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Optimizing the Environmental Impact Assessment (AMDAL) Process as the Basis for Environmental Approval: A Policy Evaluation Study in Merauke Regency, Indonesia

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Abstract

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA/AMDAL) is a mandatory public policy instrument for issuing Environmental Approval under Indonesia's Government Regulation No. 22 of 2021. In Merauke Regency, AMDAL implementation is particularly important due to its unique socio-ecological characteristics and the presence of the indigenous Malind Anim community. However, a substantial gap exists between the maximum service standard of 63 working days and the actual average completion time of 162 working days. This study evaluates the effectiveness of the AMDAL process using William N. Dunn's public policy evaluation framework, focusing on procedural accuracy, timeliness, document quality, inter-party coordination, and information disclosure and public participation. A descriptive quantitative approach with an evaluative survey was employed, involving 51 purposively selected stakeholders. Data were collected using a 3-point Likert scale questionnaire and complemented by thematic and gap analyses. The results show that the overall effectiveness of the AMDAL process reached 92.31%, categorized as very effective. Procedural accuracy (97.65%) and inter-party coordination (97.12%) were the strongest supporting dimensions, while timeliness (81.31%) remained the primary constraint. Delays were mainly associated with limited competence among AMDAL document preparers, repetitive revision cycles, and conventional public consultation practices that inadequately accommodate Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) principles. The study recommends strengthening consultant capacity, standardizing measurable RKL-RPL, institutionalizing localized FPIC protocols, and optimizing AMDALnet digitalization to improve efficiency and environmental governance.

Keywords: policy evaluation; environmental impact assessment; environmental approval; Merauke Regency; public policy; environmental governance; sustainable development.

1. Introduction

Sustainable development represents a paramount objective of contemporary public policy, demanding an intricate balance between robust economic growth, social welfare, and stringent environmental protection (Sachs, 2015). At the global level, this

paradigm has been continuously refined since the Brundtland Commission defined it as development that meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own (World Commission on Environment and Development [WCED], 1987). In the context of regional and local governance,

achieving this balance requires the deployment of rigorous policy instruments designed to ensure that developmental activities remain within the carrying capacity of the natural environment, anchored by principles of precaution, transparency, and accountability (Lemos & Agrawal, 2006).

In Indonesia, the regulatory framework governing environmental protection and management has undergone significant transformation in recent years. The enactment of Law No. 11 of 2020 on Job Creation (Omnibus Law), subsequently operationalized by Government Regulation No. 22 of 2021 concerning the Implementation of Environmental Protection and Management, marked a fundamental paradigm shift. The new regulatory regime replaced the traditional 'Environmental Permit' (Izin Lingkungan) with the 'Environmental Approval' (Persetujuan Lingkungan). This transition was designed to streamline bureaucratic licensing processes based on risk assessment while ostensibly maintaining strict environmental safeguards (Aminah, 2022; Effendi, Mursalin, & Sonaji, 2022). Within this modernized framework, the Environmental Impact Assessment—known locally as Analisis Mengenai Dampak Lingkungan (AMDAL)—retains a highly strategic position. The AMDAL is no longer merely a standalone administrative hurdle; it serves as the absolute, mandatory basis for the issuance of the Environmental Approval for businesses and activities that pose significant environmental risks (Kementerian Lingkungan Hidup dan Kehutanan Republik Indonesia [KLHK], 2021).

The AMDAL process is an extensive policy cycle that involves scoping (Kerangka Acuan), significant impact analysis (ANDAL), and the formulation of binding Environmental Management and Monitoring Plans (RKL-RPL) (Republik Indonesia, 2021). The effectiveness of this process is critical because it dictates the four foundational pillars of environmental governance: (1) service certainty through clear administrative procedures; (2) the scientific rigor of substantive document review; (3) operational efficiency in accordance with standard operating procedures (SOPs); and (4) the transparency and accountability of decision-making before an Environmental Approval is granted. If the AMDAL process is flawed, the resulting Environmental Approval becomes a mere bureaucratic formality, stripping it of its power to mitigate ecological degradation (Rahmawati, 2021).

