



Ibu Kota Baru for a new Indonesia.

An Analysis of the Project of the
New Indonesian Capital through
Government Tweets



**Universiteit
Leiden**
The Netherlands

Research Master in Asian Studies
Faculty of Humanities

Student: Giulia Frigo
Student Number: s2110857
Supervisor: Dr David Henley
Second Reader: Dr Rizal Shidiq
Words: 30724
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Declaration

I hereby declare that the content of this thesis is my original work, it has been written by me, and it has not been submitted for any degree at university previously.

I have acknowledged all the sources of information used for the thesis.



Giulia Frigo

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Cover Photos: courtesy of Adrian Pranata (Jakarta, on the top) and Chris Abney (area covered with green-leafed plant, on the bottom), both retrieved from [Unsplash](#) High-Resolution Photo. Joko Widodo (on the centre), retrieved from Joko Widodo personal Twitter account

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Abstract

On the 17th of April 2019, Indonesia held the general elections. The President Joko Widodo (“Jokowi”) won 55,5% of the vote, beating the former general Prabowo Subianto representing Gerindra Party for the second time, the first in 2014. Less than two weeks after the victory, the re-elected President announced its intention to relocate the nation's capital from Jakarta, located in Java island, to a greenfield site on the island of Kalimantan.

In this thesis, I use Twitter communication emanating from the Indonesian Ministry of National Development Planning and the office of the President to dissect the official rationale for this historic initiative and to investigate on the political and ideological discourse surrounding it. What is the Indonesian government trying to achieve through this project? What ideals and political priorities does it reflect? Is there consistency in the official discourse? My analysis is both quantitative and qualitative; it is quantitative because I used large numbers of tweets to measure the frequency which a variety of terms is used to describe both the desirable characteristics of the new capital, and the undesirable aspects of the old one. It is partly qualitative because I investigated and critically reflected on the results found on Twitter to understand better the motifs behind the decision of moving the capital, and be able to answer my research questions.

The results show that Jakarta has been abandoned because it does not represent the Indonesian aspirations of modernity, reflected on the smart, sustainable and green imaginaries that the new capital will promote. Indeed, the tweet analysis revealed that these three elements are the most desirable features for the new capital of Indonesia and are the emblem of the type of modernity and progress that the Indonesian government is aspiring to. This is confirmed by the fact that the mentions to smart, green and sustainable are not clear nor justified. These terms appear to be used as buzzwords, almost as if it they were interchangeable. In conclusion, I argue that these features are all instrumental for expressing modernity and progress (*Maju*). This is the real objective of the government. “The city of dreams”, as I renamed it, imagines a flawless and perfect city, symbol of the progress of the whole country; the truth is that it is only a *symbol*, and the country will not progress in smartness, greenness, sustainability and equality if not through real policies and measures that tackle the local problems.

Besides these attributes, the government claimed that the new capital would bring to more regional equality and economic growth. In this regard, the Indonesian government has also tweeted about Brasilia and its similarities with the new Indonesian capital, praising the design and the outcome of the project; like Brasilia, the new capital is seen as a means to cope with ongoing economic imbalance among the different regions of Indonesia. Although regional equality is, of course, an issue that the government needs to tackle, the increase of GDP outside Java will not benefit the whole population unless there is a real will to tackle inequality not only geographically but also across income groups. Besides, it is essential to remember that the gap between the rich and the poor in Jakarta is substantial and moving the capital will not represent a solution to this problem. Furthermore, the comparison with Brasilia was fundamental to notice a crucial

paradox in the project of *Ibu Kota Baru*: by promoting a modern and futuristic capital, *Ibu Kota Baru* implicitly indicates a refusal of existing conditions of Indonesia, just as like Brasilia did.

To conclude, it is important to mention that this thesis is about ideology. In essence, it does not seek to analyse the hidden personal interests and oligarchic business strategies on the project of the capital, although this has been briefly pointed out. The ultimate aim is to dissect the official rhetoric and rationale that surround this project to find the political ideals and desirable features that the project reflects, and inconsistencies in the discourse.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the study and initial communication

On the 17th of April 2019, Indonesia held the general elections. The president, the vice president, members of the People's Consultative Assembly, and members of local legislative bodies were elected on the same day for the first time. The President Joko Widodo ("Jokowi"), from the PDI-P (*Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle*), was running for re-election against the former general Prabowo Subianto representing Gerindra Party. Mr Widodo won 55,5% of the vote, beating Prabowo for the second time, the first in 2014. Less than two weeks after the victory, the re-elected President Joko Widodo announced his decision to move the capital of Indonesia away from the overpopulated Java island. The specific location, East Kalimantan, has only been announced on the 26th of August. The President Joko Widodo has given to understand a sense of urgency in the project, saying that the construction will already start in 2020 and that the capital will be completed by 2024 (Springer 2019, Johansyah et al. 2019).

According to the Indonesian Ministry of National Development Planning (Bappenas), East Kalimantan is a good location because situated in the centre of Indonesia and it is the only Indonesian island not standing in the Pacific Ring of Fire, where earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are frequent. Besides natural disasters, Kalimantan seems less susceptible to external threats (e.g. military threats from state actors that might damage the unity of Indonesia, and threats from non-state actors like robberies, cyber-attacks, criminality) and social conflicts. Furthermore, there is a sufficient amount of water and land. The government has also considered the good level of democracy, religious harmony, and human development (Moeldoko 2019, Bappenas 2019a).

The President has anticipated that the project will cost around US \$33 billion, causing critiques among the population (Johansyah et al. 2019, Anugrah 2019, Springer 2019). The government has thus made clear that only 10-20% of the amount will be funded by the state budget (*Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Negara*, APBN). The private sector (*swasta*), the state-owned enterprises (*Badan Usaha Milik Negara*, BUMN), as well as business entities (*Kerja Sama Pemerintah dan Badan Usaha*, KPBU) will play the central role in the budget. The APBN will only be used initially for government offices. The BUMN will be used to improve the airport and ports. The private will be used for constructing public housings, service facilities (e.g. hospitals and school), green parks and shopping malls and the KPBU budget will be employed for buildings not covered by APBN and entertainments sites like museums (Bappenas 2019a).

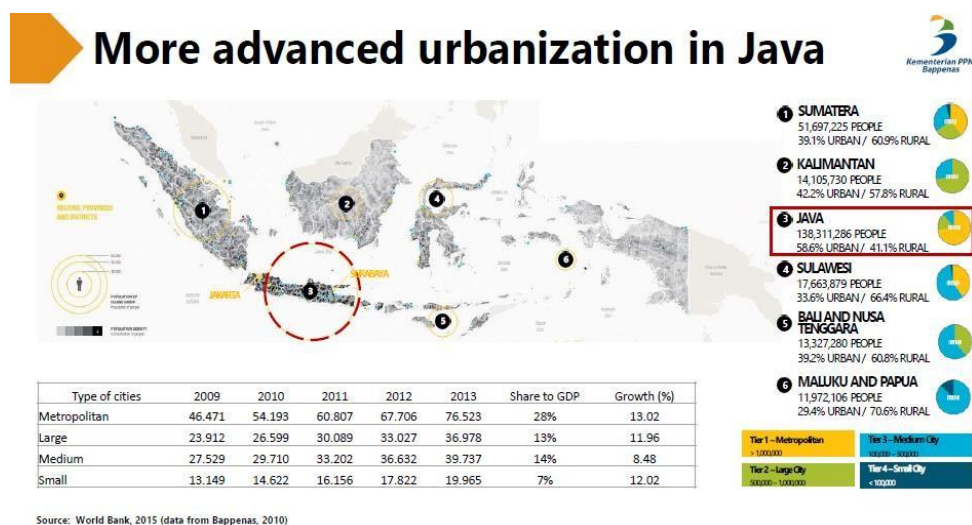
The New Capital is designed for no more than 1 million and 500 thousand people, 300 thousand of whom are government employees. The land required for the new capital is approximately 180.000 hectares and,

although all the buildings will be built from scratch, *Ibu Kota Baru* will be close to two existing cities, Balikpapan and Samarinda, with the all necessary supporting facilities like airport and ports (Moeldoko 2019).

From April on, thousands of news have been published by both Indonesian and International journals, questioning the motifs and implications of the relocation. One should not read much before understanding the two primary discourses around *Ibu Kota Baru*: the first is that Jakarta is too crowded and polluted, the second is that the new capital will be, for some reasons not clearly explained, green and sustainable. The government has indeed nicknamed the new capital “Forest city” (in English), thus underlining the fact that nature is an important element and it will be preserved through the inclusion of authentic parts of forests in the city (Bappenas 2019b, Bappenas 2019c).

1.2 An envisioned smart and green development

In the last few years, the Indonesian government has proved to be aware of the main challenges produced by the high unbalanced urbanization. The graph created by the Ministry of Development and Planning in charge from 2014 to 2019 (Figure 1.1) shows Java as the most populated island, where 58,8% of the people live in urban areas, while the demographic and urbanization level of the other islands are low. Uncontrolled urbanization might not bring to additional economic growth should this being focused in only one area.



Crowded cities are indeed facing problems related to pollution and overpopulation, which brought the government to envision a New Urban Agenda (NUA)¹ in 2016 in order to create liveable, competitive, green and resilient cities. The main principles are listed in Figure 1.2. According to government documents (Director for Urban Affairs, Housing and Settlement 2014-19, Nurbaya 2019, Bappenas 2019 n.d, Kedeputusan Bidang

¹ The NUA was adopted during the United Nation Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) Conference in Quito, Ecuador, on the 20th of October 2016. This agenda gives a framework for a better and more sustainable urbanization. It emphasises urban ecology and environmental protection, inclusion and equality, spatial development, basic services (Salim and Hudalah 2019, United Nations 2017)

Pengembangan Regional 2016), a smart and green development can help in decreasing disparity and alleviate poverty. Technology and innovation also seem to play an important role to reach the goal of an inclusive sustainable development and move beyond the natural resource exploitation upon which Indonesian economy is currently relying to (Salim and Hudalah 2019). Minister Bambang Brodjonegoro stated that Indonesia is successfully integrating urban principles with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), among which poverty alleviation, affordable clean energy, clean water and sanitation, decent employment and equitable economic growth, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, and climate action (Bappenas 2018).

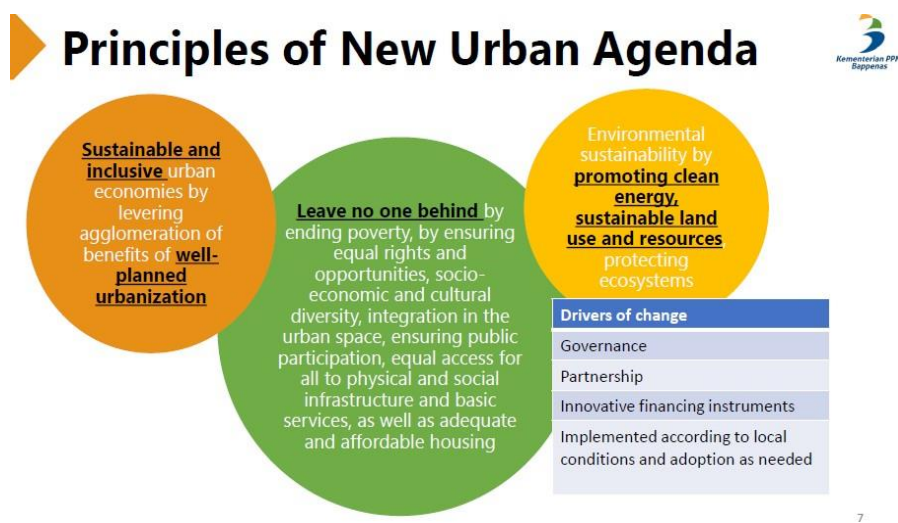


Figure 1.2 Principles of New Urban Agenda. Source: Director for Urban Affairs, Housing and Settlement (Bappenas 2014-19)

It thus emerges that the strong emphasis given to sustainability and climate change worldwide in the last decade has also influenced the Indonesian policy. Nevertheless, with a population increasing by 3 million per year, adopting the NUA is of course not an easy task for Indonesia. Indonesia ambition of long-term sustainable development goals needs to face the challenges of a growing population and unemployment rate, as well as the omnipresence of low-cost productions that do not meet the environmental standard (Salim and Hudalah 2019). Despite the ongoing dispute between environmental commitment and economic growth - especially in Kalimantan, prominent producer of palm oil and mining but also home to lush tropical forests - it is in any case remarkable that Indonesia is embracing principles of sustainable and inclusive development.

1.2.1 Research question

This new agenda is also reflected in the discourse around *Ibu Kota Baru*, where the focus on sustainability and greenness is glaring and widespread in the news. Although it is easy to see the significant role played by

sustainability, it is not clear *why* it is so essential for the capital. There must be other, more profound motifs behind this choice. The decision of leaving Jakarta in the promise of a brand-new capital does not match the promotion of a sustainable and inclusive development for all, especially in times where Jakarta is sinking. I thus argue that the strategic political discourse constructed by the government for promoting the new capital is more complicated than the sustainability statement.

Investigating on political communication is, by implication, central to understand what is promoted as necessary for the new capital and why the whole discourse is framed as such. Such investigation allows us to unravel the official discourse, evaluating whether the promoted features and aspirations of the new capital are consistent and whether there are more facets and purposes behind the official words.

Summing up the points above, I developed the following research question:

- *What is the Indonesian government trying to achieve by creating a new capital city?*

As mentioned before, East Kalimantan is known for its marvellous tropical forest but also its constant destruction due to palm oil plantation and mining concession. Tropical forest loss in Borneo has long attracted international media attention, which has for long depicted Indonesia as a country neglectful towards global warming and biodiversity loss (Nugroho et al. 2018, Harris et al. 2008, Johansyah et al. 2019, Munthe 2019, Singgih 2018, Rusmana 2019). Building a sustainable, smart and green capital in the place where these attributes have always been neglected might be a way to dispose of, or at least balance, the negative idea that surrounds Borneo destruction. Furthermore, not fixing Jakarta is in contrast with the principles of a sustainable and inclusive development and the elaborated New Urban Agenda. As it seems that the government is trying to convince the population (or even the international community) that the choice of moving is beneficial for Jakarta overpopulation and Indonesia as a whole (Bappenas 2019a, Bappenas 2019b, Bappenas 2019c), it is crucial to ascertain the effectiveness of this statement. This thesis will thereby try to answer the following sub-questions:

- What undesirable characteristics does Jakarta possess according to official communication?
- What desirable features will the new capital possess according to official communication?
- What is the specific importance and meaning of greenness and sustainability among the desired characteristics?

- How practical and effective is the new capital likely to be as a way of pursuing its stated and implied objectives?

- Who is likely to benefit from the creation of the new capital?
- What future is envisaged for Jakarta?

1.3 Purpose and significance of the study

This thesis aims to expand the understanding around the project of the new capital, shedding light on the government's intention and realistic or unrealistic perspectives. Not only does it consider the notion of

sustainability and why it is connected to the new capital, but it also tries to find other aspects and attributes promoted for *Ibu Kota Baru*, gauging their prominence through the creation of quantifiable data. Although this thesis cannot cover a period longer than seven months, it nevertheless aims to find trends on political communication. Future research can employ this data to view at the consistency of the political discourse throughout time and develop their research based on solid foundations.

This thesis has social and academic relevance. It is socially important because the moving of the capital will likely bring changes in Indonesia: from a country where Jakarta is the centrepiece of every aspect of the society, to a more “Indonesia-centric” view that considers Indonesia as a whole. Given its role in being the centre of government and business, Jakarta has been the most targeted place for civil movements, mass mobilization events, protests and riots (Illmer 2019, The Guardian 2019, The Straits Times 2019, Maerhanjati 2017). Should the seats of government move to Kalimantan, people’s requests and complaints would be much less perceived by the government, unless they are organized in the new capital. The moving of the capital is also relevant because it marks a new era: from the XVII century, Jakarta (*Batavia* at that time) was chosen as the capital of the Dutch East Indies Companies. Moving the capital would thereupon signify to cut the ties with the colonial past. *Ibu Kota Baru* is also interesting for its promoted eco-friendliness: as mentioned above, it is the first time in the Indonesian history that a city is designed to be so different and with innovative attributes such as those of greenness and smartness. Unless the capital is a sample for the other cities, the urban plan of the capital will remain unique. This, of course, deserves attention. Understanding the motifs promoted – and behind – this choice is also beneficial to comprehend the possible impact of the capital in the region, especially in protected areas. The new capital will likely drive more urbanization, and migrant workers might come to find a living there. Unless this is taken into account by the government, it is hard to affirm that the new urban area will be entirely eco-friendly. As the new capital is deemed to ease the problems of Jakarta, it is crucial to analyse the effectiveness and consistency of the relocation as it will likely affect millions of people. All things considered, analysing the project and communications developed for the capital is a socially relevant task.

The thesis also has academic relevance. Although the fact that there are not many academic sources published up to now could be a challenge, it might also be beneficial as long as the originality and freshness of this work is concerned. Indeed, this project might be a first attempt to analyse the political discourse that surround the capital, proposing insights and contributions to a very new topic in Indonesian studies. As this thesis looks at political communication, contributions are given to the fields of political science and communication. The idea of the new capital is now the most prominent project in Indonesia, and it is going to have a strong social impact, so it needs to be understood and studied by scholars of different disciplines, including political scientists. The political communication used to promote and justify the moving of the capital is at the core of the analysis, so of course, this field will benefit from this thesis, especially because political communication studies has not very often considered the Indonesian context.

The project also sheds light on the perception and usage of “sustainability” by political elites. The use of sustainability and green appeals in political communication has not covered much attention in academic research. Although materials are available regarding “climate change” and “sustainable development” in political communication (Perez 2019, Hammond 2018, Kim and Cooke 2018, Muhingi et al. 2015), and in the greening of architecture (Vandevyvere and Heynen 2014, Stein 2010, Tabb and Deviren 2013), the investigation on why “sustainability”, “greenness” and “smartness” have gained so much importance over the last few years is still weak. This paper will attempt to do so by understanding why these characteristics are so much praised and how and why the Indonesian government is showing that the new Capital will be an environmentally friendly project, stifling the common fear of forest destruction. Research that connects politics to these new appeals are an urgent desideratum, and it will be increasingly important in the future.

A last but not least contribution is given to social media studies as the analytical tool employed in this analysis to investigate political communication is Twitter. Very few times in the Indonesian context has political communication been analysed using Twitter as an investigative tool, let alone outside the context of elections. I consider this methodology not only original and suitable to answer the research questions, but also a valid contributor to the use of media in politics, which will be increasingly important in the future. Twitter appears to be the most valid tool to investigate the government’s discourse and avoid frames from the news media.

1.4 Limitations

This project presents both limitations and contributions. There are two main limitations. The first is of course time: Indonesia has announced the new capital only after the April 2019 election, and, although many news was posted, the urban planning has not been designed yet. The government has mentioned several times that constructions will start in 2020, so maps will likely be available soon. More importantly, in October 2019 the government has opened a design competition for *Ibu Kota Baru*, calling experts in architecture and urban planning to develop an original design for the new capital (Kencana 2019, Budiawati 2019). The winning team will be announced at the end of 2019 or early 2020. Despite the desire of analysing the correspondences between the initial political communication and the practical design, this master’s thesis cannot cover such a long and intense period. In this thesis, I performed a critical analysis of the Indonesian government discourse for *Ibu Kota Baru* before the announcement of the winning project. There is a need for further research that compares the analysed political communication to the real urban plan and construction. Tweets were gathered from April to end of October 2019. The president and Bappenas keep writing tweets about *Ibu Kota Baru* on a weekly basis, and many information have been posted after I completed the collection of the tweets. Although I would have added intriguing tweets that have been written later to this period, I abided by the time set so as not to confuse the previously gathered data and designed tables. Time constraints have also influenced the decision of only using Twitter as the main investigative tool and primary

data. If I had more time and no world restriction, not only more tweets would have been considered but also other social networks like Facebook and Instagram, that are also used by the government.

The second limitation is the lack of academic sources: although I utilized international and local journals as well as government official documents and NGOs reports, academic articles are lacking. It would likely take some more time for these to be published. Despite this challenge, I have looked to other countries that recently moved their capital to find academic sources, samples and similarities. Some of these new capitals are also mentioned on Twitter by Bappenas as models to consider for the new city. Should this project develop into a PhD, available academic sources and additional materials will, of course, be included.

1.5 Organization of the study

The thesis is subdivided into seven chapters. This first chapter introduced the topic as well as the research questions, aims and significance of the thesis; it also highlighted the limitations and contributions of the study. The second chapter introduces the relevant conceptual basis and the methodology employed. This theoretical chapter is useful to understand how the analysis has been developed and how the Twitter analysis is used to answer the research questions. Taking into account that not everyone might know what exactly Twitter is, a brief explanation of Twitter and its usage is also reported. The third, fourth and fifth chapters present the results obtained from the analysis of the tweets. These chapters report the data found without adding any further information or reflections. Every prominent rationale regarding the capital relocation indicated by the government is listed and explained. While these chapters are meant only to report the results detected from the analysis, the sixth chapter examines, comments and interprets the data. The motifs behind the moving and the promoted qualities for the new capital are discussed and revealed. This chapter also deals with Brasilia, the primary model for *Ibu Kota Baru*, and Jakarta, the abandoned capital. The seventh chapter concludes the analysis, but instead of summarizing the notions developed up to here, it critically comments on the sponsored regional equality, and issues related to elitism, democracy and the environment.

2. Concepts and Methodology

2.1 Theoretical framework

Communication has been studied by a series of different disciplines, such as political science, sociology, psychology and economics. Since communication is such an interdisciplinary field of study, core concepts might be difficult to uphold and be valid for all the disciplines. The concept of “framing” is considered one of the most valuable and acceptable across disciplines, and indeed it has become one of the most used keywords in communication studies (Matthes 2011, Powell 2011, Chong and Druckman 2007). According to Entman (1993:52), to “frame” means to select one or some particular aspects of the perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in order to promote a specific defined problem, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and solutions of it. Frames (or “schemata of interpretation”) are culturally constructed, they evolved, and they guide how government elites and media construct information. Every story has an angle, and information is understood and managed through the frames created by this angle (Powell 2011, Goffman 1974). Therefore, an issue can be viewed from different perspectives and constructed intentionally. How a fact is framed changes how people perceive the reality. Let us make some examples: wearing the *hijab* can be conceptualized as a symbol of gender inequality and women subjection, but it can also be seen as a religious expression and women choice. By the same token, abortion can be framed as a murder or the women’s right to choose.

Entman (1993) explains that a frame starts with a *communicator* (e.g. in this case, Joko Widodo/ Bappenas), which makes judgements by deciding what to say and why something needs to be done (e.g. moving the capital because Jakarta is overpopulated). These assertions are organized into a discourse or *text*, containing frames, judgments, stereotypes and supported decisions. The delivered message reaches a *receiver*, whose conclusions may validate or otherwise the argument of the communicator. Frames are essential in political communication because they determine how a topic is framed by politicians, re-framed by news media and perceived by people (Pan and Kosicki 1993). The receiver might not agree with the delivered political message, but they memorize it and act upon it. Thus, frames show a specific interpretation and solution of issues encountered in reality, drawing attention on strategic aspects while removing others from the eyes of the public (Froehlich and Rudiger 2005). Matthes 2011 distinguished four fields of framing: strategic framing (the “frames developers”, such as politicians), journalistic framing (who process the information), media framing and framing of individual audience members. This thesis focuses on strategic framing, where political communication is at the core of the analysis. “[Politicians] develop their own frames about an issue and try to establish these in public discourse and the news media” (Matthes 2011:127). To frame is to actively construct the meaning of the reality in question and achieve political potency in influencing public deliberation (Hänggli and Kriesi 2010, Pan and Kosicki 2003). In order to convince that moving the capital is the right choice and avoid antagonisms and protests, political actors have to frame the

issue strategically. However, not only politicians deliver frames but also, and especially, news media (journalistic and media framing). Media plays an essential role in informing the audience and more than everything affects people's perception, thereby influencing the idea of international relations and foreign and domestic policies (Bossetta 2018, Froehlich and Rudiger 2005, Pan and Kosicki 1993, Matthes 2009). A way to skip media framing and analyse communications of politicians is using Twitter as an investigative tool.

This thesis will also pay attention to the widely used word of sustainability. Although sustainability has been used in many fields of study and so it is difficult to define it, paying attention to what this concept symbolizes – along with green and smart – and why politicians use it, it is more important than understanding what sustainability is. Ultimately, the definition of sustainability is framed by what communicators display as the definition of sustainable. That is to say, important is to understand how the Indonesian government frames sustainability, so what it implies with this widely used word.

