of unpaid health work. Early findings show potential for more inclusive decision-making while highlighting persistent structural barriers to women's participation.

**Short bio**

Dr Elizabeth K. Kirkwood is a Research Fellow and Lecturer at the Sydney School of Public Health whose work focuses on gender, women's empowerment, and maternal and child health across the Asia-Pacific. She serves as GEDSI Technical Advisor to the DFAT-funded SAPPHIRE Regional Health Program and coordinates Advocacy for Women's and Children's Health in the Master of Global Health.

## Erni Astutik

*Sydney School of Public Health*

### Women's Empowerment to Protect Children's Health from Climate Change in Indonesia

Climate change has significant consequences for children's health and wellbeing, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. This research examines how climate-related factors affect child health in Indonesia and how women's empowerment may shape children's vulnerability and resilience. The mixed-methods project combines a literature review, quantitative analysis linking national health survey and climate data, spatial analysis, and qualitative interviews with women who have children under five and with relevant stakeholders. The findings identify women's empowerment as an important pathway for improving child health and adaptive capacity, while showing how structural inequalities constrain women's access to resources and decision-making. The project proposes a more integrated approach to women's empowerment, climate change and children's health in Indonesian policy and intervention design.

**Short bio**

Erni Astutik is a PhD student at the Sydney School of Public Health, supervised by Professor Ying Zhang, Professor Mu Li and Dr Elizabeth Kirkwood. Her research focuses on women's empowerment and children's health under climate change in Indonesia.

## Lucie Downer

*Sydney School of Health Sciences*

### Understanding Quality of Life for People Living with Dementia and Family Carers in Indonesia: Preliminary Findings

Most dementia quality-of-life measures were developed in Western settings and may not reflect what matters in Indonesia. This study explores how people living with dementia and family carers understand quality of life. Interviews with 11 people living with dementia and 24 family carers used picture cards to support discussion. The project was conducted with Alzheimer's Indonesia and Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia, with Indonesian students, researchers and clinicians contributing to recruitment, interviews, interpretation and analysis. Preliminary findings identify finances as especially important, while religion and faith support coping, acceptance, guidance and community connection. Quality of life was often understood relationally through family and others rather than solely at the individual level. The findings will be compared with existing measures to identify what is already captured and what may require cultural adaptation.

**Short bio**

Lucie Downer is a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Medicine and Health with a background in medical science, anthropology, public health and dementia research.

## Michelle Harrison

*Sydney School of Public Health / NeoSEAP Consortium*

### From Surveillance to Genomics: The Contribution of NeoSEAP Indonesia to Global Neonatal Vaccine Research

Neonatal sepsis remains a major cause of newborn mortality, while antimicrobial resistance is making infections caused by Escherichia coli and Klebsiella pneumoniae increasingly difficult to treat. NeoSEAP_PS is a prospective multicentre surveillance study examining the epidemiology, microbiology, resistance patterns and outcomes of culture-confirmed neonatal sepsis across Southeast Asia and the Pacific. Indonesian hospitals in Jakarta, Surabaya and Bandung are establishing capacity to archive bacterial isolates, conduct in-country genomic sequencing and link genomic results with clinical data, with expansion planned for Jayapura. At the time of abstract submission, the Jakarta site had archived 51 isolates and Surabaya 20, while Bandung was finalising governance arrangements. By linking pathogen genomics with patient outcomes, the network will identify strains associated with illness and mortality and contribute evidence for maternal vaccine targets against neonatal invasive bacterial disease.

**Short bio**

Michelle Harrison is a Research Program Manager and final-year PhD candidate at the Sydney School of Public Health. Working with Associate Professor Phoebe Williams, she leads the NeoSEAP network investigating neonatal infection, antimicrobial resistance and antimicrobial stewardship across the region.