Implementing this sophisticated national policy at the regional level, however, presents unique and profound challenges, particularly in frontier regions. Merauke Regency, newly designated as the capital of South Papua Province, serves as a compelling focal point for policy evaluation. Geographically, Merauke is the largest regency in the province, covering a massive expanse of 45,013.35 square kilometers—an area larger than many countries. Its topography is dominated by lowlands, extensive coastal swamps, and tidal reaches extending up to 60 kilometers inland. Beyond its unique geography, Merauke possesses a distinct socio-ecological fabric characterized by the presence of the Malind Anim indigenous community, whose customary lands (hak ulayat) and traditional livelihoods are deeply intertwined with the natural environment (Enala et al., 2024). Simultaneously, Merauke is experiencing rapid developmental dynamics, with intensifying investments in large-scale infrastructure, commercial plantations, and industrial zones (Pemerintah Provinsi Papua Selatan, 2025). This rapid economic expansion exerts immense pressure on the local environment, making the AMDAL process an indispensable tool for preventing irreversible ecological and social disruption.

Despite the critical importance of the AMDAL process, regional implementation in Merauke faces substantial hurdles. Data from the Merauke Regency Environmental Agency (Dinas Lingkungan Hidup / DLH) from 2023 to 2025 reveals a concerning discrepancy in service efficiency. While the standard operating procedure (SOP) derived from national regulations mandates a maximum service time of 63 working days for processing an AMDAL document, the actual completion time in Merauke averages a staggering 162 working days (Dinas Lingkungan Hidup Kabupaten Merauke, 2025). This massive temporal gap indicates underlying systemic frictions ranging from inadequate human resource capacity and poor inter-agency coordination to the complexities of gathering primary data in remote areas and resolving socio-cultural conflicts during public consultations.

Academically, the literature evaluating the new Environmental Approval regime remains heavily skewed towards normative and juridical analyses (Ningsih, Frinaldi, & Rembrandt, 2024; Halim, 2025). Previous studies have predominantly focused on the legal implications of shifting from permits to approvals, the integration of precautionary principles (Cahyani & Anditya, 2024), and the macro-level decline in public participation (Broto Laksito, Bawono, & Ikrimah, 2024). There is a distinct empirical void regarding how the pre-approval AMDAL process is actually administered at the regional regency level post-2021, particularly in geographically and demographically complex areas like South Papua. Existing empirical studies often focus solely on the post-approval compliance of RKL-RPL implementation (Akbar, 2025; Yuliansyah, 2024), overlooking the critical procedural and substantive bottlenecks that occur during document formulation and review.

Therefore, this study aims to bridge this empirical gap by conducting a comprehensive policy evaluation of the AMDAL process as the basis for Environmental Approval in Merauke Regency. By employing William N. Dunn's public policy evaluation framework, this research specifically seeks to: (1) empirically evaluate the level of effectiveness of the AMDAL process across five dimensions (procedural accuracy, timeliness, substantive quality, coordination, and public participation); and (2) identify the dominant supporting factors and structural hindrances that shape this effectiveness. The findings are intended to contribute to the discourse on regional environmental administration and provide actionable policy recommendations for optimizing public service delivery in frontier regions.

2. Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

2.1. Public Policy and Policy Evaluation

Public policy is fundamentally defined as a purposive course of action established by governmental actors to address specific public problems (Anderson, 2011). It is not merely a statement of intent, but represents concrete governmental interventions backed by legal authority and coercive power, aimed at improving societal welfare (Dye, 2017; Islamy, 2018). The policy cycle typically encompasses agenda-setting, formulation, adoption, implementation, and evaluation. Among these, evaluation holds a critical position, as it assesses the merit, worth, and utility of the policy actions taken, providing feedback loops necessary for systemic improvement.

William N. Dunn (2018) posits that policy evaluation is the process of generating valid and reliable information regarding policy performance. Evaluation moves beyond simply asking what happened or how it happened; it asks whether the outcomes are valuable and adequate. Dunn outlines six foundational criteria for evaluating public policy performance: (1) Effectiveness (whether the policy achieved its intended results); (2) Efficiency (the ratio of effort/resources to effectiveness, typically measured in time or cost); (3) Adequacy (the extent to which the achieved effectiveness actually resolves the underlying problem); (4) Equity (the fairness in the distribution of costs and benefits among different societal groups); (5) Responsiveness (the degree to which the policy satisfies the actual needs, preferences, and values of the target groups); and (6) Appropriateness (the overarching value or worth of the program's objectives). In this study, Dunn's criteria are operationalized to measure the multifaceted dimensions of the AMDAL process.