2.2 What is Twitter?

Twitter is a microblogging-based social media in which users can post short-text messages up to 140 characters, called *tweets* (Jungherr 2015, Murthy 2018). On Twitter, each user can *follow* other accounts to receive a notification once they tweet and stay updated. In this sense, microblogs like Twitter differ from social networks because here the relation is not mutual. That is to say, one person can follow a user without being followed respectively. Even if Twitter is restricted to 140 characters, it is possible to connect the tweets to broader themes or groups thanks to the use of hashtags. Tweets containing words preceded by a hash sign (#) are included in a larger conversation consisting of all tweets reporting the same hashtag. Hashtags emphasize some words, allowing the readers to grasp right away the topic of the tweet (Murthy 2018). Tweets can also be directed to an individual by using the sign "@" before the name (e.g. @Jokowi, @BappenasRI). It is also possible to *retweet* a user's message: by sharing it, the message appears in the timeline of the person who shared it, and it is thus visible to their followers. The retweet is one of the reasons why the information travels so fast on Twitter (Jungherr 2015). Each user profile has a timeline where all their posted tweets are included. For this analysis, I checked the President Joko Widodo (Twitter name: @Jokowi) and Bappenas (@BappenasRI) profile in order to find the tweets. Tweets are public – everyone can read them - and might contain emoticons, hyperlinks, images and videos. Table 2.1 provides a summary of the usage conventions on Twitter.

Usage convention	Description
@reply to another user	To address publicly other Twitter users, one precedes the text of a message with the username of the addressee and an @ (i.e. @username)
@mention of another user	One can also use the @username convention in the text of a message instead of the beginning, this is called an @mention
RT verbatim	A retweet (RT) is an exact copy quote of another tweet; to do this one copies the tweet and precedes it with the character string <i>RT @username</i>
RT modified	One can also comment or modify a quote message; this is called a modified retweet
#keywords	To establish an explicit context for a tweet, one can use keywords preceded by the # sign, so called hashtags
Links to other Web content (e.g. websites, pictures, videos et al.)	One can also post links in messages to content on the Web, these links are often shortened to accommodate Twitter's 140 character limit

Table 2.1. Usage conventions of Twitter. Source: Jungherr 2015

2.2.1 Political communication on Twitter

This research analyses the strategic political discourse that the Indonesian government has been employing regarding the moving of the capital of Indonesia. Globalization and information technologies are changing the world very fast, especially international communication and research. Twitter is one of the effects of this change. In recent years, the Internet and social media have changed how political communication is understood and realised. A great deal of research shows that there is an increasing number of politicians who use Twitter (Roth, Peters and Seruga 2013, Murthy 2018, Jungherr 2014, 2015, 2016). According to Lufkens (2016, cited in Murthy 2018), there are 793 Twitter accounts belonging to heads of state and government in 173 countries, representing 90% of all UN member states. The fact that people are writing tweets does not presume that all tweets are being read, but that these tweets are considered meaningful to the people who write them, as they know these might be read by influential people such as politicians, business companies. Not only is Twitter used by politicians for political campaigns but also regular political discussions, thus becoming a platform of daily use (Roth, Peters and Seruga 2013, Jungherr 2015). Even journalists are now using Twitter as a source of information.

One of the reasons why Twitter is so appealing for politicians is its fast and immediate nature. Through Twitter, the press is by-passed (and thus thousands of journalistic frames that rewrite the original message) and politicians can convey direct messages, allowing a more direct contact with citizens (Roth, Peters and Seruga 2013, Murthy 2013, Alonso-Muñoz, Marcos-Garcia, Caser-Ripolles 2016, Kim and Cooke 2018, Jungherr 2014). There are always more politicians who make use of this microblogging daily. Especially during political campaigns, Twitter is useful for politicians to give a distinct and personal touch, becoming a new medium to promote personalization in politics.

Contrary to what Hänggli and Kriesi claims (2010), I argue that, to some extent, political actors are no more dependent on news media to reach out people, although they still need support from the press to

“polish their images” to the audience. With Twitter, politicians are more influential on media coverage and have a more substantial influence on people’s perception thanks to the public and participatory nature of Twitter (Kim and Cooke 2018, Pal and Gonawela 2017, Murthy 2018).

While most studies have focused on political communication of Twitter in the US (Jungherr 2014, Bossetta 2018, Pan and Gonawela 2017, Stolee and Caton 2018), research that comprehends other countries is growing (Roth, Peters and Seruga 2013, Aljarallah 2017, Larsson and Moe 2011, Budiharto and Meiliana 2018, Mishra 2013). The effects, or desired effects, of the use of Twitter by politicians, seem to lie on the successful way to communicate the information directly to the audience, and it seems that politicians who tweet during political election tend to receive more support and positively influence people’s impression (Jungherr 2014 and 2016).

2.3 Methodology

This research analyses the tweets of the President Joko Widodo and the Indonesian Ministry of Development and Planning (Bappenas) as these are the main two official profiles who continuously post news about the new capital on Twitter. It is worth keeping in mind that both the Ministry and the President make an intensive use of social networks: Jokowi has more than 12 million followers on Twitter and 26 million on Instagram. Bappenas has 160 thousand on Twitter and 60 thousand on Instagram. The reasons why I pursued a Twitter analysis are twofold: first, the limit of one hundred characters “obliges” users to choose the message to convey so it is more direct and easier to classify; secondly, while Instagram and Facebook are more used among teenagers and common people, Twitter is used by prime ministers of almost all countries, and messages are thus more visible to the international community. Twitter has indeed become a powerful digital tool in political communication. To investigate what the Indonesian government is trying to promote and promise through the project of the new capital, an in-depth analysis of their official statements is, of course, the most appropriate tool. Although I have initially collected the documents from the official government website, I was particularly curious to see how the information was conveyed via social networks, especially on Twitter. Twitter is the preferable option not only to collect the features and values that the government is promoting for *Ibu Kota Baru*, but to thoroughly dig up the deep reasons for these features and values.

It is worth opening a parenthesis regarding the ongoing debate taking place on Twitter in connection with the establishment of the new capital. By only searching for the hashtags “#Ibukotabaru” or “#Ibukotapindah” - hashtags most commonly used - the number of tweets that appears is impressive. As there are many supporters and opponents, what the government writes is thus essential to attract supporters, weakening the convictions of the challengers. Although I initially analysed the hashtag “#Ibukotabaru” and “#Ibukotapindah” through apps that allow monitoring users, lists or (such as *Twitonomy*, *accountanalysis*, *foller.me*), I then decided to leave the computer-assisted approach behind as these hashtags have been

manipulated by entertainment companies or even pornography websites to reach more viewers. Hence, the data on #IbuKotaBaru are unreliable. This shows the massive popularity of the topic on Twitter and its misrepresented use. Furthermore, as I wanted to see how the government frames the moving of the capital, a manual approach is preferred to a computerized one. By doing so, I could select the specific tweets from Joko Widodo and Bappenas dealing with *Ibu Kota Baru*, avoiding issues of repetition and off-topic tweets. The next paragraph introduces the method used to find results and build the analysis.

2.3.1 Twitter analysis

For this thesis, I developed a content analysis of the tweets posted by Jokowi and Bappenas in regards to the moving of the capital of Indonesia. Generally speaking, content analysis is employed to determine the presence of certain words, themes or concepts within some given qualitative data (i.e. tweets). Researchers can thus quantify and analyse the presence, meanings and relationships of these. In the content analysis, the text must be broken down into codes, which can be then further categorized into broader “code categories” (Columbia University 2019, Krippendorf 2004, Holsti 1969). Therefore, I collected the tweets about the new capital on an Excel file and added the English translation below. For every tweet, at least one code was assigned; it was nevertheless quite common that a single tweet contained more than one code, so several arguments. Not all codes were considered in the analysis because not pertinent to answer the research question; some tweets were advisories or clarifications about the budget.

Tweets taken into consideration for this research cover about seven months (April-October 2019). The more a topic was mentioned, the more it was considered relevant. Using tweets made the codification and consequent quantification easy thanks to their shortness (i.e. 1 tweet = at least 1 code). In order to make a complete in-depth analysis of the tweets, both quantitative and qualitative analysis were used. In the first case, a thorough statistical analysis of the tweets was undertaken. This analysis was necessary to see exactly how many times certain concepts were mentioned in the tweets of the two profiles. Qualitative analysis followed the quantitative, where I reflected and interpreted the significance of the data found.

403 tweets were collected from the Twitter accounts of the Ministry @BappenasRI and President @Jokowi. I considered the ten steps proposed by Schneider (2013a) a good model to begin the analysis. Although I do not look at this project being part of the “discourse analysis” method, following these steps were essential to start collecting the data systematically. It is necessary to open a parenthesis regarding images. In the tweets, images were more often than not attached and were as important as regular texts, or even more relevant at times: because tweets are short, images attached can contain longer sentences or bigger font to emphasizing some points. Several scholars studied the importance of images on Twitter (Vempala and Preoțiu-Pietro 2019, Samani et al. 2018) as well as visual communication to interpret the text (Kress and Leween 2006, Barthes 1977, Halloran and Smith 2012). In this analysis, as Figure 2.1 shows, images mostly consisted of a background photo (usually depicting the President or the Minister Bambang

Brodjonegoro) reporting longer sentences. Images seem to be used as a means to provide a more extensive explanation that tweets would not be able to cover. As the images per se did not contain any additional meaning other than being the background of longer texts, I do not call this a “visual analysis”, as only in-text images have been considered for the analysis.

After significant trial and errors, all tweets have been coded and distributed into graphics. Let us give a practical example, although the method will be probably clearer once the results are reported in Chapter 3. Tweets reported the problems that Jakarta is suffering, such as air pollution and overpopulation. “Air pollution”, “overpopulation”

are examples of assigned codes. How the situation of Jakarta is framed is the broader category in which these codes (content analytical variables) are part. I named this frame “Disadvantages of having Jakarta as Capital City” (Table 2.2 is a sample retrieved from the analysis I developed²).



Figure 2.1. Sample of images used by the Indonesian government. Source: @BappenasRI, August 6, 2019. [Link](#)

TWEET + EMOJI	DAY	CODE 1	CODE 2	ATTACHED FILE
Pemindahan ibu kota ke provinsi di Kalimantan akan meningkatkan perdagangan antar wilayah, mencakup perdagangan di dalam provinsi #IbuKotaBaru, perdagangan antarprovinsi di Indonesia: dari P. Jawa ke provinsi luar Jawa dan antar provinsi di luar Jawa #DialogIKNKalimantan Moving the capital to the province in Kalimantan will increase trade between regions, including trade within the province #IbuKotaBaru , interprovincial trade in Indonesia: from P. Java to provinces outs+A80ide Java and between provinces outside Java #DialogIKNKalimantan	21-Aug	Features promoted for IKN	1. Economic development 2. Geographical inequalities	
Apa saja dampak ekonomi yang terjadi dengan adanya #IbuKotaBaru? Pemindahan Ibu Kota Negara Ke Kalimantan akan mendorong perdagangan antarwilayah di Indonesia. Lebih dari 50% wilayah Indonesia akan merasakan peningkatan arus perdagangan #DialogIKNKalimantan What are the economic impacts that occur with it #IbuKotaBaru ? The relocation of the National Capital to Kalimantan will encourage trade between regions in Indonesia. More than 50% of Indonesia will experience an increase in trade flows #DialogIKNKalimantan	21-Aug	Features promoted for IKN	1. Economic development 2. Geographical inequalities	
3. Jakarta rawan banjir 4. Sekitar 57% penduduk Indonesia terkonsentrasi di P. Jawa 5. Kontribusi ekonomi per pulau terhadap PDB nasional 6. Krisis air di P. Jawa, terutama Jakarta & Jawa Timur 7. Konversi lahan terbesar terjadi di P. Jawa 3. Jakarta is prone to flooding 4. About 57% of Indonesia's population is concentrated in Java Island 5. Economic contribution per island to national GDP 6. Water crisis in Java Island, especially Jakarta & East Java 7. The biggest land conversion occurs in Java Island #DialogIKNKalimantan#IbuKotaBaru	21-Aug	Disadvantages of Jakarta as Capital City	Jakarta (water crisis, economy concentrated in JK, land conversion)	
Mengapa #IbuKotaBaru harus dipindah ke luar Jawa? Ada 7 alasan utama: 1. Pertumbuhan urbanisasi sangat tinggi, dengan konsentrasi penduduk terbesar di Jakarta dan Jabodetabekpunjur 2. Kemacetan tinggi dan kualitas udara Jakarta tidak sehat Why #IbuKotaBaru must be moved outside of Java? There are 7 main reasons: 1. Urbanization growth is very high, with the largest concentration of population in Jakarta and Jabodetabekpunjur 2. High traffic congestion and unhealthy Jakarta air quality #DialogIKNKalimantan	21-Aug	Disadvantages of Jakarta as Capital City	Jakarta (overpopulation, traffic congestion, air pollution)	
Pemilihan lokasi #IbuKotaBaru ini bukan kompetisi. Dampak ekonomi akan terasa untuk seluruh Kalimantan, bukan hanya bagi provinsi yang terpilih. Ini untuk pemerataan pembangunan," -Deputi Bidang Pengembangan Regional Rudy Prawiradinata "Location selection #IbuKotaBaru this is not competition. The economic impact will be felt for the whole of Kalimantan, not only for the selected provinces. This is for equitable development," - Deputy for Regional Development Rudy Prawiradinata #DialogIKNKalimantan	21-Aug	Features promoted for IKN	Geographical inequalities	
Deputi Bidang Pengembangan Regional Rudy Prawiradinata & Gubernur Kaltim Isran Noor berbincang sebelum acara. Dialog Nasional Pemindahan Ibu Kota Negara: Kalimantan untuk Indonesia digelar di Balikpapan, setelah sebelumnya dilaksanakan di Banjarmasin & Palangka Raya #IbuKotaBaru Deputy Regional Development Rudy Prawiradinata & East Kalimantan Governor Isran Noor spoke before the event. The National Dialogue on the Relocation of the State Capital: Kalimantan for Indonesia was held in Balikpapan, having previously been held in Banjarmasin & Palangka Raya #IbuKotaBaru			communication	https://twitter.com/BappenasRI/status/1164069427631087616/photo/1

Table 2.2 Content Analysis, sample. “Code 1” represents the “categories”, “Code 2” shows the “codes” used for each category.

² Should anyone be interested in seeing how the 403 tweets were analysed, please do not hesitate to contact me at my university email indicated at the beginning of the thesis.

It is worth noticing that I used an inductive approach, meaning that categories are neither identified or presumed beforehand. This method is valid because it defines step by step the elements that make a category, and categories are retrieved only afterwards. This method provides a deep understanding of what it is measured (Matthes and Kohring 2008). Results are not subjectively determined but empirically proven by codes that are then quantified and represented in charts. As mentioned earlier, tweets are continuously posted, providing more information. This means that the numerical results reported here may change slightly if a more extensive period is being considered. This research shows significant trends concerning how the political discourse of *Ibu Kota Baru* is built. These findings are not only valid for a deeper understanding of the discourse around the new capital, but it will be also helpful for future research.

After completed the content analysis, graphics were created to summarize and clarify the information found. The codes are summarized in the following categories:

1. Disadvantages of Jakarta as capital City
2. Features promoted for *Ibu Kota Baru*
3. Potential cities considered the model for *Ibu Kota Baru*
4. Potential cities considered the model for Jakarta
5. English words used
6. Interconnected features

These categories have been selected for two simple reasons. The first is that the topics are frequently mentioned in the tweets or can be easily noticed. The second is because they contain essential information that helps to answer the research question. While the relevance of the first two categories (“Disadvantages of Jakarta as capital City”, “Features promoted for the New capital”,) are clear from what explained so far and in the research question, it is essential to briefly introduce the other categories and explain why they are considered. As far as the third category is concerned, Bappenas has mentioned in the tweets several capital cities considered potential models for *Ibu Kota Baru*. These are important to comment on because the kind of cities chosen as a model or as a point of comparison provides valid information about the real goals of the capital relocation project. Similarly, the fourth category speaks volume regarding the possible next role of Jakarta, adding valuable information to point 2. The fifth and sixth category are features that can be noticed while analysing the tweets. The fifth is the frequent mention of English words; this is a curious fact because, as it will be seen later, only the words belonging to specific topics of the new capital are found in English, providing valuable hints about the strategies of communication. The sixth category, named “interconnected features”, has been formulated because some codes are always found together with other codes. In this sense, it is possible to claim that this method develops the content conceptual analysis even further by examining the relationships among these concepts.

2.3.2 Twitter account of “@BappenasRI” and “@Jokowi”

Before turning to the proper analysis, let us briefly introduce the Twitter account of the two profiles which regularly post news about *Ibu Kota Baru*. On Twitter, users are requested to insert a name and a username which can be edited at any time. Figure 2.2 and 2.3 shows the Twitter account of the Ministry of National Development Planning of the Republic of Indonesia and the President Joko Widodo. In 2019, the name Bappenas chose for the Twitter account is “#IbuKotaBaru” and the username name is “@BappenasRI”. The profile can be found using both names. The fact that they chose “#IbuKotaBaru” as name witnesses the relevance of the topic of new capital above all the other topics. Besides, inserting the hash sign before the name is a further hint to follow the hashtag “Ibu Kota Baru” on Twitter. It can be easily noticed that all tweets from Bappenas conclude with this hashtag (or similar ones like #DialogKKNKalimantan) so they are easily traceable. In some tweets, they even reminded followers to use the hashtag to stay updated with their posts regarding the new capital. The name is thus a constant reminder of searching for this hashtag to receive news. Furthermore, given the fact that many users use this hashtag on Twitter to communicate their opinion about the capital – negative and positive - this name may also be a strategy to appear at the top of the results, as shown in Figure 2.4.



Figure 2.2 and 2.3. Twitter account of Bappenas and Joko Widodo. Source: Twitter

The political communication of the President Joko Widodo on Twitter (profile in Figure 2.3), is instead different. He does not use any hashtag when writing his tweets, and tweets are always complemented by photos depicting himself during momentous events or surrounded by local people. Only by looking at the images, regardless of the topic, it is clear that the message he wants to deliver is to be “a President of the people”, who respect Indonesian traditions and care about the daily issues of ordinary people.

The next three chapters will deal with the results obtained from the analysis, proving explanations and examples of each data.

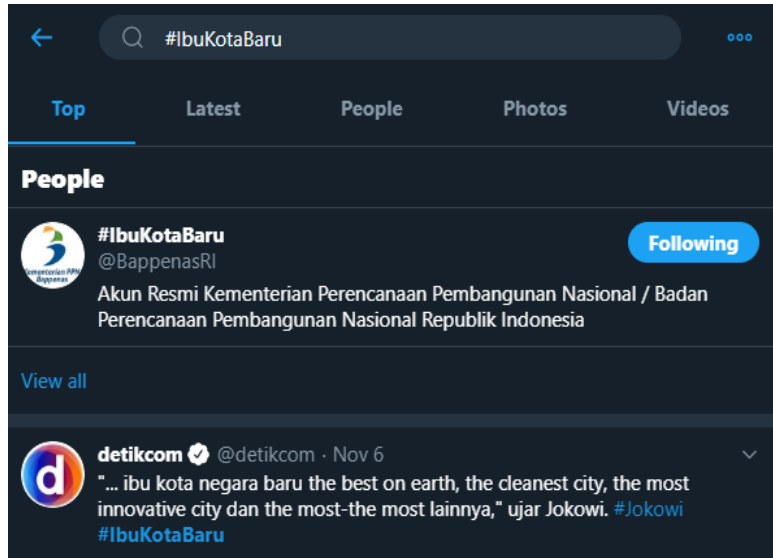


Figure 2.4 Top results when typing “#IbuKotaBaru” on Twitter. Source: Twitter

3. Jakarta: Results

3.1 Undesirable features that Jakarta possess according to official communication

One topic often mentioned in the tweets is Jakarta and its disadvantages as the current capital city of Indonesia. By listing the flaws of Jakarta, the government implicitly states the necessity of building *Ibu Kota Baru*. Among the whole tweets analysed, Jakarta was mentioned 65 times. I found nine stated disadvantages of having Jakarta as capital (Figure 3.1). Environmental issues appear to be the main reasons why the capital should move: the water crisis and the related sinking issue is presented 14 times (accounting for 22% of the total of the mentions), just above the mentions of the frequent floods (18%). The government is also aware that overpopulation further complicates this issue and it is indeed cited 10 times (15%). As a consequence, surplus population brings to a constant land conversion, traffic congestion (12% each) and an imbalance in the concentration of economic activity in and outside Jakarta and Java (6%). Other cited disadvantages of

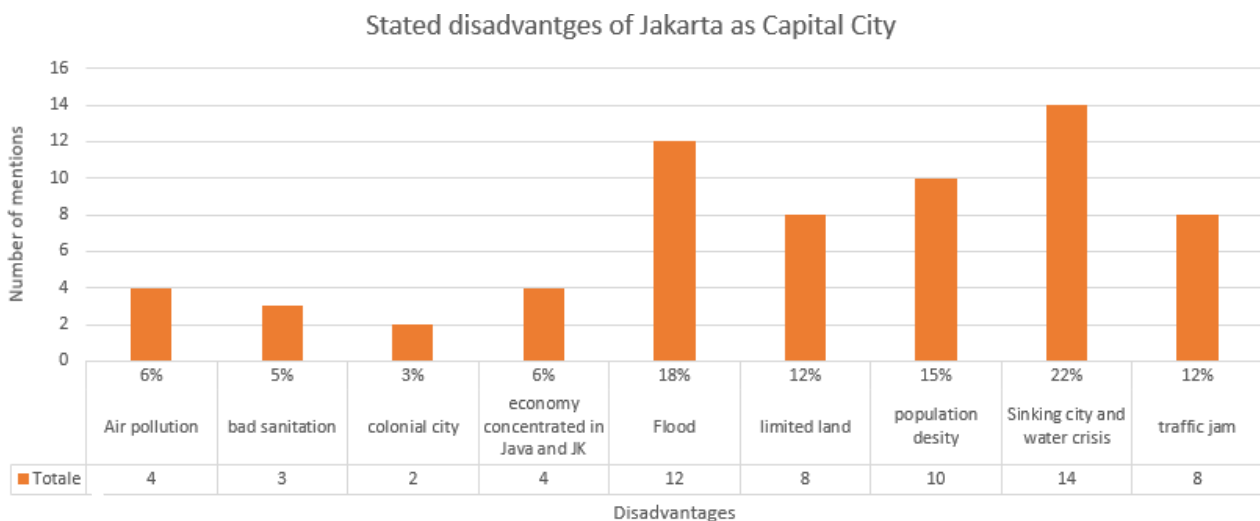


Figure 3.1. Stated disadvantages of Jakarta as Capital City.

Jakarta are the severe air pollution (6%), the lousy sanitation (5%) and the colonial legacy (3%), cited 4, 3 and 2 times respectively.

3.2 Unsustainable Jakarta

Jakarta’ sinking problem– the most mentioned feature - is related to the extraction of groundwater used for drinking and bathing. Indeed, when the groundwater is pumped out, the land above it falls, leading to land subsidence. The Ministry reports that in northern Jakarta the groundwater level decreases on average by 7.5 cm per year. The water crisis is not only seen in the sinking issue but in rivers as well. In Jakarta, rivers are highly polluted and can only supply 2,2% of the demand for clean water. According to Bappenas, 96% of

the rivers are now polluted. The Lloyd City Risk Index 2015-2025³ was cited twice in the tweets to comment on Jakarta’s environmental problems as well as on the high risk of encountering human pandemic due to the poor sanitation. As it is possible to see in Figure 3.2, GDP losses caused by environmental disasters are indeed high, although the main threats are factors related to geopolitics and security (e.g. civil conflicts) and finance, economics and trade (e.g. market crash). Bappenas also comments that around 50% of Jakarta area has flood security levels below ten years and that large cities should have a minimum flood security level of 50 years ideally.

GDP@Risk: Threat categories

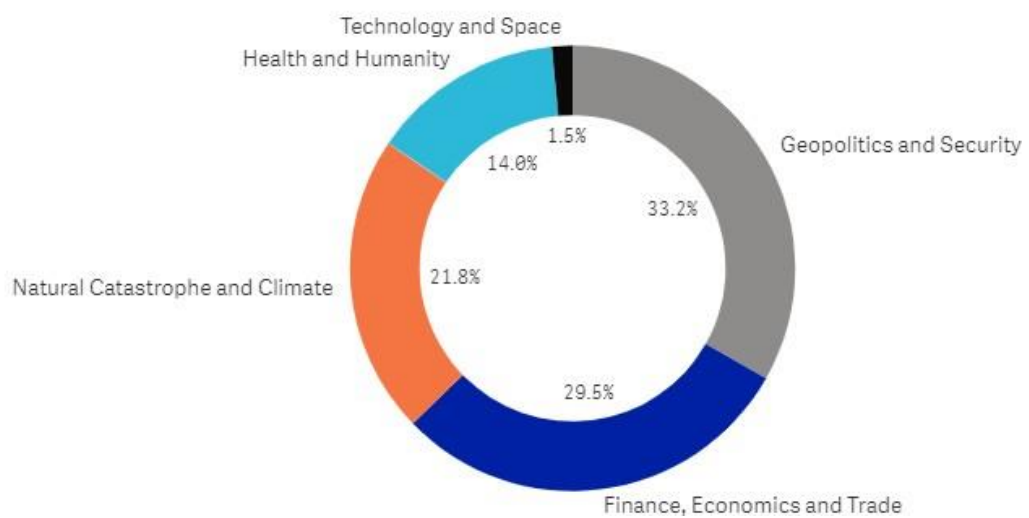


Figure 3.2 Main threats in Jakarta according to Lloyd City Risk Index. It is possible to see that the main threat is “Geopolitics and security” (e.g. civil conflicts, terrorism), followed by “Finance, Economics and Trade” (e.g. market crash) and “Natural Catastrophe and Climate” (e.g. earthquake, volcano eruption, flood). Overall, the expected annual loss in Jakarta is \$6.29 bn. Source: [Lloyd City Risk Index: Jakarta](#)

Jakarta is also home to more than 10 million people, most of them heavily concentrated in Jabodetabekpunjur (Jakarta metropolitan area, Figure 3.3). Overpopulation causes challenging consequences: not only the demand for clean water cannot meet the real availability, but also the high population density is driving a steady land conversion. According to the tweets, Java Island has decreased the area of agricultural land by 0.93% (in 2013-2016).

Tweet. *Kondisi tanah Jakarta turun 40-60 cm (1989-2007) dan diperkirakan meningkat menjadi 80-120 cm (2015) oleh pengurusan air tanah. Sementara itu, air laut naik rata-rata 4-6 cm karena perubahan iklim #DialogIKNKalimantan #IbuKotaBaru*⁴.

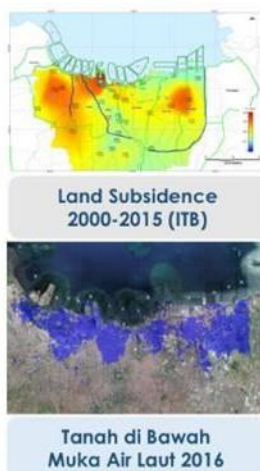
(July 19, 2019)

³ *Lloyd’s City Risk Index* is based on original research produced for Lloyd’s by the Cambridge Centre for Risk Studies at the University of Cambridge Judge Business School. The data contained in the report help policymakers, businesses and insurers make cities more resilient.

⁴ “The condition of Jakarta’s land has fallen by 40-60 cm (1989-2007), and it is expected to increase to 80-120 cm (2015) by draining groundwater. Meanwhile, seawater rises an average of 4-6 cm due to climate change #DialogIKNKalimantan #IbuKotaBaru.”

Traffic congestion is also threatening the economy of the nation. According to the Centre for Transportation and Logistics Studies of Gadjah Mada University (cited in Bappenas tweets), economic losses due to congestion in Jakarta reached Rp. 56 trillion per year. Furthermore, the Indonesian Ministry mentions a study conducted by Petroff (2017) which lists Jakarta as the 4th worst city based on traffic conditions during rush hours out of 390 cities surveyed. Its road infrastructure ratio amounting of only 6.2% of the total area (according to Bappenas and the study, the ideal would be 15%). At present, peak hour's speed is only 16 km/hour, while the commuting time is recorded at 2-3 hours/trip or 4-5 hours/roundtrip. Another study made by Pantazai (2015) was also cited because it ranked Jakarta as the 9th worst city for driver satisfaction, having the worst gridlock performance with 33,240 stop-start indexes. According to this study, ineffective communication and coordination of governance causes gridlocks. One of the most apparent consequences of traffic jam and overpopulation is the severe air pollution, threatening the lives of millions of people (Tweet).

Jakarta dan Jabodetabek: Rawan banjir tahunan, tanah turun dan muka air laut naik



- **Rawan banjir**, sekitar 50% wilayah Jakarta memiliki tingkat keamanan banjir di bawah 10 tahunan (ideal kota besar minimum 50 tahunan).
- **Tanah turun dan muka air laut naik**
 - ✓ Penurunan muka air tanah di daerah utara rata-rata 7,5 cm/tahun
 - ✓ Tanah turun 40-60 cm (1989-2007) dan diperkirakan meningkat menjadi 80-120 cm (2015) oleh pengurasan air tanah
 - ✓ Air laut naik rata-rata 4-6 cm karena perubahan iklim
- Kualitas air sungai 96% tercemar berat
- memiliki bahaya bencana signifikan untuk *human pandemic* akibat memiliki sanitasi terburuk (Llyod's City Risk Index 2015-2025).

Figure 3.3 Jakarta and Jabodetabek, prone to annual floods, land-falling and sea-level rise. 50% of Jakarta has a flood safety level below ten years. The groundwater level in Jakarta decreases 7.5 per year, the land dropped by 40-60 cm between 1989 and 2007, and it is projected to reach 80-120 cm due to groundwater extraction. The sea-level rises at an average of 4-6 cm per year. The risk of encountering a human pandemic is also high due to poor sanitation. Source: @BappenasRI, August 20, 2019. [Link](#)

Tweet. *Beban Jakarta sudah terlalu besar karena harus menanggung beban penduduk yang besar dengan wilayah yang kecil. Akibatnya, terlalu banyak orang, maka dari tempat tinggal ke tempat kerjanya di Jakarta, setiap hari penuh dengan kemacetan #IbuKotaBaru #YouthAskIKN*⁵

(August 20, 2019)

⁵“Jakarta's burden is already too big because it has to bear the burden of a large population in a small area. As a result, with too many people going from their homes to their workplaces, Jakarta is full of traffic every day #IbuKotaBaru#YouthAskIKN”

The least mentioned factor is the connection of Jakarta with colonialism. As reported in the tweet, Jakarta (Batavia) was chosen and built by the Dutch East India Company (VOC) in 1619 as a port city for trade in agricultural and plantation products like spices. Batavia, known as the 'Queen of the East', is thus a representation of the Dutch interests, not the interests of the Indonesian people (Tweet).

Tweet. Kita ingin #IbuKotaBaru yang Indonesia-sentris. Jakarta didesain dan dibangun pemerintahan kolonial pada masa lalu. Kita ingin mempunyai ibu kota yang benar-benar kita pikirkan, kita desain, kita bangun dengan kemampuan sendiri," -Menteri PPN/Kepala Bappenas Bambang Brodjonegoro⁶ (July 10, 2019)

Furthermore, the government advocates that keeping Jakarta as the capital of Indonesia does nothing but perpetuating inequalities among islands:

given the fact that the economy, businesses and companies are concentrated in Jakarta, there is imbalance as far as job opportunity and services are concerned. The issue regarding regional equalities will be further commented below.

Overall, the government concludes that the environmental capacity of Jakarta is low, and the government must move to mitigate the population burden and pollution (Tweet and Figure 3.4).



Figure 3.4. Jakarta is bad, while Kalimantan is still good. "Regarding the environmental aspect, there are two things to keep in mind. Supportive and assimilative capacity. Jakarta is bad, while Kalimantan is still good." During Dialog Nasional "Smart, green, beautiful and sustainable". Source: @BappenasRI, Jul, 16, 2019 [Link](#).

Tweet. #IbuKotaBaru akan mengurangi beban Jakarta yang saat ini sudah krisis air bersih. Jakarta akan menjadi pusat keuangan, bisnis, perdagangan, jasa, sementara Ibu Kota Negara akan menjadi pusat pemerintahan #YouthAskIKN⁷

(August 20, 2019)

⁶ "We want #IbuKotaBaru to be Indonesia-centric. Jakarta was designed and built by the colonial government in the past. We want to have a capital city that we really think about, we design, we build with our own abilities Menteri PPN/Kepala Bappenas Bambang Brodjonegoro."

⁷ "#IbuKotaBaru will reduce the burden on Jakarta, which is currently in a clean water crisis. Jakarta will be the centre of finance, business, commerce, services, while the National Capital will be the centre of government #YouthAskIKN"

4. Features promoted for *Ibu Kota Baru*: Results

4.1 Results

As stated above, in order to answer the question “What are the main features that the Indonesian government is trying to promote through the establishment of the new capital and how important is and what is the significance of sustainability among those goals?” and its connected sub-questions, a quantitative analysis was developed to be able to examine data objectively. Overall, I identified 15 features promoted by the Indonesian government for the new capital, each of them with a different degree of importance. As it was mentioned in Paragraph 2.3, the more a feature (*code*) appeared in the tweets, the more it was considered important. These features do not describe why the capital should move, but rather how the capital should be like (*so, what it represents*). Given the fact that it is not possible to know whether the capital will be built according to these standards, this analysis is significant to see the message that the government is delivering through the establishment of the new capital. This might not correspond to the real intents.

The tweets from the Ministry Bappenas outnumbered those of the President Jokowi. While the first one has made the new capital the main topic of the year 2019 by changing its account name in “#IbuKotaBaru” and tweeting almost exclusively about it, the President of Indonesia tweets many other topics related to foreign and domestic affairs. Overall, the tweets of the Ministry account for 93% of the total number of tweets analysed, while Jokowi’s tweets 7%. However, it is worth mentioning that several quotes by Joko Widodo are reported in Bappenas’ Twitter account, so his presence is more prominent than what it seems. Generally speaking, the features tweeted the most by Jokowi in regards of the new capital are developing the new capital as a symbol of modernity and progress of the nation, and also as a mean to cope with regional inequalities.

Figure 4.1 shows the most tweeted features for *Ibu Kota Baru*. It is important to note that the analysis has also considered the synonyms (for instance, “intelligent” as a synonym of “smart”). The concept of “sustainability” is mentioned 47 times (14%), followed by “smart” and “green” (cited 40 and 42 times respectively, making the 12% of the total of the mentions). “Regional equity” is mentioned 38 times (11%) whilst “economic development” 35 (10%). Furthermore, *Ibu Kota Baru* is seen by the government as an inclusive city (mentioned 29 times, 8%), that reflects the national identity of all Indonesians (20 times, 6%) as well as the modernity (15 times, 4%) and the internationality (14 times, 4%) of the country. Equally important is the need to affirm that the new capital will be located in a safe and strategic place (6%). The least mentioned factors are innovation (2%), efficiency (1%), a model for the next cities (1%) and the improvement of defence and security (2%). In the graphic, few words are intentionally indicated in quotes. These are “sustainable”, “smart” and “green”. As will be seen later, these terms have many different connotations and are used in many tweets related to the environmental and technological aspect of the new

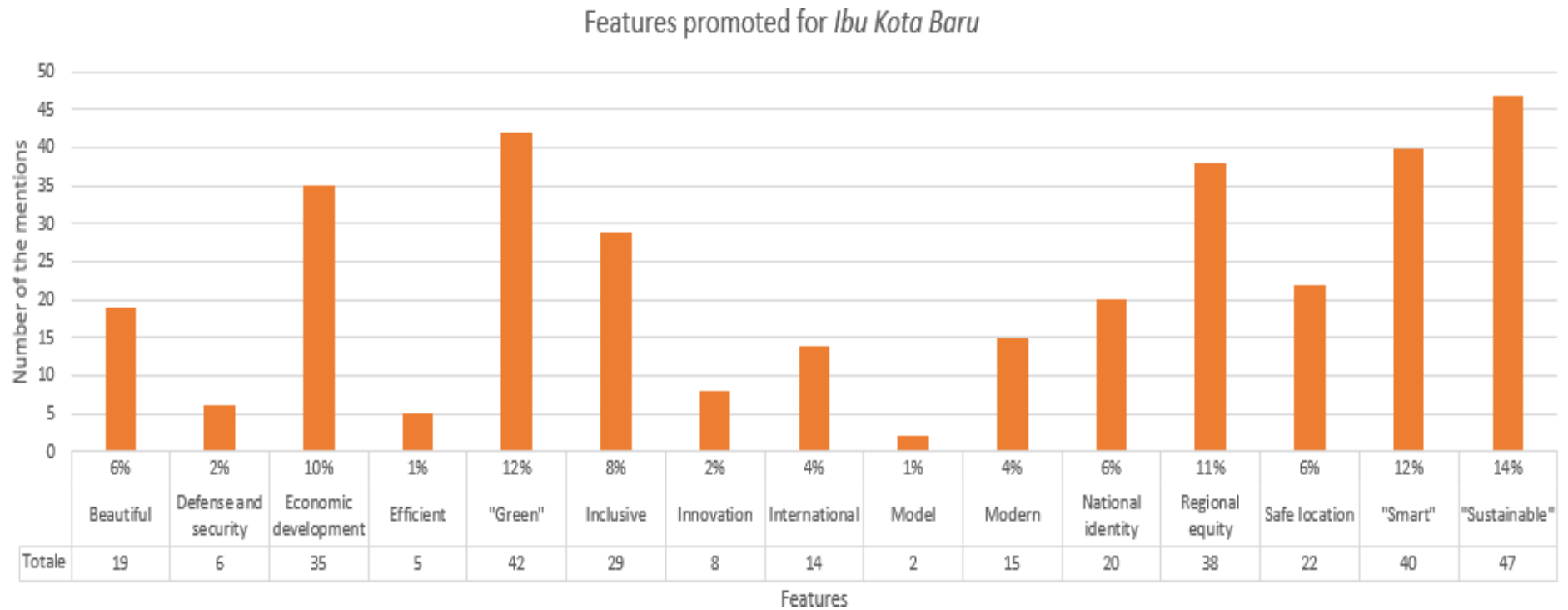


Figure 4.1. Features promoted for Ibu Kota Baru . The number represents the amount of time a word – or its synonyms – occurred in the tweets analysed. The “%” shows the percentage of the total of the mentions

capital. More often than not, these words are cited together without giving any explanation, so the significance of these words appears vague and unclear. Even when these terms are explained through examples, these are usually arduous to understand: unless the person who is reading the tweets is an urban planner or an architect, it is unlikely that they know the meaning of “smart waste management system” or “3R approach”. It is also curious that many of these words are mainly used in English.

In the next paragraph, the fifteen identified factors are reported and introduced, as described in the tweets. All information described below are taken from Twitter, and no personal opinion nor interpretations were included.

4.2 Sustainable

Sustainability is the concept cited the most among all the tweets analysed. In order to make a valuable content analysis, I also paid attention to the synonyms used by Bappenas and Joko Widodo to define sustainability, like “renewable”, “low-carbon”, “conservation” and even “green”. The latter was indeed also counted as a synonym of “sustainability” when encountered in sentences like “green waste management” or “green energy”. Here, the “green” does not refer to physical green buildings but environmentally friendly solutions.

The term “sustainable” is thereby used for many different purposes in the tweets. Besides being mentioned as a “motto” together with “smart “green” and “beautiful” where no explanation is reported (this will be better analysed later), the term is linked to the use of renewable energy, greenness, environmental conservation and peatland restoration. Bappenas also confirms that the offices of the new capital will use renewable energy. Another idea that falls into the categories of “sustainable” and “green” is the idea of “Forest city”. Although the capital is built from scratch in a quite remote area, the government assures that the new capital will not destroy the surrounding forest; instead, it will encourage forest protection through the inclusion of real pieces of forest in the city. The government will ensure that the forest will be preserved and even reforested in the parts where deforestation occurred. To further encourage this, the new capital will become an eco-tourism destination; rivers will also be safeguarded and kept clean. To be an entirely sustainable and low-carbon emission city, the government advocates the need to build an efficient and intelligent transportation system as well as cycle paths and pedestrian areas. Furthermore, the government encourages and expresses its preferences in using electric cars in the new capital, so as to avoid air pollution. In these last cases, “sustainability” is connected to the use of “renewable” and “smart” technologies. To conclude, Bappenas refers to Kalimantan as a place where local people already possess a sustainable mindset, and they are keen on adopting new green technologies.

Bappenas also cited the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction⁸ (SFDRR), the Paris Agreement on Climate Change⁹, the Agenda for Humanity¹⁰, and the New Urban Agenda as references when building the new capital. These are all international agreements and documents that encourage sustainable development for all people in different contexts, like climate change, natural disasters and poverty.

Tweet. Para pemimpin Kalimantan Selatan mempunyai mindset berkelanjutan tentang lingkungan yang sangat luas, tidak hanya menanam tetapi juga telah melakukan pelestarian sungai sehingga jangan sampai mewariskan sesuatu yang kurang bagus bagi anak cucu #IbuKotaBaru #DialogIKNKalimantan¹¹
(July 15, 2019)

4.3 Smart

Of the four buzzwords, smart is the one which Bappenas explains in detail the most. In this context, it emerges that “smart” usually refers to smart technologies used to improve the quality of life of city dwellers. Among the considered synonyms of smart, there are “intelligent”, “circular” and “Internet” applied to technologies, but there are many other different examples as reported in Figure 4.2. Indeed, smart is exemplified through the following expressions: smart and green waste management system, smart and circular water management system, smart grid power supply, efficient lighting system, energy savings offices, integrated recyclable system, circular economy for waste, 3R approach, waste to energy principle, district cooling system, smart city, intelligent transportation system, smart transportation system, Internet of Things (IoT), cable networks, integrated information system, high-tech industries, smart hospital, communication



Figure 4.2 Smart Ibu Kota Baru. Source: @BappenasRI, October, 2, 2019. [Link](#)

⁸ The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 is the most encompassing international accord to date on disaster risk reduction, aiming at protecting vulnerable states from the risk of disasters with concrete action plans (UNDRR 2015).

⁹The Paris Agreement aims at “strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change. It does so by keeping a global temperature rise below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and by pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius” (UN Climate Change, Paris Agreement, United Nations 2015).

¹⁰The Agenda for Humanity is a plan that defines the changes needed to alleviate suffering, reduce risk and lessen vulnerability worldwide. It is based on five principles: political leadership for conflict reduction, norms that safeguard humanity, leave none behind, change people’s lives, and invest in humanity ([Agenda For Humanity](#))

¹¹ “The leaders of South Kalimantan have a sustainable mindset about the environment, not only planting but also conserving the rivers, so as to leave anything that is not good for posterity” #IbuKotaBaru#DialogIKNKalimantan

and information technology, database public health management, telemedicine, park system, water flow, wetland, forest, and open space into one unit, electric cars, non-conventional technology, cybersecurity.

It is possible to note that many of these examples can also be applied to “sustainability” and “green”, so the distinction among these attributes is feeble. Although the term “smart” gives many hints to understand how the new capital will be like, very often, these hints are not clearly explained. Thus, a specific paragraph will be dedicated in Chapter 6.

***Tweet.** #SahabatPembangunan. Kita akan terapkan integrated information system dan intelligent transport system, penggunaan smart water, management system berbasis internet of things dan penerapan smart waste manajemen. Menteri PPN/Bappenas Bambang Brodjonegoro #SiapPindahIbuKota¹² (October 2, 2019)*

4.4 Green

This term has two connotations. First, green is used in the sense of incorporating the “green colour” in the city through green open spaces, green buildings, vertical gardens, green roofs and authentic parts of the forest. Not for nothing, the government continually claims that the new capital will be a city integrated in its surroundings and frequently referred to it with the concept of “forest city”. Second, “green” is used as a synonym of sustainability and environmentalism, as it was explained just above. For instance, mentions to green waste management, forest protection, forest restoration, green transport and peat restoration abound. Figure 4.3 and the Tweets below reports the two meanings of “green”.



Figure 4.3 Green Ibu Kota Baru. Source @BappenasRI, October, 2, 2019. [Link](#)

***Tweet.** Berkonsep forest city, #IbuKotaBaru memastikan kelestarian hutan sehingga Ruang Terbuka Hijau (RTH) akan dibangun minimal 50% dari total luas area kota¹³ (August 1, 2019)*

***Tweet.** Pembangunan Ibu Kota Baru tidak akan mengurangi luas hutan lindung. Pada saat membangun ibu kota kita harus melakukan reforestrasi, konsep kotanya juga kota hijau sehingga hutan akan terjaga #IbuKotaBaru¹⁴ (July 10, 2019)*

¹² “We will implement an integrated information system and intelligent transport system, the use of smart water, an internet-based management system of things and the application of smart waste management”. PPN / Bappenas Minister Bambang Brodjonegoro #ReadyMovementMother

¹³ With the concept of forest city, #IbuKotaBaru ensures forest sustainability so that Green Open Space will be built, covering at least 50% of the total area of the city”

¹⁴ “The construction of a new capital city will not reduce the area of protected forests. When developing our capital we must do reforestation, the concept of the city is also a green city so that the forest will be preserved #IbuKotaBaru”

4.5 Regional equality

From the tweets, it is possible to notice that economic development (below) is very often put together with the enhancement of regional equality. According to this idea, the more the economy grows in the islands outside Java, the more these will reach a better income, as the new capital will encourage trades and infrastructures outside Java. With this in mind, the government spur to develop an economy that is Indonesia-centric and no more Java-centric. Kalimantan, being at the centre of Indonesia could, therefore, be the solution for the ongoing geographical inequalities. Nowadays, Java makes 58,48% - with Jakarta alone 20% - of the total national GDP, while Sumatra 21,36%, Kalimantan 8.26 %, Sulawesi 6.14 %, Bali and Nusa Tenggara 3.02 %. The lowest contribution is given by the provincial groups of Maluku Island and Papua. Sometimes it is not clear how the project will reduce geographical inequalities – many tweets just report that the plan will tackle them. Nevertheless, it seems like *Ibu Kota Baru* is viewed as the bridge to reach this goal, as it brings to a reconfiguration of power from Java to the outermost regions (Figure 4.4). In the tweets, the government writes that new economic zones will be developed outside Java, and industrialisation will be encouraged for the sake of the whole nation. Additional mining projects and plantations will accelerate to boost employment. The Ministry and the President mainly refer to the Eastern part of Indonesia, being less industrialised than the Western part (Tweet).

Tweet. *Apa saja upaya kurangi ketimpangan?*

1. *Industrialisasi di luar Jawa dalam bentuk hilirisasi baik hasil tambang maupun perkebunan*
 2. *Mengembangkan berbagai kawasan ekonomi*
 3. *Mengembangkan 6 wilayah metropolitan di luar Jawa supaya bisa menjadi simbol ekonomi baru*
- #IbuKotaBaru¹⁵*

(July 10, 2019)

4.6 Economic development

The government expresses its confidence that the new capital will increase the GDP of the whole nation, as the new city will intensify trade between regions, assuring several times that more than 50% of the total area of Indonesia will benefit from this trade. As a consequence, they state that trade will encourage connectivity within regions as well as investment (Tweet). Tweets also report how the economy in Indonesia is continuously growing, increasing from 4.88% in 2015 to 5.17% in 2018. The unemployment rate decreased from 5.81% in February 2015 to 5.01% in February 2019. According to the tweets, The Logistics Performance

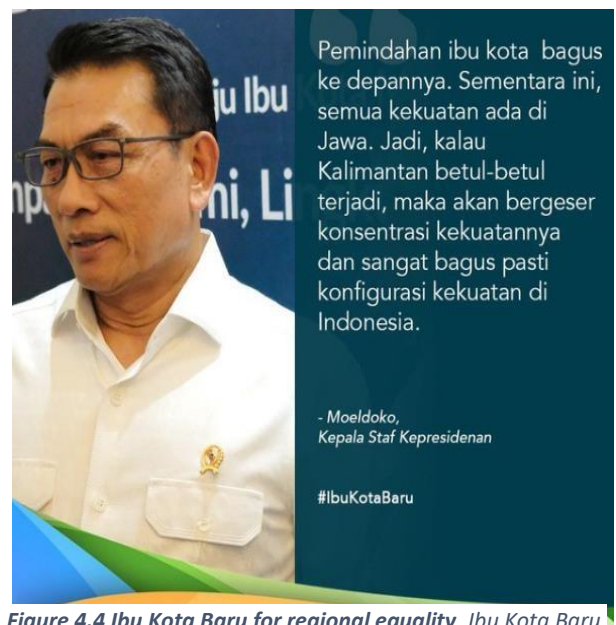


Figure 4.4 Ibu Kota Baru for regional equality. *Ibu Kota Baru will shift the concentration of power outside Java. Source: @BappenasRI June 27, 2019 . [Link](#)*

¹⁵ “What are the efforts to reduce inequality? 1. Industrialisation outside Java in the form of both mining and plantation products 2. Developing various economic zones 3. Developing 6 metropolitan areas outside Java so that they can become new economic symbols #IbuKotaBaru”

Index rose from 53rd in 2014 to 46th in 2018, and the Competitiveness Index increased from 81st in 2015 to 71st in 2018. Discourses of Bambang Brodjonegoro are often reported: these discourses communicate the positive effects of the new city at the national level. For instance, he advocates that the new capital will increase the national GDP of 1%, reaching the 5,1% growth in total per year. Also, investment in the capital will advantage the output multiplier of 2.3, while the employment multiplier will be 2.9. The project will, of course, also benefit the local economy of Kalimantan, creating services and infrastructures in the region. On the whole, the development of the capital is regarded as the stepping-stone for Indonesia to become the fifth-largest economy in the world by 2045.