Complementing Dunn's framework, Lester and Stewart (2000) conceptualize policy evaluation through an evolutionary input-process-output-outcome chain. In the context of environmental approvals, the submission of AMDAL documents constitutes the input; the review, coordination, and consultation represent the process; the issuance of the Environmental Approval is the output; and the long-term preservation of ecological balance is the outcome. Furthermore, Evert Vedung (1997) contributes significantly to the understanding of 'responsiveness' by distinguishing between 'pseudo-responsiveness' (where public input is solicited merely to fulfill formal administrative requirements) and 'genuine responsiveness' (where public aspirations actively shape policy decisions). This distinction is highly relevant when evaluating public consultations in the AMDAL process.

2.2. Environmental Governance and Public Administration

The administration of environmental policy must be understood through the lens of evolving public administration paradigms. Traditional Old Public Administration (OPA), characterized by hierarchical, command-and-control bureaucracy (Weber, 1978), proved insufficient for managing complex ecological issues. The subsequent shift to New Public Management (NPM) emphasized efficiency, performance metrics, and rapid service delivery (Hood, 1991). However, the contemporary paradigm of New Public Service (NPS) argues that the primary role of government is not to steer or manage efficiently, but to serve the public interest through democratic engagement, collaboration, and the recognition of diverse societal values (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2003; Frederickson, 1997).

These paradigms intersect with the concept of Environmental Governance, which Lemos and Agrawal (2006) define as the mechanisms, processes, and rules through which state and non-state actors interact to govern the natural environment. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1997) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP, 2019) emphasize that 'Good Environmental Governance' rests on the pillars of broad-based participation, systemic transparency, strict accountability, operational efficiency, and the unwavering rule of law. Furthermore, effective environmental governance requires 'multi-level governance' (Pierre & Peters, 2000) and 'collaborative governance' (Kooiman, 2003), necessitating seamless coordination

between local environmental agencies, sectoral departments, private initiators, and affected communities.

2.3. Previous Studies and Research Gap

A growing body of literature has examined Indonesia's environmental policy shifts following the Job Creation Law. Ningsih, Frinaldi, and Rembrandt (2024) highlighted the administrative challenges arising from the nomenclature shift from Environmental Permits to Environmental Approvals, noting significant gaps in local regulatory infrastructure. Cahyani and Anditya (2024) emphasized the continued relevance of the precautionary principle in AMDAL studies, asserting that document compilation must involve deep analytical rigor rather than mere procedural compliance. Kartikasari (2025) and Putra and Oktaviana (2025) focused on the juridical implications of new mining and environmental laws, noting that despite regulatory proliferation, environmental degradation and marginalization of participatory rights persist.

Regarding public participation, Broto Laksito, Bawono, and Ikrimah (2024) identified a structural reduction in community involvement in AMDAL preparation, driven by restricted information access and the dominance of corporate interests. Halim (2025) and Silam et al. (2023) argued that public participation in Indonesia remains largely procedural (tokenistic) rather than substantive, particularly affecting marginalized groups. Meanwhile, evaluation studies by Akbar (2025) and Yuliansyah (2024) focused on the post-approval phase, analyzing the effectiveness of RKL-RPL implementation during the operational phases of specific projects (e.g., toll roads, mining).

Despite these contributions, a prominent gap remains: there is a scarcity of empirical, mixed-methods policy evaluations assessing the pre-approval AMDAL review process at the regional level, specifically measuring procedural efficiency, institutional coordination, and substantive review quality in geographically expansive and culturally distinct areas like South Papua. This study fills that gap by deploying Dunn's criteria to measure the exact administrative mechanisms occurring within the Regional Environmental Agency prior to the issuance of the Environmental Approval.

3. Research Methods

This study utilized a descriptive quantitative approach integrated with evaluative survey methods (Creswell, 2014; Sugiyono, 2017). The objective was not to test causal hypotheses via inferential statistics, but to systematically measure and describe the effectiveness of the AMDAL process based on stakeholder perceptions, culminating in actionable policy formulations (Sholahuddin, 2021).

The research was conducted at the Environmental Agency (DLH) of Merauke Regency, focusing on the administrative and technical processes involved in reviewing AMDAL documents up to the issuance of the Environmental Approval. The population consisted of a limited, specialized group of stakeholders directly involved in the AMDAL process between 2023 and 2025. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select 51 respondents who met specific inclusion criteria (active involvement in at least one AMDAL review cycle). The sample intentionally represented five distinct stakeholder groups to ensure balanced perspectives: DLH and Technical Team members (n=16, 31.4%); Technical/Sectoral Agencies (n=13, 25.5%); Project Initiators/Business Owners

(n=11, 21.6%); Community Representatives/NGOs (n=6, 11.8%); and AMDAL Consultants (n=5, 9.8%).