***Tweet.** Pemindahan ibu kota ke provinsi di Kalimantan akan meningkatkan perdagangan antar wilayah, mencakup perdagangan di dalam provinsi #IbuKotaBaru, perdagangan antarprovinsi di Indonesia: dari P. Jawa ke provinsi luar Jawa dan antar provinsi di luar Jawa #DialogIKNKalimantan.¹⁶*
(August 21, 2019)

4.7 Inclusive

Similar to inequalities, there is “inclusive”, which was mentioned 29 times. The government depicts Kalimantan as an inclusive island because it is home to different ethnicities. The new capital will embrace this heterogeneity by being open to local workers and immigrants. Furthermore, the government has been showing interest in integrating the local culture in the capital and in listening to the opinions of local people and local government in how to build the new capital. Bappenas reported that on the 17th of July 2019 the government invited the leaders of the Dayak community at the event “National Dayak Culture Seminar and Its Contribution to the Transfer of the National Capital to East Kalimantan” (Figure 4.5), where the government guaranteed the integration of local communities and their traditions in the new



Figure 4.5. Inclusive Ibu Kota Baru. “In the future we will pay attention to the culture and habits of the local community, so that in the process of development of the capital city there will be a synergy between all elements of society”. Source: @BappenasRI, October, 17, 2019. [Link](#).

capital. Bappenas stated that including local people and “local wisdom” in the development of the new capital prevents the possibility of conflicts and disputes. During a visit to Kalimantan, the government gathered opinions from people living in Paser, North Penajam Paser and Balikpapan to consider indigenous people requests, such as: ensuring customary land and use Paser and Dayak’s distinctive ornament for the

¹⁶ “Moving the capital to the province of Kalimantan will increase trade between regions, including trade within the province of #IbuKotaBaru ,but also interprovincial trade in Indonesia: from the province of Java to provinces outside Java and between provinces outside Java #DialogIKNKalimantan”

buildings (Tweet). Not only indigenous people were consulted, but also the chancellor of Mulawarman University in Masjaya, Kumpiady Widen from Palangkaraya University and personnel of the local governments, like Abdul Gafur Mas'us, the regent of North Penajam Paser, and Isran Noor, governor of East Kalimantan.

The inclusivity can also be noted in the way Bappenas structured the whole argument of the capital on Twitter. For instance, it organized “Youth Talks” in August 2019, where well-known Indonesian young people like Pangean Siahaan and Tasya Milla were invited to join and express their aspirations for the capital. Parts of the talk were reported on Twitter with the hashtag #YouthAskIKN¹⁷. Bappenas emphasized that young people are the future of the nation, and thus, their opinion is essential. Alongside youth talks, Bappenas has frequently invited the online community of Twitter to join online questionnaires, surveys, look at videos via their YouTube channel (“Bappenas RI”) or *tvri nasional*. A competition for young generations called “*Harapanmu untuk Ibu Kota Baru*” (“Your wishes for the new capital”) was also carried out. In essence, people were invited to share their hopes for the new capital through article or vlogs. The first three winners would receive a money prize.

***Tweet.** Soal masyarakat adat, sosiologinya tentu dipelajari. Kalimantan itu unik, ada 1 provinsi yang didominasi etnis lokal, ada yang didominasi pendatang. Artinya Kalimantan sendiri tidak homogen. Tidak akan ada displace, menggusur, atòpau pun mengganggu masyarakat adat #IbuKotaBaru¹⁸*
(July 10, 2019)

4.8 Safe location

The government often points out that the area is both safe and strategic. Although this point does not focus on how the new capital should be like, it is nevertheless a point worth analysing. It is strategic because it is in the middle of Indonesia, so it acts as a bridge among regions; it is safe because Kalimantan is the only region in Indonesia outside the Ring of Fire, the path along the Pacific Ocean characterized by active volcanoes and frequent earthquakes. On Twitter, Bappenas also mentions that Kalimantan is not only free from earthquakes and tsunamis but also safe from the risk of flooding, forest fires and peatland damage (Tweet). Additionally, compared to Jakarta, the air quality is good, and the population density is low. Both Jokowi and Bappenas consider Kalimantan a peaceful region as different ethnicities cohabit serenely, so social conflict is minimal, and inhabitants are open to foreigners. Since the capital will be built close to existing cities – Balikpapan and Samarinda – the projected capital already enjoys airport access, harbour, main roads and electricity as well as wide-open land and water resources.

¹⁷ IKN = Ibu Kota Negara

¹⁸ “Concerning indigenous people, their sociology is certainly studied. Kalimantan is unique, there is only one province dominated by a local ethnic group, while the others are dominated by migrants. This means that Kalimantan itself is not homogeneous. There will be no displacement nor disturb to indigenous peoples #IbuKotaBaru”

***Tweet.** #SahabatPembangunan, kabar baru dari #IbuKotaBaru! Daerah seluas 40.00 m2 di Sepaku yg akan dijadikan pusat pemerintahan terbebas dari segala potensi kerusakan lahan, karena tidak mengandung batu bara, gambut, titik panas, dan jauh dari hutan dengan riwayat terbakar di masa lalu. ¹⁹ (September 10, 2019)*

4.9 National identity

Not only will *Ibu Kota Baru* be an open and inclusive city, but also a symbol of national identity. Although this topic is not at the top of the promoted factors, tweets addressing national identity are passionate. National identity is commonly connected to the term “progress”, as the new capital symbolizes an advanced nation (Figure 4.6), carrying the concept of smart, green, beautiful, sustainable and modern (Tweets). It is curious to note that “national identity” is more often connected to symbols of modernity (e.g. smart, technological advancement, sustainable) than to Indonesian heritage and cultures. Nevertheless, some tweets mention Pancasila²⁰, and the need to separate Indonesia from the colonial heritage that Jakarta holds.



Figure 4.6 *Ibu Kota Baru and National Identity.*

Source: @BaepnasRI, August,16, 2019 . [Link](#)

Pancasila and the theme of “a united Indonesia” are more addressed by Joko Widodo, stating that only if Indonesia stays unite against the odds, it will manage to create a superior nation. According to him, only in unity, brotherhood and openness, Indonesia finds its strengths.

***Tweet.** Kalimantan bukan hanya milik orang Kalimantan. Kalimantan itu milik Aceh, milik Jawa, milik Sulawesi, Kalimantan adalah milik Indonesia. Itulah hebatnya Indonesia karena punya Bhinneka Tunggal Ika," Gubernur Kalimantan Selatan Sahbirin Noor #IbuKotaBaru #DialogIKNKalimantan²¹*

(July 15, 2019)

***Tweet.** Nah, #IbuKotaBaru akan menjadi simbol identitas bangsa dan mengusung konsep Green, Smart, Beautiful, dan Sustainable. Pembangunan Ibu Kota Negara (IKN) juga harus modern dan berstandar Internasional, dengan tata kelola pemerintahan yang efisien dan efektif.²²*

(August 20, 2019)

¹⁹ “#SahabatPembangunan, new news from #IbuKotaBaru! The area of 40.00 m2 in Sepaku, which will be the centre of government, is free from all potential land damage, because it does not contain coal, peat, hotspots, and it is far from forests with a history of burning in the past”

²⁰ Pancasila is the core ideology of the Indonesian government. It consists in five principles: belief in God, Indonesian nationalism, humanitarianism or just and civilized humanity, democracy, and social justice. It was formulated by Sukarno in 1945 and it was Intended to alleviate religious tensions and promote pluralism (The Oxford Dictionary of Islam)

²¹ "Kalimantan is not only Kalimantan's people. Kalimantan is Aceh's, Java's, Sulawesi's, Kalimantan is Indonesia's. That is great for Indonesia because it has Unity in Diversity," South Kalimantan Governor Sahbirin Noor.

²² “Well, #IbuKotaBaru will become a symbol of national identity and will carry the concepts of Green, Smart, Beautiful, and Sustainable. The development of the National Capital City must also be modern and of international standard, with efficient and effective governance.”

4.10 Beautiful

The term beautiful is quite vague and always comes together with the concept of “smart”, “green” and “sustainable”. Furthermore, the term always appears in English, and no synonyms were found. The government does not explain what it means by beautiful. However, it seems like beauty relates to the project of a city that is clean, green, technologically advanced, modern, smart, home to sports facilities and jogging areas. The only explicit example the government made about beautiful is Washington DC, considered the emblem of a beautiful city (Tweet).

***Tweet.** Ibu kota baru akan berkonsep ‘Smart, Green, & Beautiful City’ #IbuKotaNegara. Best practice konsep ibu kota: Beautiful City (Washington D.C), Radiant City (Brasilia), Garden City (Canberra dan Abuja), Green City (Gaborono and New Kabul), Intelligent City (Putrajaya), dan lainnya²³*
(May 6, 2019)

4.11 Modern

As stated just above, the new capital is said to symbolize a superior, international and modern nation. Just like national identity, modernity is used as a synonym of progress, based on the use of science and technology. “Modern” is also a fast and innovative nation that does not remain stuck in long procedures of bureaucracies and can compete internationally. Modern also emerges as a synonym of comfort, and Bappenas points out the need to build a human and liveable capital in line with international standard (Tweet).

***Tweet.** "Kita bangun kota yang manusiawi, yang standarnya sesuai dengan kebutuhan manusia untuk hidup nyaman sesuai standar modern, jangan memaksakan orang untuk tinggal di kota dengan fasilitas seadanya," -Menteri PPN/Kepala Bappenas Bambang Brodjonegoro #IbuKotaBaru²⁴*
(August 1, 2019)

4.12 International

There is not much to say about this feature as it very often coincides with “modernity”. Although they were subdivided in the analysis to make it more precise, it seems that the aspiration to be international is in line with the desire of being modern. In other words, a modernity that follows the international standard (Tweet). Besides this, in the tweet below, the government says that international standard universities will be built in the new capital, thus referring to a higher quality of schooling and services.

²³ “The new capital city will be built according to the concept of “Smart, Green & Beautiful City” #IbuKotaNegara. Best practice of these concepts in capitals: Beautiful City (WashingtonD.C), Radiant City (Brasilia), Garden City (Canberra and Abuja), Green City (Gaborono and New Kabul), Intelligent City (Putrajaya), and others”

²⁴ “We build a humane city, the standard is in accordance with human needs to live comfortably according to modern standards, we do not force people to live in cities with modest facilities,” -News Minister of PPN / Head of Bappenas Bambang Brodjonegoro #IbuKotaBaru

Tweet. "Di #IbuKotabaru, kita akan mendorong pembangunan universitas berstandar internasional, dan berfokus pada bidang-bidang yang mendukung industrialisasi 4.0," -Menteri PPN/Kepala Bappenas Bambang Brodjonegoro²⁵

(October 2, 2019)

4.13 Innovation

From the tweets, it is not clear what the word "innovation" signifies in the government agenda. Frequently, the term is found together with the sentence "innovative, inclusive and sustainable development". Other times, innovation symbolizes anything that has to do with the simplification of people's life (Tweet). Due to the strong emphasis given to smart technologies, innovation likely refers to this domain.

Tweet. "Inovasi yang membuat keterbatasan menjadi keberlimpahan. Inovasi yang mengubah kesulitan menjadi kemampuan. Inovasi yang mengubah tidak berharga menjadi bernilai untuk rakyat dan bangsa"²⁶. #SDMUnggul #IndonesiaMaju #74thIndonesia #PidatoPresiden2019

(August 6, 2019)

4.14 Defence and security

Bappenas also mentions the importance of building a city able to tackle problems related to defence and security. The Indonesian government states that the new capital will be able to efficiently tackle traditional threats (protests, wars) and non-traditional threats (cyber-attacks). Cybercrime will be prevented through adequate data centres and the design of both software and hardware that ensure cybersecurity (Tweet). In this case too, the concept of smart, new technologies and the Internet are playing a major role.

Tweet. Selain itu, ada pula aspek ancaman terhadap keamanan siber, apalagi di era industri 4.0 saat ini, pemerintah dijalankan dengan manajemen data yang bersifat digital serta konektivitas Internet #IbuKotaBaru²⁷

(June 17, 2019)

4.15 Efficient

The term "efficient" relates to governance. The governance of the city must be effective, clear and, given the fact that the city represents the nation, the city itself must be efficient. An effective governance is linked to the creation of a smart, green, beautiful and sustainable capital. (Figure 4.7 and Tweet).

Tweet. "Ada empat visi #IbuKotaBaru: sebagai simbol identitas bangsa, kota yang smart, green, beautiful, dan sustainable, kota modern dan berstandar internasional, serta kota dengan tata kelola pemerintahan yang efisien dan efektif," -Menteri PPN/Kepala Bappenas Bambang Brodjonegoro²⁸

(August 1, 2019)

²⁵ "In #IbuKotabaru , we will encourage the development of international-standard universities, and we will focus on areas that support industrialization 4.0, "-PAT Minister / Head of Bappenas Bambang Brodjonegoro

²⁶ "Innovations that make limitations become abundances. Innovations that turn difficulties into abilities. Innovations that turn worthlessness into value for the people and nation ". #SDMUnggul #IndonesiaMaju # 74thIndonesia #Presidential Speech2019

²⁷ "In addition, there are also aspects of threats to cyber security, especially in the current industrial era 4.0, the government is working with digital data management and Internet connectivity #IbuKotaBaru

²⁸ "There are four visions for #IbuKotaBaru: as a symbol of national identity, a smart, green, beautiful, and sustainable city, a modern city with international standards, and a city with efficient and effective governance".

4.16 Model

It appears that the city will not necessarily be a model for the present overcrowded Indonesian cities or the next cities built in Indonesia. From the results of this analysis, it is clear that the government is not making it a priority, and indeed there are only two results on Twitter (Tweet). This might not perforce mean that the current cities will not be fixed, but it might suggest that the design of the new capital will be unique.

Tweet. #SahabatPembangunan, Master Plan dan Urban Design untuk Ibu Kota Negara (IKN) yang akan dibangun akan menggambarkan kota yang ideal dan menjadi standar bagi pengembangan kota-kota besar atau wilayah metropolitan di Indonesia #IbuKotaBaru²⁹ (August 1, 2019)

4.17 Interconnected features

From the tweet analysis, it is possible to have an idea regarding how the new capital will be. It is curious that almost all the promoted features are interconnected to each other and that the explanation given is sometimes unclear or repetitive. More importantly, it was seen that the terms smart, green, beautiful and sustainable are often found together and are used almost interchangeably as it was not necessary to distinguish between them. Nevertheless, together they are the cornerstone of the whole discourse around *Ibu Kota Baru*. These mentioned factors contribute to the creation of the symbol of national identity, an identity that believes in progress and science, and aspires to make Indonesia an internationally competitive country.

Although all the features are somehow linked to each other³⁰, it is possible to identify at least six complexes that overlap each other. As it is possible to see in Figure 4.8, “smart”, “green” and “sustainable” are mentioned 5 times together. “Beautiful” is cited jointly with these terms 15 times. Furthermore, due to the ambivalence of the term “green”- used as a synonym of sustainable other than greenness per se -, this term is encountered 12 times together with “sustainable”. “Modernity” and “international” are cited together 11 times, including 4 times in conjunction with “smart”, “green”, “beautiful” and “sustainable”, and 2 times with “smart”, “green” and “sustainable”.



Figure 4.7 The desired new capital. Source: @BappenasRI, October, 2, 2019. [Link](#).

²⁹ "#SahabatPembangunan. The Master Plan and Urban Design for the National Capital (IKN) that will be built will describe the ideal city and become a standard for the development of large cities or metropolitan areas in Indonesia. #IbuKotaBaru"

³⁰ Indeed, all features promoted on Twitter are interconnected and part of a single frame. The features chosen for this paragraph are even more related.

It is noticeable that the times “green” was mentioned in these complexes account for 42. Looking back at Figure 4.1, it is noticeable that “green” is mentioned 42 times in total, meaning that this term is always cited in one of the complexes above. “Sustainable” is also cited in these complexes 42 times, meaning that it is cited alone or with other factors³¹ only 5 times. By the same token, “beautiful” is never cited alone, and “modern” and “international” are found alone only 4 and 3 times respectively.

“Smart”, “green”, “beautiful” and “sustainable” is the biggest complex, and it will be seen in the next chapter that these terms are used as a slogan for the new capital. Indeed, throughout summer 2019, especially in July and August 2019, Bappenas did organize several meetings called “Menuju Ibu Kota Masa Depan: Smart, Green, Beautiful, dan Sustainable”. It is clear that these terms occupy a central position and act as a base for the other features.

Below, graphs report the terminology and examples of the above-interconnected features (Figure 4.9 and 4.10)

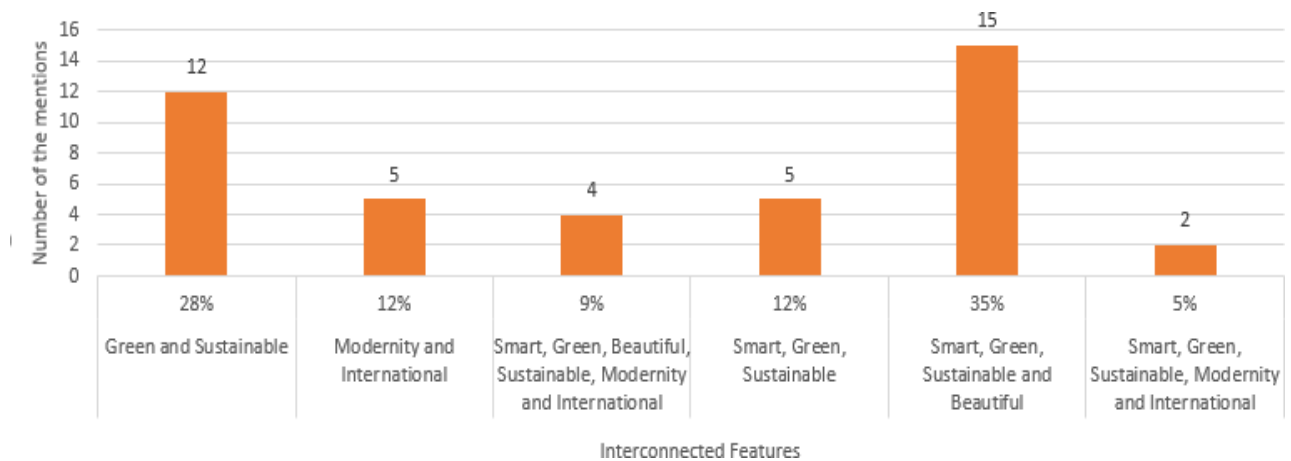


Figure 4.8 Interconnected Features

³¹ For instance, I found that the word “sustainable” is often encountered with “inclusive”.

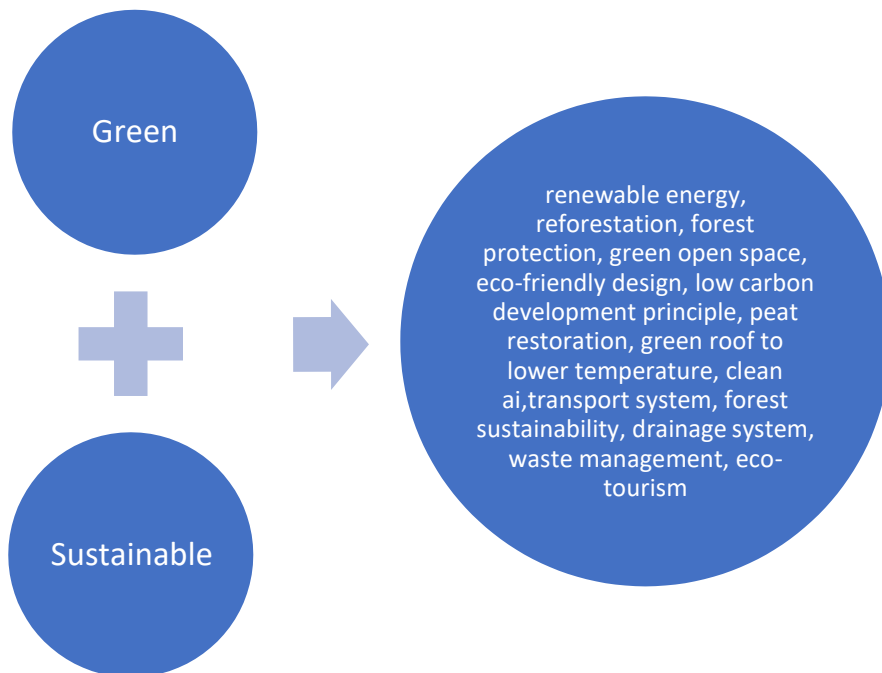


Figure 4.9 “Green” and “Sustainability” complex. “Green” has the same meaning of “sustainability” most of the time, as it was seen in paragraph 4.4.

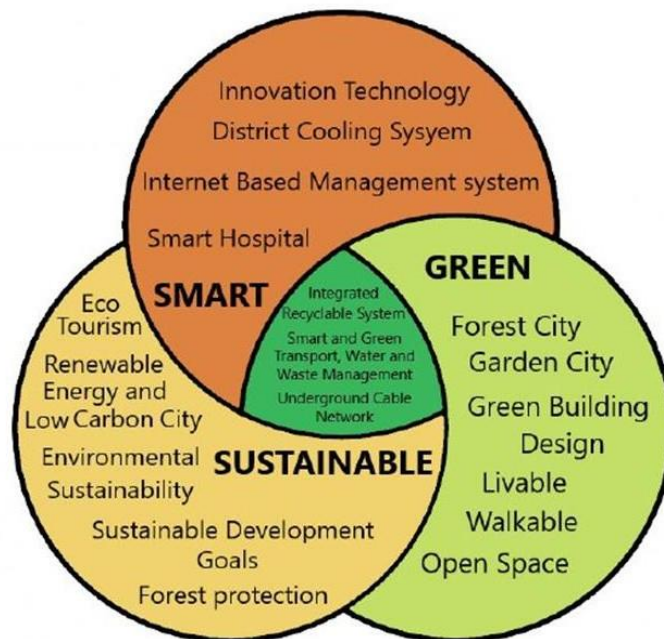


Figure 4.10 The “Green”, “Smart” and “Sustainability” complex with samples.

5. Cities mentioned: Results

Throughout the tweets, Bappenas mentioned several countries that, according to them, successfully moved their capital. These cities are regarded as good models to take into consideration when building the future capital. Not only prototypes for the new capital are reported, but also cities which can explain Jakarta's next role. This section will report the cities mentioned in the tweets as potential models for *Ibu Kota Baru* and Jakarta. Interestingly, no country in South and North-East Asia was cited.

5.1 Models for *Ibu Kota baru*

Figure 5.1 reports the cities cited as models for the new capital. Interestingly, Brasilia is cited 21 times, a number that impressively exceeds the other mentions. Washington, Canberra and Putrajaya are cited 3 times each, New Cairo and Abuja twice while the remaining cities once. These are Astana, Almaty, Sejong, New Kabul, Nabire, Jayapura, Islamabad, Gaborone. There is a significant imbalance between Brasilia and the other cities: while there is not much explanation regarding the choice of these particular cities, Brasilia is explained in detail through examples and arguments.



Figure 5.1 Potentials models for *Ibu Kota Baru* according to the Indonesian government

Some cities were metaphorically connected to concepts which the new capital will be based on. Washington D.C is the "Beautiful City", Brasilia is the "Radiant City", Canberra and Abuja are the "Garden City", Gaborone and New Kabul are the "Green City", Putrajaya is the "Intelligent City" (Tweet). These cities are also examples of liveable and non-polluted places (Tweet).