Primary data were collected via a structured questionnaire. To minimize central tendency bias and force definitive evaluation choices in a professional administrative context, a 3-point Likert scale was utilized (3 = Agree, 2 = Undecided/Neutral, 1 = Disagree), a method validated for focused descriptive evaluations (Boone & Boone, 2012; Dawes, 2008). The questionnaire comprised 25 closed statements divided equally across five operational indicators derived from Dunn's (2018) criteria: (1) Procedural Accuracy, (2) Timeliness of Completion, (3) Quality of Document Substance, (4) Inter-party Coordination, and (5) Information Disclosure and Public Participation. Additionally, four open-ended questions were included to capture qualitative thematic data regarding specific obstacles and suggestions.

Data analysis was conducted by calculating the Actual Score against the Maximum Potential Score to derive an Achievement Percentage for each indicator and the overall process. The results were categorized based on specific intervals: 'Very Effective' (77.78% – 100%), 'Effective' (55.56% – 77.77%), and 'Less Effective' (33.33% – 55.55%). To identify dominant factors, gap analysis and cross-tabulations were performed across respondent groups, supplemented by qualitative thematic coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006) of the open-ended responses to explain the numerical outcomes.

4. Results

4.1. Overall Effectiveness of the AMDAL Process

The empirical measurement of the 51 respondents across 25 statement items yielded a total Actual Score of 3,531 out of a Maximum Score of 3,825. This equates to an overall achievement percentage of 92.31%, firmly placing the AMDAL process in Merauke Regency within the 'Very Effective' category. At a macro level, this indicates that the foundational objectives of Government Regulation No. 22 of 2021 regarding environmental assessments are being adequately translated into regional administrative practices.

However, aggregating the data conceals significant variances among the five measured dimensions. Table 1 presents the breakdown of scores per indicator, revealing a distinct structural pattern: while four indicators form a high-performing cluster (above 92%), the timeliness indicator lags significantly behind.

Table 1.

Overall Effectiveness of the AMDAL Process by Indicator

Rank	Indicator	Actual Score	Maximum Score	Achievement (%)
1	Procedural Accuracy	747	765	97.65%
2	Inter-party Coordination	743	765	97.12%
3	Information Disclosure & Participation	714	765	93.33%

4	Quality of Document Substance	705	765	92.16%
5	Timeliness of Completion	622	765	81.31%

Note. Primary Data Analysis (2026). N = 51 respondents.

4.2. Detailed Analysis of Indicators

Procedural Accuracy emerged as the highest-performing indicator (97.65%). The data shows near-unanimous agreement (239 'Agree' responses out of 255 potential responses across the 5 items) that the AMDAL stages, ranging from administrative verification to the final issuance of the Environmental Approval, are executed strictly according to national regulations. Notably, the specific item assessing whether Environmental Approvals are only issued after all prior AMDAL stages are fully satisfied received a perfect 100% agreement score, reflecting strong administrative discipline.

Inter-party Coordination ranked second (97.12%). In an impressive finding, this indicator received zero 'Disagree' responses across all groups. Coordination mechanisms within the Review Team (Tim Uji Kelayakan), communication of administrative deficiencies, and cross-sectoral synergy between the DLH and other technical agencies are perceived to function seamlessly.

Conversely, Timeliness of Completion constitutes the primary weakness (81.31%). Out of a total of 63 'Disagree' responses recorded across the entire study, 58 (92.06%) were concentrated in this single indicator. Specifically, items assessing the speed of document revision by initiators (78.43%) and the overall efficiency of the timeline leading to approval (77.78%) barely crossed the threshold for the 'Very Effective' category. This reflects the reality of the 162-day average processing time.

Quality of Document Substance (92.16%) and Information Disclosure & Participation (93.33%) displayed a unique pattern. While generating very few 'Disagree' responses, these two indicators accumulated the highest number of 'Undecided/Neutral' responses (56 and 49, respectively). This hesitancy points to qualitative concerns. For document substance, respondents expressed doubts regarding the operationality and verifiability of the RKL-RPL matrices. For participation, while information is transparently distributed, there is skepticism regarding the depth and meaningfulness of public consultations, particularly involving customary lands.