***Tweet.** Ibu Kota Baru akan berkonsep 'Smart, Green, & Beautiful City' #IbuKotaNegara. Best practice konsep ibu kota: Beautiful City (Washington D.C), Radiant City (Brasilia), Garden City (Canberra dan Abuja), Green City (Gaborone and New Kabul), Intelligent City (Putrajaya), dan lainnya³²*
(May 6, 2019)

***Tweet.** "Saya 10 hari lalu ke Papua. Di Jayapura dan Nabire, saya tengok ke atas, langitnya biru, sangat bersih. Di Jakarta, statusnya hanya ada kabut. Kabut yang bukan alami, tetapi karena polusi udara," - Menteri PPN/Kepala Bappenas Bambang Brodjonegoro #IbuKotaBaru #YouthAskIKN³³*
(August 20, 2019)

In some cases, it is also said that Indonesia will do more than some new capitals. For instance, the Indonesian Ministry said that Indonesia wants to do more compared to Malaysia and Egypt, which both moved their government seat just outside the existing capital. The Indonesian project is substantial because the capital is transferred to another island. There are no other reported explanations concerning the cities mentioned other than Brasilia (Tweet). Nevertheless, the fact that these cities - and not others - were named, suggests that the government found a good model of inspiration in them.

Selain Brasil, banyak negara memindahkan ibu kota: Malaysia yang pusat administrasinya ke Putrajaya. Korea Selatan, dari Seoul ke Sejong. Kazakhstan, dari Almaty ke Astana, juga Australia, ke Canberra. Pakistan, Nigeria, bahkan Mesir juga pernah pindahkan ibu kota #IbuKotaBaru³⁴
(July 9, 2019)

³²"The new capital city will be built under the concept of "Smart, Green and Beautiful" #IbuKotaNegara. Best practice of these concepts in capitals: Beautiful City (Washington D.C), Radiant City (Brasilia), Garden City (Canberra and Abuja), Green City (Gaborone and New Kabul), Intelligent City (Putrajaya), and others".

³³ "I went to Papua 10 days ago. In Jayapura and Nabire, I looked up, the sky was blue, very clean. In Jakarta, the status is only fog. Fog was not natural, but it was caused by air pollution," -PAT Minister / Head of Bappenas Bambang Brodjonegoro #IbuKotaBaru#YouthAskIKN

³⁴ "Besides Brazil, many countries moved the capital city: Malaysia, whose administrative centre is to Putrajaya. South Korea, from Seoul to Sejong. Kazakhstan, from Almaty to Astana, also Australia, to Canberra. Pakistan, Nigeria and even Egypt have also moved their capital city #IbuKotaBaru"

5.2 Models for Jakarta

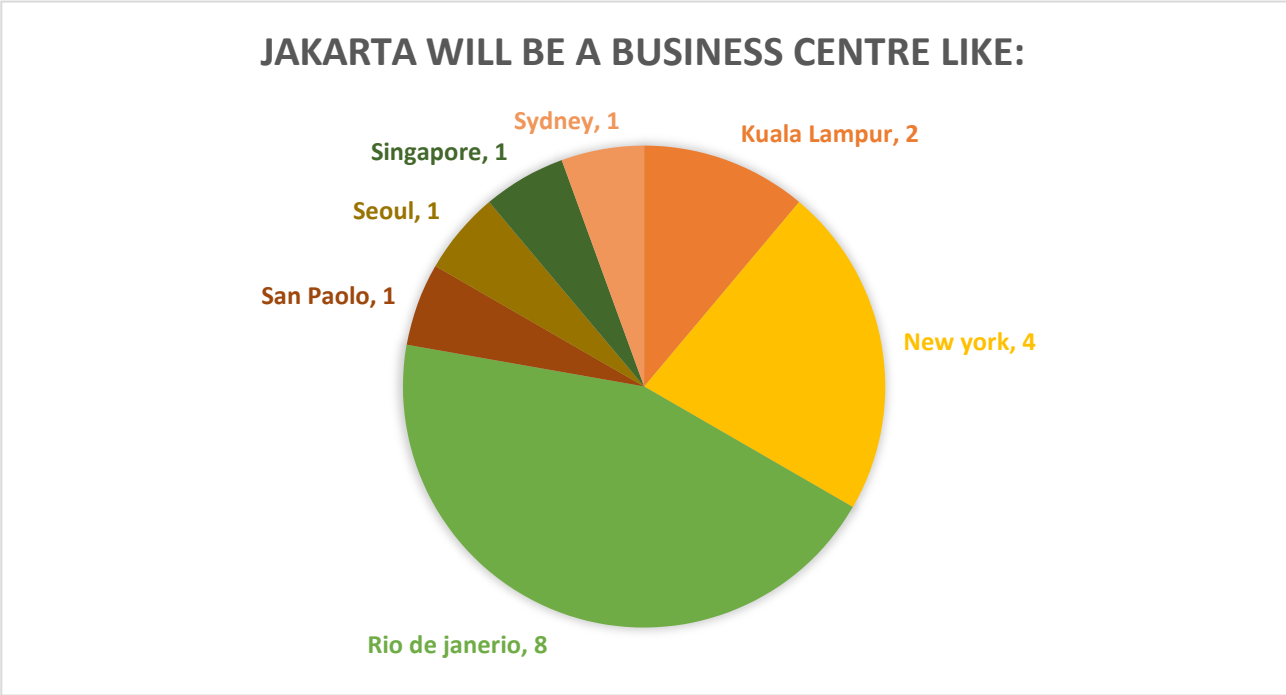


Figure 5.2 Potential models for Jakarta according to the Indonesian government

Tweet. "#IbuKotaBaru akan menjadi pusat pemerintahan, seperti Washigton DC, Jakarta menjadi New York, kota bisnis terbesar. Jakarta akan menjadi ekonomi yang lebih maju. Jakarta akan menjadi pesaing Singapura," -Menteri PPN/Kepala Bappenas Bambang Brodjonegoro #YouthAskIKN " ³⁵

(August 20, 2019)

The Indonesian government is also concerned about indicating a new role for Jakarta. First of all, it is worth remembering that the new capital is said to ease the burden of Jakarta in terms of population, as around 1 million people will move. Although the allusions of Jakarta as the capital city are not positive, there seems to be hope for Jakarta as a new competitive city. Indeed, thanks to the moving of the capital, Jakarta can evolve into the biggest business centre of Indonesia, thus becoming a strong competitor of Singapore. The results are reported in Figure 5.2. All the cities in this table have more inhabitants compared to their corresponding new capitals and have now been developed to be the centres of economy, finance and business of the country. Rio de Janeiro was mentioned 8 times, followed by New York, Kuala Lumpur, Sydney, Singapore, Seoul and São Paolo.

The government tweets that by developing and facilitating the business, Jakarta will attract more investors and, consequently, the local and national economy will benefit from this progress. Nevertheless, not all functions will move: the Financial Services Authority (Otoritas Jasa Keuangan), trades and industries

³⁵ "#IbuKotaBaru will become the centre of government, such as Washington DC. Jakarta becomes New York, the largest business city. Jakarta will become a more developed economy. Jakarta will be a competitor to Singapore." -PAT Minister / Head of Bappenas Bambang Brodjonegoro #YouthAskIKN"

will remain in Jakarta as well as the office of Bank Indonesia and the Investment Coordinating Board of the Republic of Indonesia. As Rio - that maintained the main matches and Olympic games - Jakarta will maintain its central position.

Similar to the models cited for *Ibu Kota Baru*, there are no clear reasons why these cities were chosen, if not for the fact that many of them are former capitals. What is curious is that the government sees Jakarta as a possible business competitor worldwide (Tweets).

***Tweet.** Contoh menariknya adalah Brasil. Olimpiade tetap di Rio, bukan di Brasilia. Begitu juga piala dunia. Akhirnya di stadion yang ada di Rio. Artinya, Jakarta akan tetap menjadi Jakarta, justru diharapkan menjadi kota bisnis yang semakin besar #IbuKotaBaru³⁶*

(July 9, 2019)

***Tweet.** Fungsi Jasa Keuangan, Perdagangan, dan Industri tetap di Jakarta. Kemungkinan besar, Kantor @bank_indonesia @ojkindonesia, dan @bkpm masih tetap di Jakarta. Contoh: Washington DC-New York; Canberra-Sydney; Brasilia-Rio de Janeiro; Putra Jaya-Kualalumpur #IbuKotaNegara³⁷*

(May 6, 2019)

5.3 Brasilia

Given the fact that the Indonesian government found in Brasilia a real source of inspiration, it is worth dwelling on it a bit in order to identify the similarities they found with *Ibu Kota Baru* and see the reasons why Brasilia is so crucial. Let us see what the Indonesian government indicates.

Brasilia is the current capital of Brazil, built from scratch in 1960, after the election of Juscelino Kubitschek as President of Brazil in 1956. Brasilia is the third capital, after Rio de Janeiro and Salvador. Before, it was just an empty area near the Amazon. Although it is quite bizarre that a remote capital like Brasilia was chosen as the main model for *Ibu Kota Baru*, it seems that the Indonesian government finds many similarities within the two countries. Just like Brasilia, *Ibu Kota Baru* will be built as a new city close to the largest country's rainforest, and it is projected to be a source of economic development as well as the highest income city per capita (Tweet). Indonesia and Brazil also share the fact of being fast-emerging markets, likely to be among the countries with the largest GDP in the coming decades (Tweet). They are also vast and heterogeneous.

***Tweet.** Indonesia dan Brasil, sama-sama anggota G20, emerging market, dua negara emerging market yang berpotensi masuk top 10 ekonomi dengan PDB terbesar apakah di 2030 atau 2040, juga wilayahnya besar. Perbedaannya hanya 1, Brazil wilayah kontinen, kita kepulauan #IbuKotaBaru³⁸*

(July 9, 2019)

³⁶ "An interesting example is Brazil. The Olympics remain in Rio, not in Brasilia. Likewise the world cup, the final is at the stadium in Rio. So, Jakarta will continue to be Jakarta. It is expected to become a big business city #IbuKotaBaru"

³⁷ "The functions of Financial Services, Trade and Industry remain in Jakarta. Most likely, Office of the Bank of Indonesia, Financial service authority and Investment Coordinating Board, will still be in Jakarta. Example: Washington DC-New York; Canberra-Sydney; Brasilia-Rio de Janeiro; Putra Jaya-Kualalumpur #IbuKotaNegara"

³⁸ "Indonesia and Brazil, both members of the G20, emerging markets, two emerging market countries that have the potential to enter the top 10 economies with the largest GDP in 2030 or 2040, and are also large regions. The difference is only 1, Brazil is a continental region, we are islands #IbuKotaBaru"

In the tweets, it is reported that Brasilia was constructed in two thousand days, it has a modern and artistic design, and the relocation was made through a constitutional mandate after the government was formed. It is also stated that in 1959 the President Soekarno visited Brazil, and a year later Brasilia. Although not reported in the tweets, it is likely that, during 2019, the Indonesian government organized meetings where they talked about Brasilia as quotes from non-governmental figures were mentioned in the tweets. For instance, a tweet reporting part of the discourse made by the LBPP Ambassador to Brazil 2010-2015, Sudaryomo Hartosudarmo, was reported, stating the extraordinary development of Brasilia and its impact in 20 satellite cities that became the centre of new industries, trade and tourism. The Brazilian Ambassador in Indonesia, Rubem Barbosa, was also mentioned, saying:

***Tweet.** "Sebagai ukuran sukses, saat ini, Brasilia memiliki pendapatan per kapita tertinggi di Brasil. Brasilia juga berjasa bagi penyebaran agribisnis karena peran sentralnya sebagai kota di tengah-tengah negara Brasil," Duta Besar Brasil untuk Indonesia Rubem Barbosa #IbuKotaBaru³⁹*

(July 10, 2019)

Bappenas communicates that the initial idea of Brasilia was not to build a city with a better income and far from existing cities, but it was built to cope with problems related to overpopulation in the main cities so that to find a better balance between highly overpopulated urban areas and remote rural areas. The aim was to renew national pride through the design of a modern capital, the model for the 21st century. It is curious that the Indonesian government put so much effort in discussing about Brasilia on Twitter, and at the same time that it finds in Brasilia an example to tackle inequalities and to renovate national pride and unity (Figure 5.3).



Figure 5.3 Let's learn from Brazil. Source: @BappenasRI. July, 10, 2019. [Link](#).

³⁹ "As a measure of success, currently, Brasilia has the highest income per capita in Brazil. Brasilia also serves to spread agribusiness because of its central role as a city in the middle of the country of Brazil" Brazilian Ambassador to Indonesia Rubem Barbosa #IbuKotaBaru



Figure 5.4 Population of Brasilia and Rio De Janeiro. Source: @BappenasRI July, 10, 2019. [Link](#)

Bappenas had also made clear in several tweets that when the capital was relocated from Rio de Janeiro to Brasilia, the population in this latter increased sharply (Figure 5.4). Indeed, Brasilia saw an increase in the population of 14.4% per year, whereas Rio de Janeiro 4.2% per year. The Indonesian Ministry also reports *The Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics World Urbanization Prospects*, which recorded a gradual increase in population in Brasilia in 1955, 1960, and 2019, being 69,669, 136,643, and 4,558,991 respectively.

Bappenas also clarified that there have been no economic losses for Rio when the capital moved. This information was further confirmed by an article published by Quistorff in 2015, reported in Figure

5.5. Through an in-depth analysis using a synthetic control strategy⁴⁰, the article finds that losing the capital nomination had no significant effects in Rio de Janeiro. In contrast, Brasilia experienced large and significant increases in population, employment and GDP. The article concludes by saying: “receiving the capital designation had large, positive effects on total population and both the public and private GDP and employment of Brasilia. For Rio de Janeiro, the old capital, I find no significant impact on public sector employment or GDP and consequently no impact on the private sector or total population” (Quistorff 2015:19). Through these studies, the Indonesian government is thus giving additional proofs that *Ibu Kota Baru* and



Figure 5.5 Rio de Janeiro and its economy after Brasilia became capital. Source: @BappenasRI July, 10, 2019. [Link](#)

the surroundings will experience a significant economic growth, while Jakarta will not be affected. On the contrary, as stated before, Jakarta will become a financial centre and will decrease its population. The positive effect on the Brazilian economy for transferring the capital are also explained on the fact that the

⁴⁰ A synthetic control strategy is a statistical method that provide quantitative support for case studies by evaluating the effect of an intervention (McClelland and Gault 2017)

employment multiplier has increased of 1.7 as additional jobs in the public sector were created, and the output multiplier of 2.93.

It was seen below that Bappenas metaphorically named Brasilia the “Radiant City”. The next Chapter will analyse Brasilia more thoroughly and why it is nicknamed as such.

6. Analysis and Interpretation

The previous chapters introduced the results obtained from the analysis of the tweets posted in the period of January-October 2019 by Bappenas and President Joko Widodo regarding *Ibu Kota Baru*. It is now clear that among the features promoted for *Ibu Kota Baru* some stand out: sustainable, smart and green. This chapter is different from the previous three: so far, I displayed the results retrieved from the Twitter analysis with no further information nor interpretation of the data. This chapter will reflect on the results found to analyse the official rationale and, particularly, to dissect the political and ideological discourse that surrounds the new capital project.

6.1 Indonesia Maju

As mentioned earlier, the terms “smart”, “green”, “sustainable” and “beautiful” lack of explanations and examples. Although from the tweets, it is possible at times to grasp the different meanings embedded in these terms, very often, it is not clear what the government is implying through the use of these concepts. As this terminology is hard to define, it would be possible that these concepts are used as buzzwords. That is to say, words charged of too many meanings and deemed to solve too many problems (e.g. sustainable plastic use, green lifestyle, smart energy, environmental sustainability, sustainable development, green solutions, and so on). These features not only are they employed for indicating a great deal of attributes that the new city is going to have (e.g. renewable, modern, cutting-edge water and waste system, green open spaces), but they are also used in the title “*Menuju ibu kota masa depan: smart, green, beautiful, dan sustainable*”. This title is given to several government meetings organized throughout summer 2019. These meetings were held for obtaining input related to the readiness of the new capital. Interestingly, although these dialogues had the title reporting the smart, green, beautiful and sustainable concept, all the other features described above were mentioned and cited during these talks (example in Figure 6.1). This shows how these concepts are used as a frame to explain the others.

Adopting the title “*Menuju Ibu Kota Masa Depan: Smart, Green, Beautiful, dan Sustainable*” for discussing all the components promoted for *Ibu Kota Baru* emphasizes the fact that these concepts prevail on the others



Figure 6.1 A smart, green, beautiful and sustainable but also modern and international capital. Source: @BappenasRI, July, 16, 2019. [Link](#).

and suggests the type of national progress and identity the government is promoting. That is to say, progress and identity are expressed through modern and progressive attributes and the use of intelligent and environmentally friendly technologies. It goes without saying that the word “modernity” is much more than one of the categories individuated in the tweets; it is also the backbone of the whole discourse of *Ibu Kota Baru*. Modernity is thus explained through the features of sustainable, smart, green, beautiful and internationalism. It is noteworthy that “modernity” is not found very often in the tweets with the word “modern”: “*maju*”, or “*kemajuan*”, that can be translated with the words “advanced/ advancing” and “progressed/ progressing”, are instead more frequent. “*Maju*” is modernity in the most dynamic sense. The term may also be found in the repeated hashtag #IndonesiaMaju and the Twitter cover image of President Joko Widodo.

Therefore, it is worth keeping in mind that the terms “smart”, “green”, “beautiful”, “sustainable” and also “international”⁴¹ are widely encountered as “validations without explanations”: by this I mean that these words, at least until the end of 2019, are encountered more as symbols rather than clear explanations of the project. This is also proven by the fact that the features are unclear and interchangeable, as it was seen in paragraph 4.17. The take-home message here is that the government looks at these features as a single unit, a constructed frame that provides a meaning to the perceived reality. I argue that these features - modernity, international, sustainable, smart and green- are the cornerstone of the strategic frame made up by politicians to promote and convince the local and international community that the new capital is a project that must be done in order to have a prosperous country. These features are thus elements and signs of modernity and progress. This is the message they are conveying (Figure 6.2).

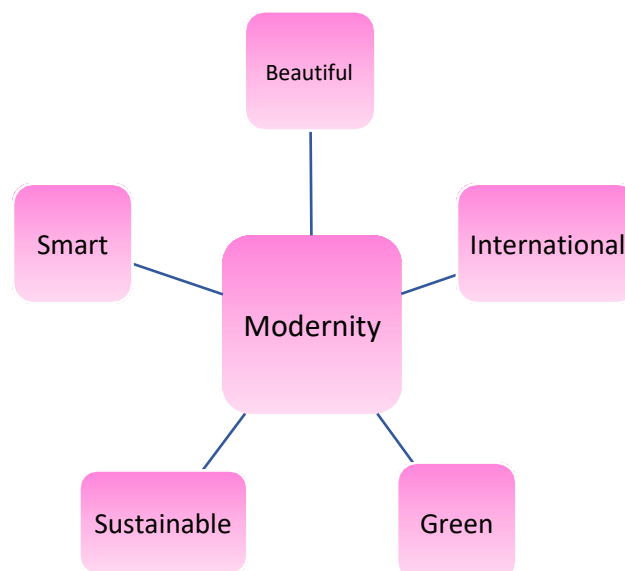


Figure 6.2 Modernity, the centrepiece, and its attribute

⁴¹ As it was seen, “international” is important because it is almost always mentioned together with “modernity”.

6.2 Modern capital cities

The term “modern” may be challenging to define. Generally speaking, modernity is associated with the process of urbanization and economic globalization, technological innovation and the power of nation-states (Snyder 2016). In Asia, globalization after the ‘60s has produced a new type of city able to transcend national institutions, politics and culture (Rimmer and Dick 2009, McGee 1967). “Western” is no longer a Euro-American domain; it is a condition of universal aspiration, a process that the “Others” has made theirs (Koolhaas 1995:1013). The Eurocentric modernity in Asia led to a significant change in the urbanism, creating commodified products in line with international style. The Singaporean architect William S.W Lim, referring to Asian cities, writes: “This elitist utopian vision of creating an improved environment in the name of providing a better-order future leads to the destruction of invaluable historical memories and of the existing familiar environment which makes ordinary people feel at home. The question that must be asked is: what exactly is meant by “better” and for whose benefit?” (2008:146). The latter question is essential when questioning the motifs behind *Ibu Kota Baru*, and it is especially tackled in the concluding chapter.

Generally speaking, capital cities always carry a symbol: they may be the centre of business, commerce, religion, culture or government (Macedo and Tran 2013). Hall (2006) distinguished seven types of capital cities: multi-functional capitals, global capital, political capitals, former capitals, ex-imperial capitals, provincial capitals, and super capitals. All capitals cited by the Indonesian government on Twitter, including *Ibu Kota Baru*, are “political capitals”, that is to say: “created as seats of government, and often lacking other functions which remain in older-established commercial cities (Ibid:8)”. In all of the cited cities, the modern buildings stand out and are surrounded by large green spaces (Figure 6.3). The symbolism and urban planning of a capital change according to its function. In the case of *Ibu Kota Baru*, the capital is clearly the symbol of a modern and advanced nation that is sustainable thanks to the use of smart technologies. The planned high-speed trains, excellent infrastructures, smart systems and tamed green areas are all symbols of efficient governance.

As it was seen in Chapter 5, the Indonesian government mentioned some cities considered to be good models for *Ibu Kota Baru*. The one that particularly stands out is Brasilia, mentioned 21 times. This session will briefly mention Brasilia, although more information will be given in paragraph 6.6. Indicating Brasilia as the main model for *Ibu Kota Baru* might appear inconsistent. It is true that Brasilia is a symbol of modernity and reflects government’s ambition to create a modern society, but it has never been created with the “sustainability” and “smartness” idea in mind, nor it has ever been considered one of the best examples of these attributes. Why has Brasilia been selected as the primary model if the most desired features for *Ibu Kota Baru* were not envisaged for Brasilia? One may think that Singapore would be a better example for *Ibu Kota Baru*. As seen before, Singapore is ranked first in terms of smartness, and it is known for its greenery and gardens (Min 2010, Woetzel et al. 2018, Wong et al. 2014, Yuen 1996, Han 2018). The fact that Singapore was not mentioned as a model for the new Indonesian capital is curious and disturbing at the same time.

There might be two reasons for this. The first is regional competitiveness; if the Indonesian government considered Singapore the official model, they would claim its superiority not only in the present but also in the future references of *Ibu Kota Baru*. The second is the actual similarities of Indonesia with Brazil; it might be possible to think that Indonesia shares more similarities with Brazil than Singapore: they are vast, they have lots of available land, they are heterogeneous in culture and people, their prior capital was overcrowded and polluted. Regarding their ambition, both nations desired to change the gravity of their country, shifting it in the direction of frontiers and peripheries and away from an old historic core. In this respect, the cited Abuja and Canberra are also comparable. In conclusion, *Ibu Kota Baru* might be viewed as the 21st century equivalent of Brasilia, with sustainability and smartness as new elements.



Figure 6.3 Some of the city models for *Ibu Kota Baru*, cited in the tweets. In most of the cases, there is a central tall symbolic building surrounded by green open areas. On the top left and top right, there is [Abuja](#), and [Gaborone](#). On the centre-left and centre-right, there is [Washington DC](#) and [Putrajaya](#). On the bottom left and bottom right, there is [Astana](#) and [Canberra](#).

6.3 Sustainability: a vague and overused concept

Turning back to Singapore for a moment, the “Garden city” vision introduced in 1967 by Lee Kuan Yew transformed Singapore in a green and clean city. The “greenness” aimed at evolving Singapore into a civilized and prosperous state in order to demonstrate a good governance, an advanced nation, and to attract investments and tourism (Lee 2000, Wong et al. 2014). Therefore, the greening of the city was always subjugated under the economic yoke and regime’s legitimacy, never for its own sake (Min 2010). Singapore has mostly maintained a top-down, non-participatory approach in environmental policy, which is based on a utilitarian view towards nature. Green technologies, infrastructures and gardens are emphasized for a mere beautification programme rather than biodiversity protection and natural habitat (Han 2016). This state-led green transition process reflects the state’s utilitarian environmental perspective that nature can be controlled through a thorough planning and use of technologies. By looking at *Ibu Kota Baru*, some similarities with Singapore may be found; for instance, the demonstration of an advanced nation through modern attributes, the use of technologies and the beautification of the city through forests and gardens. It is, as a matter of fact, a utilitarian view of nature.

Nevertheless, Singapore has been criticized for not being a truly sustainable city: its carbon footprint is growing, 95% of the energy comes from non-renewable sources and, as said before, economic growth has always prevailed (Chua 2017, Tan 2019, Han 2018, Chin 2019, Urban Ecology 2018, Mah 2019). However, it is green, fast, modern and smart. The same can be said about Brasilia for its hyper-modern style and natural elements thoroughly tamed and captured within rectilinear limits. All these attributes seem to have become the modern practice and vision of sustainability; in other words, it is a rhetoric that replace actions towards a real “sustainable” outcome. If *Ibu Kota Baru* is planned to be sustainable, it might be crucial paying attention on the real carbon footprint of the city, on the origin of the energy, and at what cost has the “green” been created, before calling the capital “sustainable”. The Indonesian government did not provide any examples nor explanations on how to reach sustainability in *Ibu Kota Baru*; on the contrary, there are examples of smart systems and mentions to green spaces. Therefore, it seems that the term “sustainability” is more linked to smart and green attributes than “sustainability” per se, as if these concepts were interchangeable. It is partially true that the mentioned smart systems can lower waste and energy consumption and therefore be sustainable, but the effectiveness depends on factors that cannot be foreseen now, such as whether these systems will be spread around the city or not. Private interests are also playing a role in the new capital, severely questioning the much-praised sustainability (paragraph 7.5). I argue that “sustainable” has wrongly been conceived as a synonym of “smart”, “green” and a symbol of “modernity”. Furthermore, as Bappenas tweets suggest, “sustainable”, and especially “sustainable development” are also linked to the terms “inclusivity” and “equality”. In order to be real, “sustainability” should not be a consequence of these attributes and must, therefore, be untied from these. In order to give a further explanation, let us look at the smart systems that Bappenas mentioned in the tweets.

6.4 Smart systems

“Smart city” can have different connotations. A “smart city” can be defined with the terms “intelligent”, “digital”, “interconnected”, “creative”, “sustainable”, “innovative” or even as a “place for high-educated people, education and knowledge” (Hatuka et al. 2018, Albino, Berardi, Dangelico 2015).

According to Dameri (2013), a smart city is “a geographical area in which high technologies such as ICT, logistic and energy production cooperate to create benefits for citizens in terms of wellbeing, inclusion and participation, environmental quality, intelligent development” (2013: 2549). Furthermore, a smart city improves the performance of public services (e.g. transports, energy, housing, waste and water management), to reduce consumption, waste and overall costs (Neirotti et al. 2014, Mohamed, Lazarova-Molnar and Al-Jaroodi 2017). Thus, the overarching aim of a smart city is to enhance the quality of living through smart technology. Generally speaking, technologies can be considered intelligent when they have an awareness of the situation and can react to it (Worden 2003). They can detect, sense, measure, and record data to communicate and interact with system operators and managers and to analyse the situation enabling quick responses and optimize troubleshooting solutions (Ho Kim 2019).

In the tweets, it appears that “smart city” is connected to the implementations of smart systems for bettering the lives of citizens and being more efficient and sustainable. Nevertheless, the tweets do not provide any explanation of these smart systems. Using complex terminologies without explaining them is not fruitful for delivering messages to the majority of people who are not expert in the field of urban planning and technology. The use of the English language further complicates the comprehension for Indonesian people. While it is more or less clear what green and sustainable means, it is not clear how the mentioned “intelligent” systems functions. In order to detect the cutting-edge urbanism of the new capital, it is necessary to explain the concept, and the provide examples briefly.

Bappenas often cites the concept of smart waste management. In this case, a sensor that measures the fill level is attached to the waste receptacle, and the measured data is transferred to the Cloud computing. Thanks to the IoT (Internet of Things, repeatedly mentioned in the tweets) it is thus possible to maximize collection services and reduce operational cost, converting waste management into data-driven collection processes (Jamrozik 2019, Ray 2015). Bappenas goes beyond this definition, stating that waste management in *Ibu Kota Baru* will be carried out through the principle of Waste to Energy (WtE) and the principle of Circular Economy for waste (3R approach). In the Waste-to-Energy system, the discarded products are used as a renewable source of energy. In this way, it is possible to create a valid alternative to energy from fossil fuels, lowering CO₂ emissions (Kothari et al. 2010). Circular economy differs from the linear economy as, while in the latter raw materials are processed into products and thrown away, in the circular economy products are constantly recycled, thus making the production more sustainable. The mentioned 3R approach refers to the three English words of *reuse, reduce and recycle*, pillars of the circular economy. Promoters claim that the

circular economy that does not only look for a good ecological impact but also at the economic and social impact, thus focusing in bettering the quality of life of the people (Andersen 2007, Accenture 2014).

Equally important in the tweets is the concept of smart water management system. This system is used to provide a more resilient and efficient water supply scheme that lessen the cost and waste and improve the sustainability of the city. High-technology solutions for the water sector include digital meters and sensors used for transmitting information in real-time (e.g. rain gauges, pressure monitoring), supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) systems to optimize the information (e.g. sewerage and water treatment control), geographic information systems (GIS) and software to store data (Ho Kim 2018). A smart system provides water managers with updated information to promptly find the right solutions. In the tweets, a synonym given to “smart” is “circular”, in this case, circular water management system. Figure 6.4 shows the circular economy applied to water.

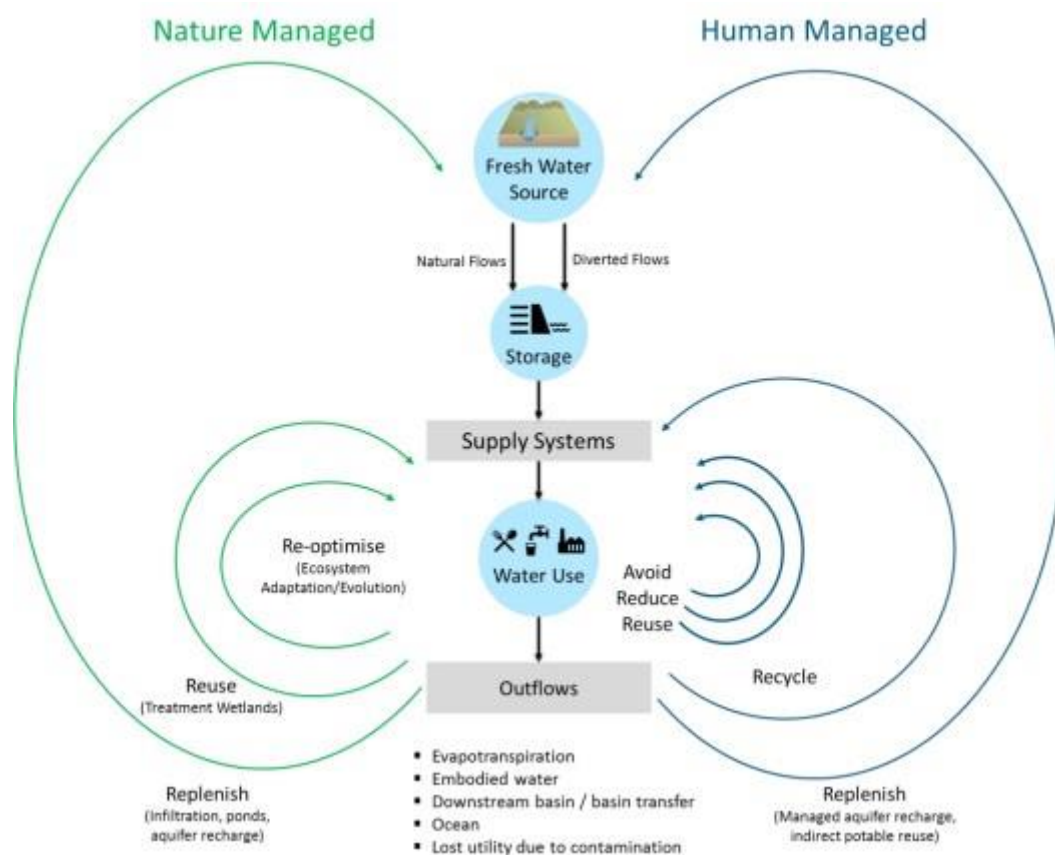


Figure 6.4. Smart water management system. The left side of the graphic shows the natural system, where the ecosystem re-optimizes, re-uses and replenishes water by itself. The right side represents the human management system, which copies the natural system through the 5R approach (avoid use, reduce, reuse, recycle, replenish). From: *Water and circular economy*. Source: Ellen McArthur Foundation 2018

Besides enjoying the benefits of smart waste and water management, *Ibu Kota Baru* will avail of smart grids, smart transports, smart hospitals, e-cars, integrated recyclable system and integrated information system. Smart Grids consist of electronic grids working together with controls, computers, automation, new technologies and equipment to respond digitally to the changing electric demand (Shabanzadeh and

Moghaddam 2013). The Intelligent transport system aims at minimizing traffic problems while assuring road safety and efficient infrastructure through sensors, information processors, communication system, roadside messages and GPS (Choudhary 2019). Smart hospitals use smart technologies and artificial intelligence to make diagnosis and achieve better care. The integrated recyclable system refers to the circular economy for waste, where parts of products are constantly reused in a closed-loop.

It should be clearer now what exactly a smart city is and what these intricate systems bring to a city. Smart technologies have never been employed to Indonesian cities in such vast proportions. Should the new capital become a smart city, it would be a breakthrough for Indonesia. Furthermore, as these smart technologies are employed to make urban systems more sustainable and eco-friendlier, they might create a new vision of a city. City is not only a place to inhabit, but a place for people where they are free to choose whether to use transport, bicycle or walk, and they do not need to deal with pollution or traffic.

To summarize, the new capital is expected to provide a new, modern, safe and clean environment for its inhabitants, reflecting the modernity which Indonesia is aspiring to. We have also seen that modernity is not linked to something recalling Indonesia, nor Southeast Asia as there are no cities mentioned besides Putrajaya. Nevertheless, it is worth questioning how this city, brilliantly reflecting the image of a modern country, will benefit the rest of the population which presumably wants to live in clean, safe and efficient cities. Although the tweet advocates that Jakarta will be a business city, there is no reference of Jakarta as a next smart and liveable city that can copy the model of the new capital. It is only highlighted that Jakarta will reduce its population as 1 million people will move in the new capital. More details will be given in paragraph 6.7. Before that, it is important to discuss another point that the Indonesian government has cherished: the internationalism of *Ibu Kota Baru*. Despite there are not clear and direct explanations regarding how the new capital will manage to be an international city, this intent is clear when looked at the language used. English words are indeed used when certain concepts are cited. Let us analyse this.

6.5 Internationalism and the use of English words

Throughout the analysis of the tweets, it was observed that several words were regularly written in English. By collecting them on Excel, it was possible to notice that these terms relate to the main features of the capital, namely smart, green, sustainable, modern and international, as shown in Table 6.1. These are the topics that the Indonesian government, wittingly or not, includes in the “international” sphere.

It is interesting to look at the use of English words for two main reasons: first, they show which topics the government sees as being part of the global agenda and discourse; secondly, they clearly show that these words are not directed to Indonesian people but probably to foreign politicians or experts. Besides, using complicate English jargons is not useful to make Indonesian people better understand how the new capital will be. Instead, these words are used to demonstrate to the external community that *Ibu Kota Baru* will be, above all, an intelligent city that uses cutting-edge technology to be sustainable and green. The fact that also

the most used title for government meetings contains these English words – *Menuju Ibu Kota masa depan smart, green, beautiful dan sustainable* - witnesses that these particular attributes are the aspects that the government aims at showing to the world.

Furthermore, it is noticeable that not only the word “smart” is always written in English but also other concepts related to the Internet (e.g. Internet of Things), sustainability and green spaces (e.g. forest city, liveable, green open space) and modern technologies (e.g. smart waste management, circular economy). Let us see why.

The reason why a language becomes “global” does not concern the number of people who speak the language. Indeed, there is a close connection between the dominance of a language and its economic, cultural, and technological power. Without a solid power base, no language can become an international medium of communication (Crystal 2003:7). English is historically (colonial development in the XIX century and its adoption as an official or semi-official language in the XX century) and socio-culturally relevant, which now penetrates the political life, business, and international communication. The XIX century was the period of most exceptional progress for the English press, thanks to new printing technology, production and transportation. The adoption of English as an international medium of communication has been influencing and facilitating the way people communicate. The use of Anglicism is especially strong in the IT (Information Technology) domain, facilitating the communication within specialists. This is explained by the fact that most progress in the field of IT and computer programming has been made in the English-speaking countries and sources like books, articles and research are published in English to facilitate the communication and the spread of the information (Abrudan and Sturza 2015, Ariyati 2014, Graddol 1997, Crystal 2003). In this analysis, it was seen that many Anglicisms are also used as buzzwords, without a specific meaning. Looking at the tweets analysed, it is blatant that the majority of English words refers to the smart, green and sustainable attributes of the capital. “English has more than ever become America’s greatest and most effective export” (Specter in Crystal 2003). Although the English words mentioned in the tweets have their Bahasa Indonesia equivalent, they are mainly adopted in English by Bappenas. For instance, “smart”, “green”, “beautiful” and “forest city” are never found in Indonesian, along with the terminology related to smart systems (e.g. circular, intelligent, water/waste management system), the Internet (e.g. Internet of Things), sustainability and green spaces (e.g. forest city, liveable, green open space). Sometimes, instead of using “sustainable development” they used “*pembangunan lanjutan*”, and for “modern/progress” they used “*maju*”, but these are the only detected cases. In effect, the design of *Ibu Kota Baru* does not reflect Indonesian identity or history. Instead, the main attributes promoted for the new capital reflect the global influences and trends in which *Ibu Kota Baru* is inserted. That is to say, the process of globalization and modernism architecture, smart technologies, green, clean areas and sustainability are more linked to global trends.

Smart	17	Intelligent city	3	Gridlock	1	Vertical Garden	1	Lighting system	1	Recreational Park	
Green	16	Liveable	3	Queen of the East	1	Urban garden	1	Motorized and non-motorized transport	1	Botanical Garden	
Beautiful	12	Integrated Information system	3	Efficient street and building lighting	1	Green design	1	Sport complex	1		
Sustainable	10	Garden City	2	Clean	1	Waste to Energy	1	Innovative public transportation network	1		
Forest City	6	City	2	Radiant city	1	Circular economy	1	Electric vehicles	1		
Modern	5	Circular waste management system	2	Renewable energy	1	Potable water	1	Smart hospitals	1		
Intelligent and Green transport system	5	Internet of Things	2	Competitiveness	1	Waste water system-sewerage	1	Telemedicine	1		
Urban design	4	Smart grid	2	Fossil fuel	1	Water treatment system	1	Swim centre	1		
Youth dream	4	Smart green waste management	2	Science techno park	1	Greywater	1	Jogging area	1		

Smart water management system	4	Power and gas supply	4	Shopping mall	1	Green building design	1	Artificial Intelligence	1		
Master plan	3	Gridlock	1	Green roof	1	Efficient	1	Let's go	1		

Table 6.1. English words used by Bappenas and Jokowi in the tweets.

Thus, the adoption of English words is legit and reflects the new Indonesian aspirations of internationalism and transnationality. On the one hand, the use of English terminology demonstrates an openness towards these global trends; on the other hand, it may enforce existing patterns of inclusion and exclusion. Indeed, the extensive use of English buzzwords and complex terminology is not understood by everybody, especially in Indonesia, where the level of English is still weak.

There are still two essential elements to analyse in this chapter. First is Brasilia, the model for *Ibu Kota Baru*. An analysis around Brasilia design, aims and outcomes might provide crucial information about the urban planning and, more importantly, about the possible future challenges that *Ibu Kota Baru* might encounter. The second is Jakarta, the abandoned capital.

6.6 Brasilia: the model for *Ibu Kota Baru*

6.6.1 Influences

To explain it briefly, Brasilia was a state-imposed city invented to project a new Brazil to the world. Brasilia was built according to the CIAM doctrine, mainly elaborated by the famous and controversial modernist architect and planner Le Corbusier⁴²; furthermore, one of the leading designers of Brasilia, Lucio Costa, was a student of Le Corbusier himself. It is thus apparent that Le Corbusier has thus a major influence in the plan of Brasilia. Let us see where the idea of Brasilia originates.

From 1928 to mid-1960s, CIAM (*Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne*), was the main forum for international exchange of ideas on modern architecture (Holston 1989). The fourth CIAM congress in 1933, named "Functional City" and then published by Le Corbusier as a document with the name "Athens Charter"⁴³, represents a consensual statement of architects to plan new cities and the establishment of the Modern Movement (Weiss, Harbusch and Maurer 2015). In CIAM IV, architects demanded a separation of the four functions of the city (housing, work, recreation and traffic) and expressed their faith in high

⁴² I said "controversial" because, according to Le Corbusier, slums are caused by poor planning and can be avoided thanks to the use of technological innovations and a detailed plan (Johnson 2008). Le Corbusier not only rejected the idea of slums, but the people who live inside as well.

⁴³ This name was given because it took place on a ship from Marseille to Athens (July – August 1933).

modernism to shape society through architecture (Holston 1989, Costa and Lee 2019, Weiss, Harbusch and Maurer 2015). High modernism is a form of modernity which implies a refusal of the past, a confidence in technology and science in order to make a completely fresh start and reorder the society (Scott 1998). This movement was prevalent in the late 1950s and 1960s. The designed “CIAM city” was conceived as a place of salvation from all the troubles affecting the cities of the XIX century, driven by the greed for capital and health accumulation. Indeed, architects imagined a city where the benefits were distributed to all social classes. The spatial and social structure of Brasilia were based on the CIAM theories of modern architecture being this the reference point for the development of the modern city until the 60s of the XX century. This is well seen, for instance, in the separation of the four aforementioned functions of the city, in the vertical buildings surrounded by wide open spaces and in the desire to produce a classless city through architecture. As mentioned earlier, Le Corbusier’s architectural ideas are considered the primary source of inspiration for Brasilia, especially the ideas of building a city free from traffic jam and slums, with high buildings, identical apartment blocks and green areas (Williams 2005). According to him, a city, in order to be efficient, needed to demolish what it had inherited, like slums, pollution and confusion (Scott 1998). Similarly, the two minds of Brasilia, Oscar Nyemer and Lucio Costa, looked at Brasilia as a realizable utopia that had no reference to the past cities like Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. In short, Brasilia was a state-imposed city invented to project a new Brazil to the world.

Along with the strong influence of the Modern Movement and the CIAM, the project of Brasilia contains evident elements from the “Garden city Movement”, which can also be found in *Ibu Kota Baru* (the green and beautiful city). This movement was an urban planning method introduced in 1898 by Sir Ebenezer Howard in the United Kingdom. He published “Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Social Reform” (1898), also known as “Garden City of To-morrow” (dated 1902). Howard saw in the planned and large green cities the solution for overpopulation and pollution (Costa and Lee 2019, Encyclopedia Britannica 2012). The proponent of the Garden City Movement envisioned a considerable proportion of the urban space occupied by green



Figure 6.5 Brasilia. Source: *Mijn Brazilië*. Brasilia is de hoofstad van Brazilië sinds 21 April 1960. [Link](#).

areas or gardens (Figure 6.5). As it will also be seen later, Le Corbusier combines his fondness for hyper-modern architecture with the one for green areas, designing roof gardens in his envisioned city, the *Radiant City*. Having Le Corbusier much influence in the project, it is very likely that the idea of building a garden city was considered for Brasilia; the current aspect of Brasilia further confirms this.

6.6.2 Architecture

In 1955, Juscelino Kubitschek was elected President of Brazil and announced that the construction of the new capital would have been the main priority for Brazilian national development programme. He argued that the new capital, located more in the centre of Brazil, would bring to a balanced economic growth, to more regional integration and would stimulate projects related to infrastructures development, steel production and hydroelectric generation (Holston 1989, Madaleno 1996). In the Kubitschek Master plan, Brasilia would drive economic growth in the central west of Brazil, to reach the economic development of Rio and São Paulo. More importantly, the new capital was aimed at creating a wave of progress able to positively influence and transform the rest of Brazil. Brasilia “would help strengthen the social bonds of the state by becoming a symbol of national effort and national pride” (Stephenson 1970:323 cited in Galien 2019). As it is possible to see in Figure 6.6, the population density of Brazil is not homogenous: the states of Rio and São Paulo are highly populated, with over 100 persons per square kilometres, while the rest of Brazil is clearly less populated. The Federal District, the smallest federal unit of Brazil, is home to 31 administrative regions and it is where Brasilia is located. Indonesia likewise is undergoing a similar problem, being Java densely populated compared to the rest of Indonesia. Furthermore, like Brasilia, *Ibu Kota Baru* will be located in a low-density area, benefitting from the availability of land and clean natural resources.

As mentioned before, two names are worth remembering as far as the plan of Brasilia is concerned: Lucio Costa and Oscar Niemeyer. While Niemeyer is the creator of several famous buildings of Brasilia, Costa is the creator of Brasilia Pilot Plan (Figure 6.7). Seen from above, Brasilia has a shape of an aeroplane: the curving wings hosts the residential buildings in the form of identical apartment blocks, and it is 15 kilometres long. This is bisected by a 5 kilometres monumental axis which hosts ministries and government offices, national theatres and similar (Williams 2005, Banerji 2012, Costa and Lee 2019). Vast green areas surround both wings and the entire city of Brasilia. Lucio Costa divided Brasilia into four sectors: Monumental (vertical axis), residential (horizontal axis), social (at the intersection of the two-axis), and bucolic (all around the city). The symmetry was used to guarantee the desired equality that the capital desired to promote (Batista et al. 2006). The text “Report of the Pilot Plan for Brasília” (“Relatório do Plano Piloto”) presents Costa’s project, selected during an international competition in 1957 (Holston 1989, Williams 2005).

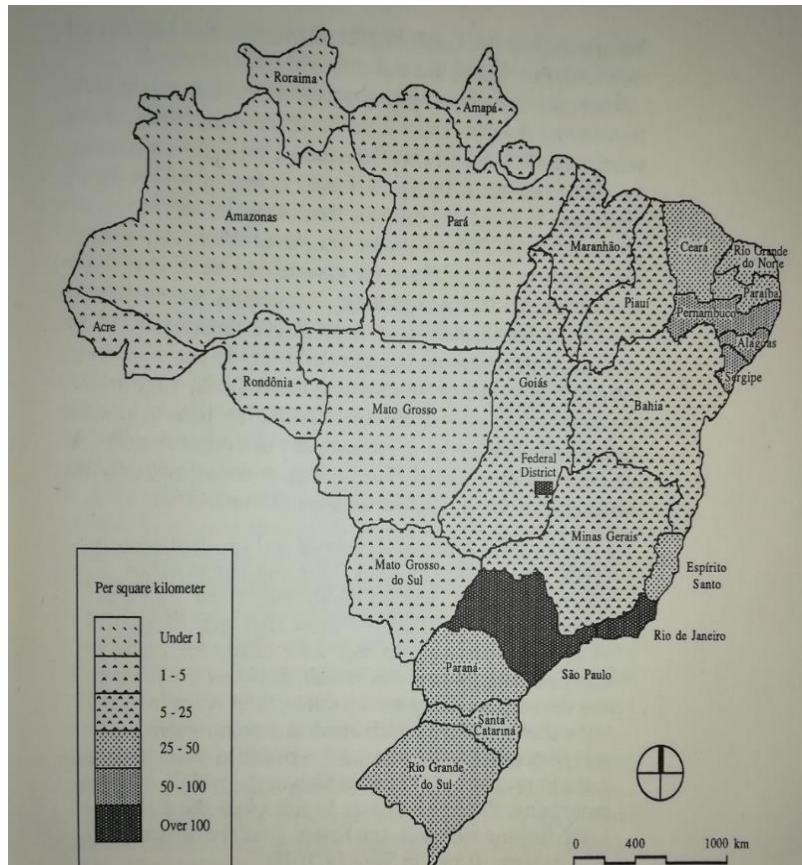


Figure 6.6. Population density of Brazil. Source: Holston 1989

Brasilia was built to represent more than a symbol of modernity: it was intended as a city that would have led to the transformation of Brazil. The two architects designed a perfectly geometrical city. The idea was to make Brasilia a city where the distinction of class did not exist. In this way, the creation of an equal society would be reached wiping away the architectural elements that might have caused discrimination and visible social hierarchies. The apartment complexes are all equal: same appearance, same facilities and services and same material. In addition, they are distributed respectively according to the size of a family (Merin 2013, Holston 1989). The underlying idea was that everyone is equal and should receive the same. This is represented by the symmetry and identical buildings found in the capital. Brasilia urban design was thus linked with a programme for social change for the whole Brazil; modernist architects were indeed convinced that new technologies might wipe the way for this success. Architecture was thus conceived as a form of social change, good governance and rational order (Holston 1989). Nevertheless, the translation of Brasilia's ideals into practice was probably as fleeting as in the case of *Ibu Kota Baru*. How exactly was Brasilia going to make the rest of Brazil more modern or egalitarian? Moreover, have the typical Brazilian social inequalities been stamped out thanks to a thorough urban plan? As a matter of fact, building a new capital from scratch drained amounts of funds that could otherwise have been used in much more practical and concrete ways. This will be tackled in paragraph 7.7 in the concluding chapter.