4.3. Cross-Tabulation and Gap Analysis

To understand the structural causes of these scores, a cross-tabulation by respondent group was conducted (see Table 2). The analysis reveals a sharp perceptual divide regarding Timeliness. The government actors bearing the administrative burden the DLH (75.4%) and Technical Agencies (73.8%) rated timeliness poorly, dropping into the 'Effective' rather than 'Very Effective' tier. Community representatives rated it even lower at 64.4%. Shockingly, Project Initiators (99.4%) and Consultants (100%) rated the time factor as near-perfect. This perceptual gap suggests that consultants measure time relative to their internal project milestones, whereas government and community actors experience the prolonged delays as bureaucratic stagnation.

Table 2

Cross-Tabulation of Achievement Percentage by Respondent Stakeholder Group

Evaluation Indicator	DLH (n=16)	Agencies (n=13)	Initiators (n=11)	Consultants (n=5)	Community (n=6)	Average (%)
Procedural Accuracy	97.9%	96.4%	100.0%	100.0%	93.3%	97.65%
Timeliness of Completion	75.4%	73.8%	99.4%	100.0%	64.4%	81.31%
Quality of Document Substance	91.7%	87.7%	100.0%	100.0%	82.2%	92.16%
Inter-party Coordination	96.7%	93.8%	100.0%	100.0%	97.8%	97.12%
Information Disclosure & Participation	92.9%	87.7%	100.0%	100.0%	88.9%	93.33%

Note. Primary Data Analysis (2026).

4.4. Thematic Analysis of Open-Ended Responses

Thematic coding of the qualitative open-ended questions triangulated the quantitative data. When asked to identify the dominant hindering factors, 33.3% of respondents cited the low capacity and competence of AMDAL consultants, and 31.4% cited prolonged delays during the document revision phases. These two issues are causally linked: incompetent consultants submit substandard initial documents, triggering extensive corrections from the DLH Review Team, which the consultants then take excessive time to rectify. Consequently, the bottleneck is not on the government's reviewing side, but on the initiators' submission and revision side.

Furthermore, 23.5% of respondents highlighted the complexities of public participation involving the Malind Anim indigenous communities. Navigating customary land rights (hak ulayat) and achieving Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) requires extensive, culturally sensitive negotiations that conventional 63-day administrative timelines fail to accommodate. Interestingly, despite the push for e-government, only 3.9% cited the national digital portal (AMDALnet) as a supporting factor, indicating severe underutilization of digital tracking tools in Merauke.

5. Discussion

The empirical findings of this study provide a nuanced evaluation of environmental administration in frontier regions, corroborating and challenging existing literature. Evaluated through Dunn's (2018) criteria, the AMDAL process in Merauke demonstrates high 'Effectiveness' (procedural adherence) and 'Equity/Appropriateness' (institutional coordination), yet falters significantly on 'Efficiency' (timeliness) and 'Responsiveness' (depth of public participation).

The pronounced gap between Procedural Accuracy (97.65%) and Timeliness (81.31%) underscores a classic public administration dilemma: the trade-off between bureaucratic rigor and operational speed (Hood, 1991). The 162-day processing reality reveals that the standardized national SOP of 63 days is misaligned with the spatial and socio-technical realities of Merauke. George C. Edward III's (1980) implementation theory highlights 'resources' as a critical determinant of policy success. This study validates that framework by demonstrating that the lack of resources—specifically the technical competence of AMDAL consultants hired

by project initiators—is the root cause of the temporal inefficiency. Poor quality inputs inevitably create administrative bottlenecks during the process phase, a dynamic also highlighted by Lester and Stewart (2000). The local DLH essentially functions as a stringent 'quality gate', refusing to pass substandard documents, which preserves ecological integrity but sacrifices administrative speed.