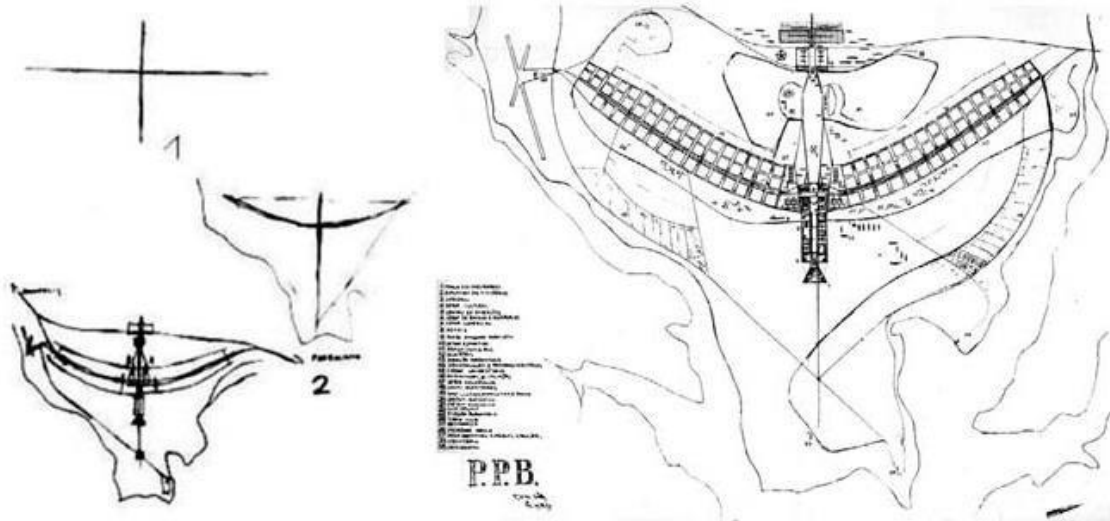


Figure 6.7. *Brasilia Plano Piloto*. Source: Macedo and Tran 2013

6.6.3 The Radiant City

As commented in paragraph 5.3, Bappenas metaphorically called Brasilia “the Radiant City”. Interestingly, the “Radiant City” was a project designed in 1924 and published in a book in 1933 by Le Corbusier, one of the modernism’s most influential architect. Because the “Radiant City” was mentioned in the tweets concerning Brasilia, it is very likely that the Indonesian government is familiar with the legacy of this architect and might replicate it for *Ibu Kota Baru*.

Le Corbusier’s idea was to create a city from *tabula rasa*, with tall vertical buildings and open green spaces in between so that people could enjoy the fresh air. His model intended to provide inhabitants with a better quality of life and services (Merin 2013, Kohlstedt 2018, Nelles 2013). According to Le Corbusier, formal order and geometrical simplicity were the primary component for efficiency. Everything is thus prepared in the Radiant City: pedestrians, cyclists, drivers and means of transport circulate in specific routes with one-way traffic so that to avoid gridlocks. Airport and railway stations are located near the apartment complexes and the skyscrapers in the business district. In the project, the central business district, with monotypic skyscrapers, is connected via underground to commercial zones and vertical prefabricated housing towers where people live (Koohlstedt 2018, Merin 2013, Scott 1998). These housing complexes are located in peaceful areas far from the chaotic districts, each of them accommodating around 2,700 inhabitants, resulting in proper vertical villages with dedicated facilities. Le Corbusier was fascinated by skyscrapers and vertical buildings because these can augment the density of a city without causing congestion. Furthermore, on the top of the vertical buildings, he imagined roof gardens. Here, sandy beaches, pools, flowers will be placed thanks to the use of technology, bringing back nature to cities (Le Corbusier 1933, Oechslin and Wang 1987, Marmot 1981). It is possible to note that the idea in which nature and greenness are conceived for Brasilia is different from the one of *IBu Kota Baru* which “aspires to incorporate pieces of wild forest in the city. Brasilia reflects more the old idea of a ‘garden city’, with natural elements thoroughly tamed and

captured within rectilinear limits. The Radiant City does not accept irregularities and sudden disruptions: it is symmetrical, standardized city, radical, strict and disciplinarian (Figure 6.8)

According to the Modernist Movement, slums are caused by poor planning and can be avoided in the new cities thanks to the use of technological innovations and a detailed plan (Johnson 2008). Le Corbusier himself found in the slums a burden for the success of his project as they are undisciplined and may threaten authorities. He not only did reject the idea of slums but the people who live inside as well (Scott 1998). The keystone of the Radiant city is the liberty of the individual, and its aim is to respect this liberty and assure a high life quality free from the slavery created by pollution and slums⁴⁴. According to him, it was necessary not to fix the cities but to create another world with only social attributes (Le Corbusier 1933:91-92). The same idea is partly reflected in *Ibu Kota Baru*: the government did not try to fix Jakarta, but instead, it denied the unpleasant attributes of it, desiring to create a new world free from chaos, people and pollution.

Although it remains unknown whether the Indonesian government has read the Radiant City, there are of course some similarities with *Ibu Kota Baru*. Above all, the hyper-modern urbanism that represents the advancement of the nation, the belief in technology, science and progress, the implementation of green areas– although wild and not tamed -, the rejection of slums and pollution and the efficiency of governance and services.



Figure 6.8. *The Radiant City*. Source: Le Corbusier 1937

6.7 Why not Jakarta? *Ibu Kota Baru* as the antithesis of Jakarta

As seen before, the main reason that spurred the government to build a new capital is to create a symbol for Indonesia based on the concepts of smart, green, beautiful and sustainable. After having analysed what makes a city smart, a question may arise: will the new capital be the opposite of Jakarta? The following

⁴⁴ Condemning existing cities as places where people cannot be free but at the same time imagining a strict and disciplinarian city is paradoxical.

section argues that *Ibu Kota Baru* is constructed as the antithesis of Jakarta, representing the new Indonesian aspirations of smart, green, sustainable.

As a matter of fact, *Ibu Kota Baru* could be the answer to all Jakarta's afflictions. Kalimantan itself is more than four times bigger than Java, and it is home to approximately 20 million people, with 30 people per square kilometre. In contrast, Java island hosts 145 million people, with a population density of around 900 people per square kilometre. Jakarta is more than four times worse, with 4,400 people per square kilometre (Ravenry 2019). Jakarta seems to lack all the attributes promoted for *Ibu Kota Baru*, so let us analyse Jakarta in terms of smartness, greenness and sustainability.

6.7.1 Is it smart?

In a study made by McKinsey Global Institute (Woetzel et al. 2018), 50 cities were analysed in terms of their technology base, the application rollout, and public adoption of smart technologies. Jakarta scored 8.1 out of 37 points in the provision of technology (network communications, data portal and sensors), only Jaipur and Pune had a lower score in the Asia-Pacific region. The use of smart applications is also scarce, making only 16.5 points in a maximum of 55 points. In terms of fibre optic and internet connection speed, Jakarta ranked 5th out of the six Southeast Asian countries analysed (Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia and Cambodia), with 200 Mbps (Afifa 2019). However, when it comes to people's awareness of the usage of smart applications, Jakarta scored high (19.1 in a maximum of 30 points). This means that Jakartans are keen on using technologies when these are available (Woetzel et al. 2018). Summing up the data, Jakarta is not an example of a digital city. The International Institute for Management Development (IMD) World Competitiveness Centre's Smart City Observatory, in partnership with the Singapore University of Technology and Design, presented the first edition of the IMD Smart City Index 2019, which ranked 102 cities worldwide. Cities are assessed according to the perceptions of inhabitants on issues related to structures and technology applications available in their city. Jakarta ranked 81st, while Singapore ranked first, followed by Oslo and Zurich. Brasilia was not considered in the analysis, but Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo were included, ranking 96 and 90 respectively (IDM Smart City Index 2019).

6.7.2 Is it green?

Green spaces in Jakarta saw a decrease of 23% between 1983 and 2013, and now accounts for only 4.65%, according to the Forestry Agency⁴⁵ (Table 6.2). The social planning Law of 2007 demanded the transformation of at least 30% of land in Jakarta into green areas but, so far, the city struggled to meet this target (Sidiq 2019). Long-term guidance to cope with environmental degradation and climate change is also lacking (Setiowati, Hasibuan and Koestoer 2018).

⁴⁵ The percentage of green open space changes slightly if other studies are considered. For instance, according to the Environmental Agency, the green open space in Jakarta amounted to 11.97%, whilst the Spatial Planning and Environmental Bureau reported 7.67% (Setiowati, Hasibuan and Koestoer 2018)

Jakarta also ranks lower compared to other cities in Indonesia: Bandung has 12,12% of green open space, Semarang 43,26% and Yogyakarta 32,86% (Sidiq 2019). When Jakarta is compared to other cities in the world, the outcome is similar: Jakarta has the lowest percentage of green open space (Table 6.3).

No.	Type	Area (m ²)	Percentage (%)
1.	Park	14,088,903.00	2.13
2.	Green line	7,864,106.60	1.19
3.	Cemetery	6,313,315.00	0.95
4.	City Forest	2,542,600.00	0.38
Amount		30,808,924.60	4.65

Table 6.2 Green public open space managed by Forestry Agency. Source: Forestry Agency 2013 in Setiowati, Hasibuan and Koestoer 2018

No.	City	Area (Ha)	Percentage (%)	Year	Source
1.	Jakarta	3,080.89	4.65	2017	Jakarta Forestry Agency, JCCG
2.	Singapura	33,835.30	47.00	2007	CUGE, National Parks Board
3.	Kuala Lumpur	7,367.76	23.80	2000	CHKL, Kuala Lumpur Structure Plan 2020
4.	Seoul	16,098.32	26.6	2015	Seoul Metropolitan Government
5.	Vienna	18,864.30	45.5	2014	Vienna Annual Statistic
6.	Tokyo	16,410.00	7.5	2015	Bureau of Urban Development Tokyo Metropolitan Government
7.	London	51,876.00	33	2013	Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC
8.	New York	21,303.00	27	2010	Department of City Planning Land Use
9.	Hongkong	110,160.00	40	2015	Agriculture, Fisheries, and Conservation Department

Table 6.3. The amount of Green Open Space in the World. Source: Setiowati, Hasibuan and Koestoer 2018

6.7.3 Is it sustainable?

As a consequence of land conversion, soil erosion and underground water extraction that causes the land to sink, Jakarta cannot be regarded as an eco-friendly and sustainable city. There is not much to debate here. As reported in Chapter 3 (especially paragraph 3.2, “unsustainable Jakarta”), the government listed several downsides of Jakarta as capital: it is choking due to constant groundwater extraction and climate change, it is overpopulated, it is polluted, it is undergoing a terrible land conversion, and it upholds existing regional inequalities. The water crisis is not only seen in the sinking issue but rivers as well. In Jakarta, rivers are highly polluted and can only supply 2,2% of the demand for clean water, as it contains trash, toxic wastewater, and high levels of biochemical oxygen, phosphor and nitrogen (The Jakarta Post 2018). The lousy situation of rivers in Jakarta received attention from international media and Citarum river was dubbed as “the most polluted river in the world” (Yallop 2014, Tarahita and Zulfikar Rakhmat 2018, Vatvani 2018).

Consequently, Jakarta lacks all the attributes promoted for *Ibu Kota Baru*, and it is, of course, not a symbol of modernity, greenness, and smartness, let alone sustainability.

6.8 The City of Dreams

Falling to represent the ideal of a modern city and falling to adapt to climate change and new technologies, there is no doubt that Jakarta cannot stand the designation of capital of Indonesia. By looking at the tweets again, I found that the Indonesian government is taking into consideration the woes of Jakarta when designing *Ibu Kota Baru*. For each woe of Jakarta, the government found a prevention system to apply in *Ibu Kota Baru*. Traffic congestion and air pollution will be solved through an integrated and intelligent transport system, the creation of cycle roads and walkways, the use of electric cars and renewable energy. The government has also found a solution for waste disposal through the smart waste management system, the 3R approach (reduce, reuse, recycle), the circular economy for waste and the waste-to-energy approach. Furthermore, while Jakarta has a colonial legacy, *Ibu Kota Baru* will portray the new values that Indonesia relies on: modernity, internationalism, smartness, greenness, progress, sustainability and beauty. These attributes appear to be the main new symbols that make the Indonesian national identity. The new capital will also invest in smart hospitals, as opposed to Jakarta, whereby the sanitation is poor and disorganized. The most problematic aspects for Jakarta, like water crisis, sinking and flooding, are forestalled through the use of smart technologies, such as smart water management system and potable water access. As Jakarta is affected by overpopulation, the new capital will be a city with a maximum of 1 million and a half dwellers. Figure 6.9 summarizes these points.

This chapter stated that the word “modernity” is much more than one of the categories individuated in the tweets; it is the centrepiece of the whole discourse of *Ibu Kota Baru*. Modernity is explained through the features of “smart”, “green”, “beautiful”, “sustainable” and “internationalism”. It was also seen that these terms are widely encountered more as symbols rather than clear explanations of the project. This is also proven by the fact that the features are unclear.

Ibu Kota Baru, of course, will be the opposite of Indonesia and the things that afflict it as a country, like pollution, and inequalities. Just as Brasilia, it is more a symbol of modernity rather than a practical example that may lead to a more advanced Indonesia. I called this paragraph “The city of dreams” precisely because of the utopia of imagining a flawless and perfect city, symbol of the progress of the whole country. The truth is that it is only a *symbol*, and the country will not be advancing if not through real policies and measures that tackle the problems. The choice of moving the capital proves that the government has chosen symbolism over practicality, and beautification over a widespread development.

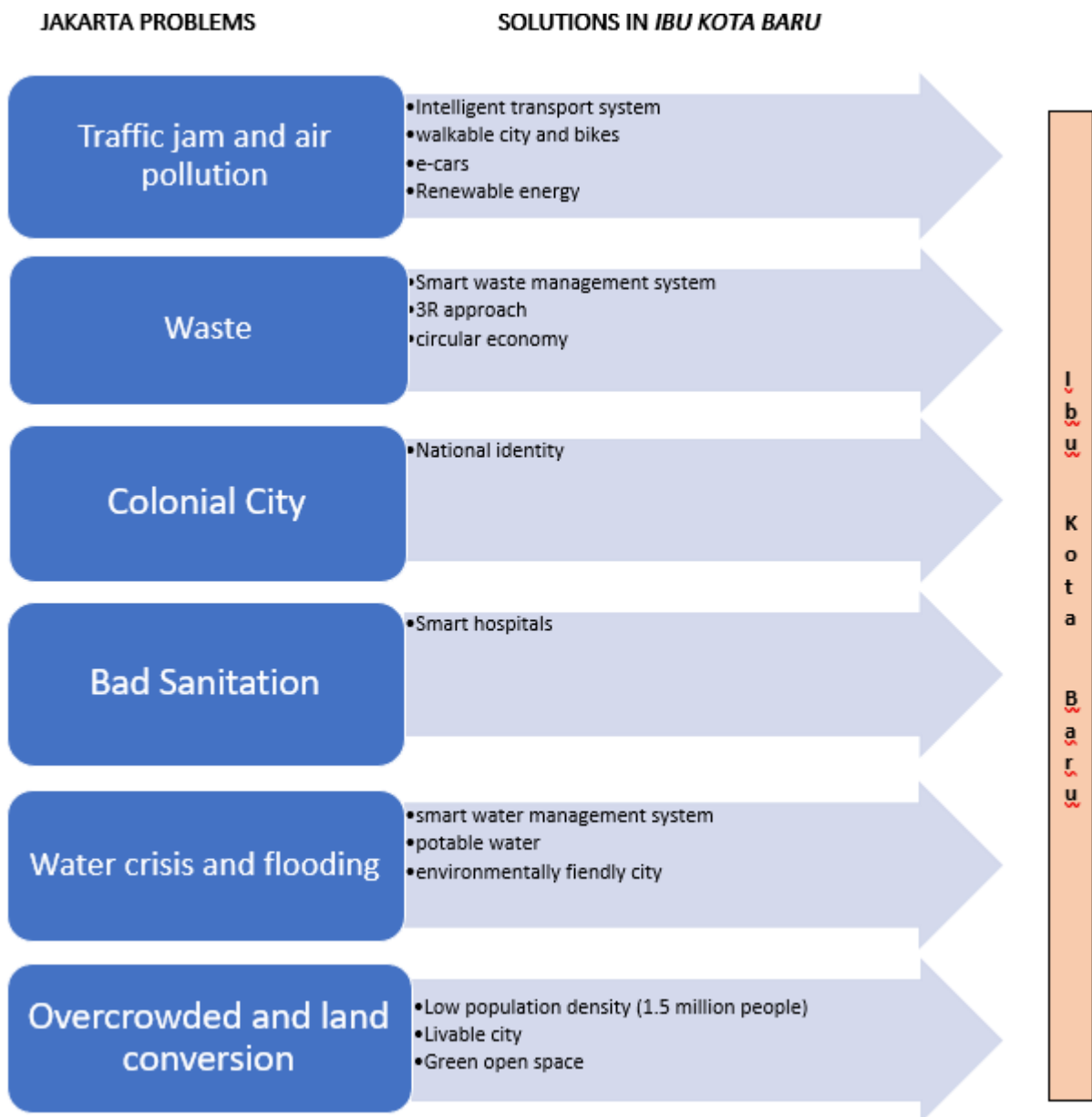


Figure 6.9 Learning from Jakarta's errors

7. Limitations of *Ibu Kota Baru* as a national project

After having extensively analysed the significance of smart, green, sustainable and beautiful, this last chapter will comment on some aspects worth considering before concluding the analysis. It will start by commenting on the promoted regional equality, for then discussing the fact that the new capital is not mentioned as a relevant model for the other Indonesian cities. The chapter will also comment on the hidden players that are strongly influencing the new capital project, and the feeble role that democracy occupies in all this. The example of Brasilia will again come up for the last time, to help us understand the inconsistencies of the project.

7.1 A comment on regional equality

Before concluding the analysis, let us go back to the initial sub-question “How practical and effective is the new capital likely to be as a way of pursuing its stated and implied objectives?”; the answer can vary depending on which features of the new capital are being considered. If judged on its capacity of being modern, smart, green, beautiful⁴⁶, the capital will probably be successful. This is evident when looking at the tweets, where these attributes are strongly emphasized and even depicted as symbols of national progress, new national identity and modernity (*Indonesia Maju*). It was also seen that these features are the foundation of the whole discourse developed around *Ibu Kota Baru*. As these features are of major importance for the Indonesian government, they are likely going to be implemented in practice. The practical examples given in regards to smart systems -although not well explained - (e.g. 3R approach, circular water management, smart waste management) further confirm this hypothesis. More importantly, these features are going to be implemented because they are the new symbols that the Indonesian government employs for expressing modernity. On the other hand, if the capital is judged by its capacity of generating regional equality, economic development and a wave of transformation in the Indonesian urban landscape, its success is dubious.

Let us quickly analyse these points. Despite Indonesia managed to halve its poverty since 2000 and create a growing middle class, inequalities have been increasing since 2000 (Figure 7.1). There is a growing awareness that economic growth did not benefit Indonesian in equal measure but mostly that 20% of the population who already stood out from the crowd for its wealth (Tjoe 2018, The World Bank 2016). The economic crisis that hit the region in 1997 was the only moment that inequality fell, since the crisis hit mainly the wealthy individuals, for then scaling up firmly during the administration of Megawati Soekarnoputri and Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (Tjoe 2018). President Joko Widodo considered to tackle this issue, along with

⁴⁶ “Sustainability” is intentionally not included due to its unclarity (paragraph 6.3) and real facts (paragraph 7.5)

poverty and infrastructure development, and from 2013 to 2017, inequality decreased (GINI Index: World Bank Data).

After a long period of stability, the Gini began rising, then fell with the Asian financial crisis, before rising sharply since the recovery

Gini coefficient (points) and national poverty rate (percent) 1980-2014

SOURCE BPS, Susenas and World Bank calculations
 NOTE Nominal consumption Gini. The national poverty line was changed in 1998, and the 1996 rate calculated under both the new and old methodologies.

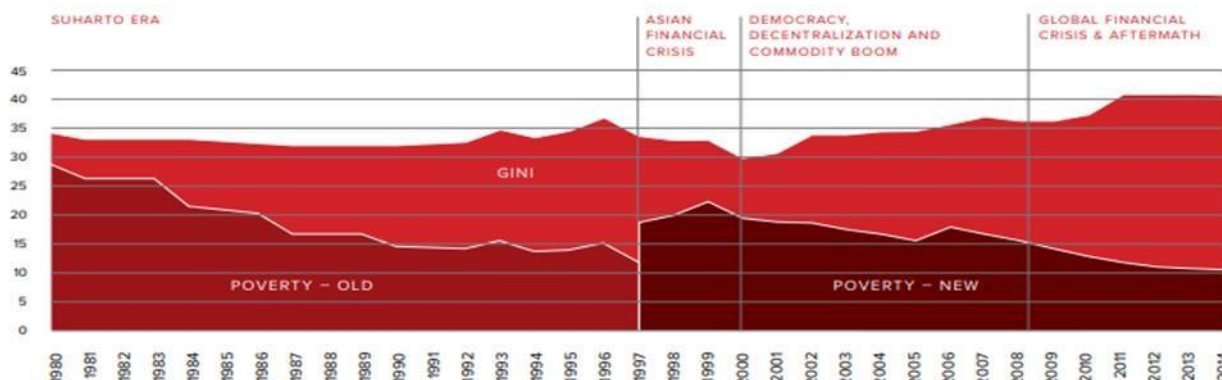


Figure 7.1. Gini coefficient (points) and the national poverty rate in Indonesia Source: Tjoe 2018

Now Indonesia is at a crossroad: which direction it will take? It is worth mentioning that hardly ever have the tweets touched upon inequalities between income groups. The only mentioned “type” of inequality deemed to be solved or at least lessened through the new capital is regional inequality, that is the existing inequality within Java and the other regions, especially the less developed Eastern part of Indonesia. Reaching more equality among regions does not mean that inequality is solved. In Java alone, inequalities within income groups are vast. In 2017, The Indonesia Bureau of Statistic had recorded sharp disparity in Jakarta, thus presenting the fact that the vaunted economic growth provoked an unequal concentration of wealth (Wilson 2017, The Word Bank 2016). In Jakarta, the upper-middle class and the poor live a completely separate life. It is not rare to see poor *kampung* situated not far from fancy quarters. This gap worsens the problem of saving Jakarta from sinking and environmental degradation, as the urban planning is too fragmented and split between rich and poor people. Although regional equality is an issue that needs to be tackled, the increase of GDP outside Java will not benefit the whole population in any case unless it is followed by a valid will to address inequality across income groups. It will be seen below that Brasilia is a blatant example of this unresolved problematic. The World Bank found four main drivers of inequality: unequal opportunities (poorer children are less likely to succeed due to factor outside their control), unequal jobs (high-skilled workers can increase their wages, while the rest do not have the opportunity to improve), the concentration of wealth in certain areas and low resiliency (poor are more vulnerable to disasters) (The World Bank 2016).

As far as the economic development is concerned, it is true that an increase in trade within Kalimantan and Eastern regions can bring to more economic growth. It is nevertheless at the same time true that this growth might benefit only the already well-off people should income inequalities not being tackled, and this

might trigger them even more. As it was seen, *Ibu Kota Baru* will be a small-size capital that does not seem to be affordable by middle and low-income groups, given the number of smart services and electric cars that the new capital is projected to have. This desire is inconsistent with the promoted desire of building an inclusive capital. More explanation is given below.