The findings regarding Information Disclosure and Participation (93.33% aggregate, but low community satisfaction) offer a textbook illustration of Evert Vedung's (1997) concept of 'pseudo-responsiveness'. While the DLH perfectly executes the formal requirement to announce projects and hold public consultation meetings (transparency), the actual dialogue often lacks substantive impact on project design. In the context of Merauke's Malind Anim community, where livelihoods are inseparable from customary forests and swamps, tokenistic consultation is inadequate. Good Environmental Governance (UNDP, 1997) and international standards demand genuine Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC). The study shows that attempting to shoehorn complex indigenous negotiations into rigid bureaucratic timelines frequently results in unresolved grievances, highlighting a gap in localized regulatory protocols (Putra & Oktaviana, 2025; Silam et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the hesitation expressed by technical agencies regarding the Quality of Document Substance specifically the RKL-RPL operability aligns with Cahyani and Anditya (2024), who argue that the precautionary principle is often diluted by vague environmental management matrices. If the RKL-RPL lacks measurable parameters (e.g., precise coordinates, specific biochemical thresholds, defined monitoring frequencies), the subsequent Environmental Approval becomes impossible to enforce during the post-approval compliance phase (Akbar, 2025; Yuliansyah, 2024). Therefore, ensuring RKL-RPL documents are empirically verifiable is non-negotiable for effective environmental governance (Lemos & Agrawal, 2006).

Finally, the high success of Inter-party Coordination (97.12%) demonstrates the successful application of 'collaborative governance' (Kooiman, 2003) and 'multi-level governance' (Pierre & Peters, 2000) within the local government ecosystem. The ability of the DLH to synergize with spatial planning, public works, and health agencies ensures that the AMDAL review is multidisciplinary. This strong institutional capital provides a solid

foundation for addressing the remaining deficiencies in time management and community engagement.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The policy evaluation of the AMDAL process as the basis for Environmental Approval in Merauke Regency reveals a dual narrative. On the one hand, the process demonstrates a high level of effectiveness in terms of procedural accuracy and inter-party coordination, with both dimensions scoring above 97%, indicating the strong institutionalization of Government Regulation No. 22 of 2021. The local government has successfully established robust administrative mechanisms and quality-control procedures for AMDAL assessment. On the other hand, the process continues to face substantial temporal inefficiencies, with an average completion time of 162 working days. These delays are primarily associated with the inadequate technical competence of environmental consultants, which frequently results in prolonged and repetitive document revision cycles. Furthermore, although formal mechanisms for transparency and public participation have been established, the substantive quality of community involvement, particularly in relation to indigenous customary lands, remains insufficient and requires a more culturally responsive and participatory approach.

To improve public service efficiency and ensure that Environmental Approvals function as substantive ecological safeguards rather than merely administrative outputs, several policy improvements are necessary. The Merauke Regency Government should establish tiered time-management Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that impose clear and enforceable deadlines not only on government reviewers but also on project initiators and environmental consultants responsible for document revisions. Such mechanisms should be accompanied by appropriate administrative disincentives to prevent continuous delays and strengthen accountability throughout the assessment process. At the same time, the Environmental Agency (DLH) should strengthen capacity-building and qualification requirements for AMDAL consultants by verifying professional certification, technical competence, and historical performance before document submission. Technical clinics or pre-submission consultations should also be institutionalized to identify potential deficiencies before documents enter the formal assessment process, thereby reducing repetitive revisions and improving overall processing efficiency.

Improvements are also required in the substantive quality and enforceability of environmental management instruments. The local government should develop standardized and locally relevant criteria for Environmental Management and Monitoring Plans (RKL-RPL), ensuring that proposed management measures contain specific, measurable, verifiable, and geographically appropriate indicators. Such standardization would facilitate more effective monitoring and enforcement after Environmental Approval has been granted. Equally important is the institutionalization of localized Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) protocols that reflect the social and cultural characteristics of the Malind Anim community. Regional regulatory mechanisms should ensure that consultations concerning customary lands are conducted meaningfully, culturally appropriately, and transparently, with community consent adequately documented before the technical AMDAL assessment proceeds. In parallel, comprehensive digitalization through AMDALnet should be optimized to facilitate

real-time tracking of document submissions, strengthen accountability for processing timelines, improve coordination among sectoral agencies, and expand public access to relevant environmental information.

Overall, strengthening the AMDAL process in Merauke Regency requires an integrated approach that simultaneously addresses procedural efficiency, technical capacity, environmental management quality, meaningful indigenous participation, and digital governance. These improvements are essential to transform AMDAL from a predominantly administrative compliance mechanism into an effective instrument for environmental protection, accountable public service delivery, and sustainable development. Nevertheless, this study is geographically limited to Merauke Regency and primarily evaluates the pre-approval stage of the AMDAL process. Future research should therefore extend the analysis across multiple regions and employ longitudinal approaches to examine whether improvements in AMDAL procedures translate into stronger post-approval environmental compliance, more effective implementation of RKL-RPL commitments, and measurable reductions in socio-ecological conflicts within frontier development areas.

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