Furthermore, the Indonesian government did not mention the existing inequalities in Jakarta. Poor infrastructures and a wrong urban planning make the adaptive capacity and the employment of smart solutions even harder. The Ministry of Agrarian Affairs and Spatial Planning director Doni Janarto Widiyanto advocated that 118 out of 267 sub-districts have slums, 39% of these located in North Jakarta, 8% in West Jakarta, 19% in South Jakarta, 12% in East Jakarta, 11% in Central Jakarta and 1% in Thousand Islands Regency. In addition to slums, Jakarta is an exceptionally divided city: on the 28th of January 2019, Vice President Jusuf Kalla stated: “Jakarta’s Thamrin Street area resembles Singapore. But not far from that, Tanjung Priok looks more like Bangladesh” (Murti 2019, The Jakarta Post 2019). He goes on saying that urban planners have never considered the importance of spatial planning in exacerbating or reducing inequalities, thus neglecting the impacts that spatial disparities may have in the adaptive capacity and resilience of a city.

7.2 A model for the next cities

Another point worth commenting on is *Ibu Kota Baru* as a model for the other Indonesian cities. The fact that this theme is only mentioned twice in the tweets is puzzling: why is the government not making it a priority? In the case of Brasilia, the government considered the new capital the stepping-stone to transform the whole country, meaning that the other cities should have followed the right example of Brasilia in order to cope with ongoing inequalities and pollution. This does not seem to apply for Indonesia, at least until December 2019. It is difficult to regard the new capital as a model for the other cities as the capital will not have to deal with the same difficulties from the start. Rather, the urban plan of the new capital seems to take into account the flaws of Indonesian cities (e.g. flooding, pollution, overpopulation, gridlocks), preventing them through technology and planning from the very beginning. Advocating that inequalities in Indonesia will come to an end - without clearly explaining how - while not proposing the capital as a model for the other cities is inconsistent. Furthermore, claiming that the new capital is open to everyone without taking into consideration that not everyone can afford to live “smart” is also contradictory. To conclude, the fact that the new capital is not promoted as a model for the other cities may also suggest indifference towards the Indonesian population who is daily facing the challenges and threats bypassed in the capital: floods, earthquakes, traffic congestion, air pollution, slow Internet. In this case, *Ibu Kota Baru* risks becoming an elitist city enjoyed by only a few people.

7.3 Democracy and *Ibu Kota Baru*

It is worth noting that the word “democracy” does not appear in the tweets. As the capital will be a symbol of the progress of the nation, why democracy is not part of this progress? From this analysis, it seems that “progress” is only conceived in its technical terms and not in terms of human development or democratic values. As a matter of fact, the creation of a “smart city” is not directly proportional nor somehow related to a higher level of democracy or human development. In this analysis, “smart city” is a notion that combines technology with an ecological narrative (“sustainable” and “green”), and no mention is given to democratic values, besides (geographical) equalities. Such definition of smart city risks triggering a technocratic and elitist imaginary of the society, worsening the gap within the people who can afford to live “smart”, and who cannot (Albert 2019). Environmentally friendly behaviours and smart solutions may become a form of exclusion akin to other forms of race and class-based exclusion. In this case, the age of “green” may risk becoming an age of inequality (Brisman 2009).

“The cities of the future will not be “smart” or well-engineered, cleverly designed, just, clean, fair, green, sustainable, safe, healthy, affordable, or resilient. They will not have any particularly higher ethical values of liberty, equality, or fraternity, either. The future smart city will be the internet, the mobile cloud, and a lot of weird paste-on gadgetry, deployed by City Hall, mostly for the sake of making towns more attractive to capital” (Sterling 2018). Poor communities are less likely to benefit from smart systems and bucolic areas, which will be presumably in gross-value added sites. All this might bring to question how a smart and sustainable city will offer social and environmental progress. In the mainstream thinking of urban sustainability and green theory, there is a lack of social justice and overall human development (Agyeman 2013, Castelnovo, Misuraca, Savoldelli 2015). Should urban planners and policies considering only part of the population, opportunities for democratic engagements might weaken. The problem of current smart and sustainable cities is that few policymakers have so far questioned its efficiency and impact (Viitanen and Kingston 2013). It is nevertheless peculiar that, among the features promoted for *Ibu Kota Baru*, democracy is not even mentioned. The idea of progress and modernity (*Maju*) is thus not related to it.

7.4 Jakarta

Jakarta played an essential role in this thesis. The tweets reported the deficiencies of Jakarta to prove the need to build a new capital. Besides saying that Jakarta will develop as a business city after the moving of the capital, a consideration regarding its dramatic situation would have been desirable. For instance, the problem of inequalities in Jakarta reviewed just above were not reported at all in the tweets. How can Jakarta develop its financial centre if disaster risk scenarios are not prevented? Will further business be developed in the wealthiest areas while poor will be left behind? This research does not aim to answer these questions directly, nor to ascertain facts that might be premature. Instead, this research has looked at empirical data to reflect on it and find plausible meanings behind the promoted features of the new capital and evaluate the

consistency within what it is said. Furthermore, one reason why the government wants to move the capital is to ease the population burden of Jakarta. However, it is likely that only people working for the government will be moving, while the majority of the population will stay in Jakarta carrying on their business and activities. It is worth remembering that most of the people who immigrated to Brasilia came from the Northern regions, not from Rio or São Paulo. Also, when the country of Myanmar moved the capital in 2005, not many people moved with it. Moving the capital will not mitigate any Jakarta current troubles if these are not tackled directly. Perhaps, the trillions of Rupiah that will be spent on *Ibu Kota Baru* might have been better spent to fix Jakarta. For sure, fixing Jakarta does not attract attention as much as moving the capital in the middle of the tropical forest. If the final goal were to improve the quality of life of more than 10 million people regardless income and social status, the government would have employed the money to fix Jakarta and make the city more liveable for all. Instead, if the final goal is to prove the world of “Indonesia Maju”, *Ibu Kota Baru* might be more appropriate. What is wrong is to claim that *Ibu Kota Baru* will benefit Indonesians as a whole and will minimize inequalities and Jakarta issues.

7.5 Private interests and oligarchic politics

As a matter of fact, *Ibu Kota Baru* cannot be seen as a democratic-driven choice. Business and economic interests are also involved, and the project was thus highly criticized from the very beginning. This session deals with the private and economic interests involved in the new capital site. Although this subject is not part of the study of political communication, it is still necessary to report and be aware of the hidden players that are strongly influencing the new capital project.

Jeffrey Winters, a well-known political scientist and author of “Oligarchy” (2011), proposes a clear and fresh explanation of oligarchy. According to him, the term “oligarchs” refers to people who are empowered by wealth, namely vast material resources. Wealth is a form of power and, when it is condensed in the hands of the few, it produces a group of people directed to maintain their fortune and wealth; they thus engage in the so-called “politics of wealth defence” (Winters in Keen 2019). The capacity of oligarchs is to convert their disproportionate wealth in political influence unavailable to other members of the polity (Giglioli 2013). Winters claims that democracy is not the antithesis of oligarchy: until the democratic system allows concentrated wealth, there is no conflict between democracy and oligarchy (Winter 2011:281). This is well seen, for instance, in political campaigns – especially in the US - where one cannot emerge without money.

In this session, we will see how the current Indonesian government is engaging in the politics of wealth defence to protect their interest and maintain wealth power in the new capital site. The interests are a clear example of an oligarchic politics that tries to consolidate the president authority, benefit important players through money and wealth and cement the cynical alliance between Jokowi and Prabowo to make the country governable.

To begin with, the central core area of the new capital (Kawasan Inti Pusat Pemerintahan), is located inside the forest concession⁴⁷ of Izin Usaha Pemanfaatan Hasil Hutan Kayu-Hutan Tanaman (IUPHHK-HT, for planted forests), owned by PT. International Timber Corporation Indonesia Hutani Manunggal (PT. IHM). The expansion area of the capital hosts the forest concession of PT. IHM and also Izin Usaha Pemanfaatan Hasil Hutan Kayu- Hutan Alam (IUPHHK-HA, for natural forests), owned by PT. International Timber Corporation Indonesia Kartika Utama (PT. IKU). Besides these two, there are also 10 palm oil concessions⁴⁸, which PT owns the largest (17.000 hectares wide). Perkebunan Inti Kaltim Utara I, strongly connected to the family of Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan, the Coordinating Minister of Maritime and Investment during the Jokowi - Amin ministerial cabinet. Besides, a coal power plant and 94 former mining pits are spread in the area.

The site where the capital will be built, between North Penajam Paser and Kutai Kartanegara, is curiously owned for mining purpose by Jokowi's political rival, Prabowo Subianto (Gokkon 2019). According to the former state-owned enterprise Minister Dahlan Iskan (2019) the American company ITCI (International Timber Cooperation Indonesia), owned logging rights from the 1970s, from which Prabowo and his brother Hashim Djojohadikusumo gained 220 thousand hectares of landholdings in East Kalimantan (Coconuts Jakarta 2019, CNN Indonesia 2019a, Jakarta Globe 2019, Iskan 2019). Recently, Prabowo has stated his will in giving up his land concession for the sake of *Ibu Kota Baru*. It is worth noting that the rivalry between the Gerindra Party (Prabowo Subianto), and PDI-P (Joko Widodo) has created a huge divide in Indonesia in the recent years, especially after the political election of April 2019. Moving the capital in this exact location might hide more shades than expected: not only is the location free from earthquakes, floods, overpopulation and similar, but it may be the solution for ongoing political tensions between the two parties. "The project will only benefit the oligarchy of coal mining concessions holders and large-scale land rulers in East Kalimantan," said Red National Jatam Johansyah Coordinator (CNN Indonesia 2019b). Prabowo is not indeed the only one to own land in East Kalimantan. Other companies such as Jatam and BUMI, and also China and India have land concessions in the area. Due to the strong power of these corporations and landowners, they are likely a more valuable negotiators than local people (Siti Nur 2019, Johansyah et al. 2019). This might call into question whether *Ibu Kota Baru* is environmentally friendly and made for the public interest. Figure 7.2 shows the concessions in the new capital and nearby areas.

Other than this, environmental destruction may occur in Balikpapan Bay, thus threatening the livelihoods of thousands of fishers and the 17-kilometre mangrove forest which spread from the West Balikpapan Sub-District to the coast of bay in the Penajam Sub-District. Vulnerable animals that can be spotted in East Kalimantan are orangutans, the Mahakam Dolphin and the Bekantan Monkey.

⁴⁷ Forest concession refers to an area allocated by forest owners permitting the harvesting of specified resources from a given forest area.

⁴⁸ "Oil palm concession refers to an area allocated by a government or other body for industrial-scale oil palm plantations" (Global Forest Watch 2020).

ALL CONCESSIONS MAP IN THE NEW CAPITAL CITY

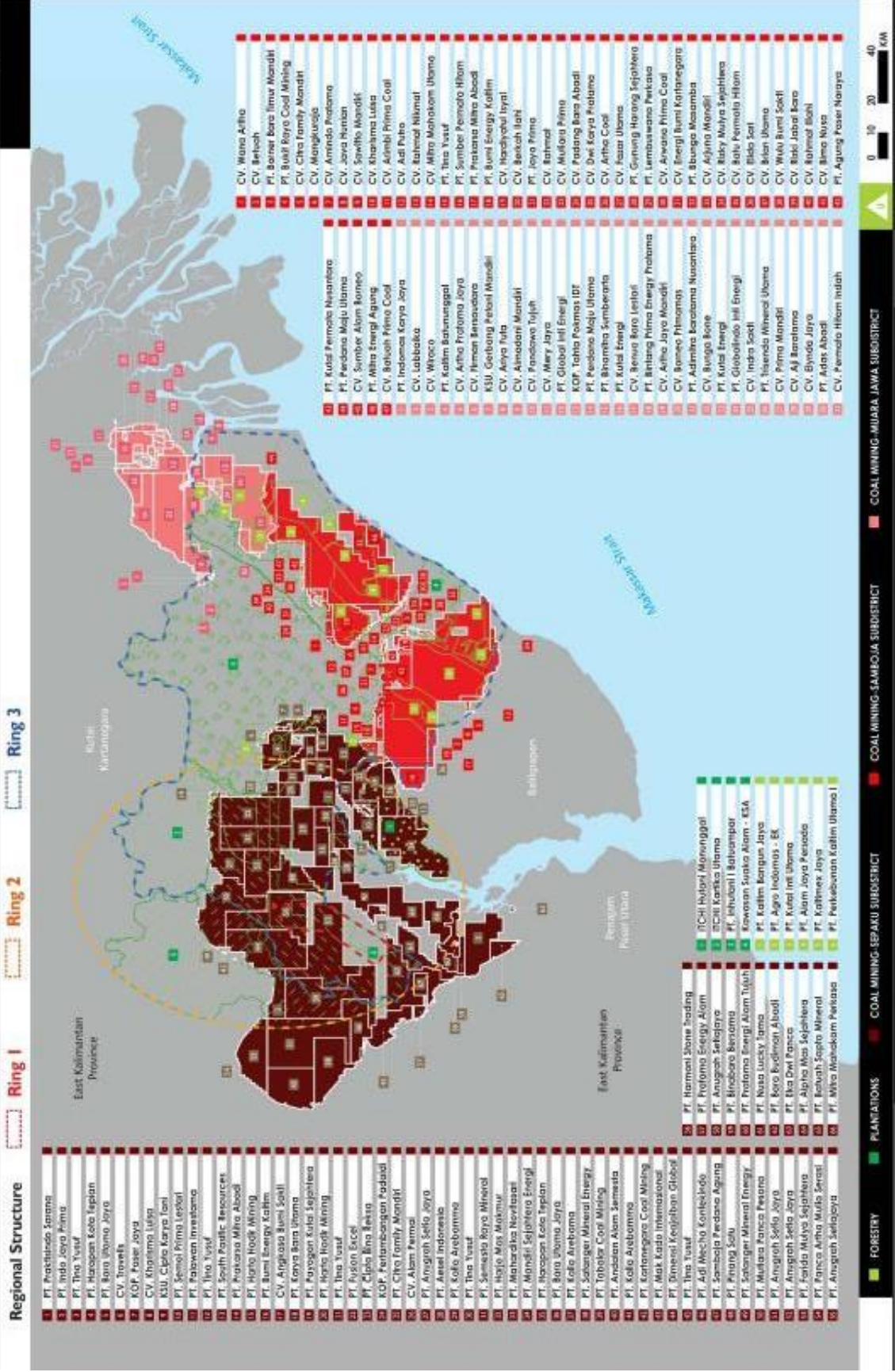


Figure 7.2 Concessions in East Kalimantan. Ring 1 refers to the central government area called Kawasan Inti Pusat Pemerintahan, ring 2 refers to the national capital area called Kawasan Ibu Kota Negara, the 3 is the expansion area Kawasan Perluasan Ibu Kota Negara. Source: Johansyah et al. 2019

7.6 Ecological problems

The government has been criticized for promoting false promises as the area is also known for extensive logging, palm oil plantation, pulp, paper mills and forest fires. On Twitter and Bappenas website, there is no mention of how these problems are going to be tackled and whether they will ever be (Cassrels 2019, Dobson 2019). Promoted as a green and eco-friendly capital, it goes without saying that the new city should reduce these problems. Nevertheless, apart from listed smart systems and promises that the forest will be protected, details of the proposed eco-friendliness are lacking. “The government is using broad terms, like 50 per cent green space, low carbon energy. This does not reflect an actual green sustainable city” (Puteri in Cassrels 2019). The frequently mentioned concept of “forest city” is also unclear: the plan has so far not been shared with experts, nor the government provided any information on how the new city should be constructed without damaging the surrounding environment. In addition to this, the protected area Bukit Soeharto is partly located where the new capital is planned to be built, threatening the pristine natural habitat. Although the government has made clear that *Ibu Kota Baru* will not destroy the forest because it will be incorporated in the city, scepticism remains. Within North Penajam Paser and Kutai Kartanegara regencies there are 1.8 hectares of forest, which account for 65% of the land. In 2018, these two regencies lost 35,000 hectares of tree cover in 2018 (Dobson 2018). Deforesting 100,000 hectares of land, which is the estimated size of the capital, could release 48 million tons of carbon dioxide, 9.3 vehicles in an entire year release the same amount of emissions (Cassidy and Hamzah 2019). Not only forest but also peatland can be impacted as there are 157,000 hectares of it in the area. Figure 7.3 shows the approximate location of the next capital and the surrounded key biodiversity areas.

Ecological problems that Jakarta is suffering, such as nature loss, erosion, industrial waste and pollution, can only be wiped out if there is a legal compliance and a concerted effort. As a matter of fact, there is no relation between fixing Jakarta and moving government offices. Should the government not understanding this, *Ibu Kota Baru* risks encountering the same problematics that Jakarta is now facing, and these will be even worsened by the negative pressures in the area given by mining, timber and palm oil. Furthermore, although the Indonesian government has long promoted a smart and green capital which uses renewable energy, coal plants are still being constructed in East Kalimantan, thus proving that the commitment to fossil fuels is not ended. There are already two power plants near Balikpapan and Samarinda (Figure 7.4). The “coal players” in the area will likely want to benefit from this situation, and indeed, Dileep Srivastava, Director and Corporate Secretary of BUMI is planning to build a new private power plant with the help of Kaltim Prima Coal (KPC), BUMI’S subsidiary (Banjarnahor 2019). It is thus hard that the new capital will enjoy clean air as it will be affected by forest fires and existing and planned coal plants, which emit dangerous gases like micro-nitrogen oxide (NO_x), sulphur dioxide (SO₂), and PM_{2.5} (Munthe 2019, Johansyah et al. 2019, Singgih 2018, Rusmana 2019).

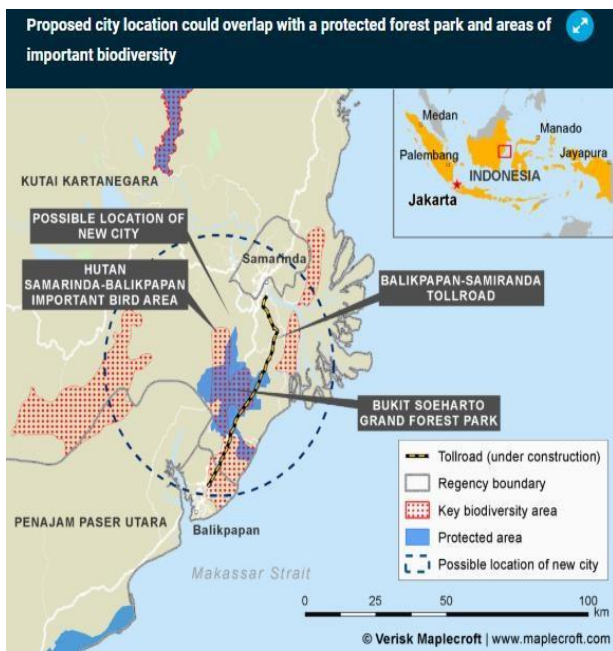
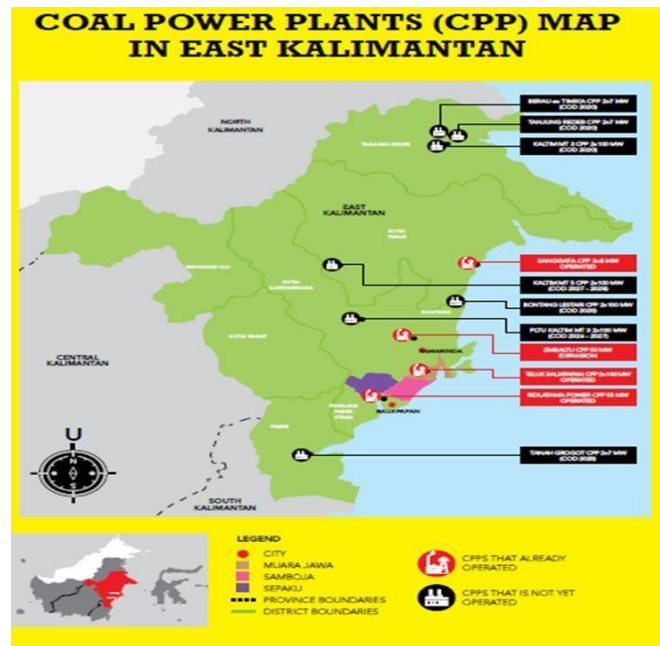


Figure 7.3. Approximate location of Ibu Kota Baru and biodiversity areas. Source: Maplecroft in Dobson 2019
 Figure 7.4 Coal Power Plant in East Kalimantan. Source: Johansyah et al. 2019



7.7 The paradox of Brasilia as a model

It is important to comment Brasilia and its outcomes because it has much in common with *Ibu Kota Baru*, even in aspects not reported by the Indonesian government. Holston (1989) advocates that Brasilia is a contradiction in terms: on representing Brasilia as a transforming model for the whole of Brazil through hyper-modern elements, Brasilia negates the existing Brazilian social conditions. Therefore, Brasilia appears to be the antithesis of Brazil, a capital that denied the underdevelopment and the urban life of Brazil. Indeed, the construction of Brasilia employed many workers coming from all over Brazil. The drought that occurred in 1957 and 1958 in Northeast Brazil caused even greater migration towards the new capital (Costa and Lee 2019). Nevertheless, the thousands of workers who built Brasilia did not have a place projected for them in the city, so the unplanned population occupied the outskirts of the city. In 1960 the population of the Federal District was 141,724, whereas in 1970 it reached 546,015 inhabitants (Batista et al. 2006). By 1980, 75% of the Brasilia population lived in the outskirts of the capital (Holston 1989, Merin 2013, Macedo and Tran 2013). The outskirts formed the so-called “satellite cities”, which ranged from well-built houses to proper incubators of poverty, the shanty towns. The satellite cities are not proper cities: the Federal District is divided into 31 administrative regions, and each satellite city is an administrative region.

The main reason why Brasilia attracted so many people was a better quality of life. Even if poor people lived in the periphery of Brasilia, services were better than the ones in Sao Paulo or Rio. As Holston (1989) reports: “if one has to be poor in Brazil, it is better to be poor in Brasilia” (27).

The fact that Brasilia positively impacted the satellite cities was also reported in Bappenas' tweets. However, satellite cities, especially those similar to ghettos, were of course much poorer than the elite living in Plano Piloto. When considering the imbalance between the poverty of satellite cities and Plano Piloto, the paradox of Brasilia emerges: the desire to make Brasilia a capital without class distinction fails the moment we look at satellite cities, where almost three-quarters of Federal District population live. The distinction between centre (the privileged) and periphery (deprivileged) thus reproduces the primary feature of Brazilian bigger cities: the blatant social inequalities (Holston 1989, Banerji 2012). This element was what Brazilian planners wanted to eliminate. Brasilia' social inequalities are strongly seen when moving from the centre to the periphery, which, being chaotic and noisy, ruined Brasilia ideal (Macedo and Tran 2013).

To conclude, although it is true that Brasilia is an icon of modern architecture, it is also true that the new capital failed in driving a social change for the existing divided Brazil and actually, it was itself a symbol of the existing divided Brazil. It is likely that the architects did not foresee the development of informal settlements and satellite cities, and thus the city was not prepared to cope with the arrival of many low-income people. Although Brasilia was built to be a classless and egalitarian capital, unwittingly or not, the Pilot Plan was only made for privileged people working for the government. Was Brasilia successful then? If judged by its hyper-modern elements that conferred a symbol of progress to Brazil, it can be considered successful. However, if judged by its ability to transform Brazil and create a classless city, it failed (Johnson 2008:6). Brasilia, intended to be a place for hopes and opportunities and the stepping-stone for changing Brazilian society, has thus failed in its intent, ending up producing what their architects have originally negated. Ricky Burdett (cited in Banerji 2012), professor at the London School of Economics (LSE), states that Brasilia has, above all, only one problem: it is not a city. It lacks the typical attributes of a Brazilian city, such as the street life, people living near the shops and offices, and the noises. "It is a sort of office campus for a government", he claims. Needless to say, the satellite cities represent Brazil more than Brasilia itself.

7.8 Final remarks

This analysis has allowed to explore the deep meanings of the main features promoted for *Ibu Kota Baru*. There is, as in the case of Brasilia, an important paradox in the project of *Ibu Kota Baru*: by displaying a hyper-modern futuristic city, the new Indonesian capital implicitly indicates a refusal of the existing conditions of Indonesia. This utopian experiment of imagining a better world would not be erroneous should this being used as a model to improve existing cities. Besides not being conceived as a model, nothing of the typical Indonesian society is reproduced in *Ibu Kota Baru*, ending up in creating a beautiful and hyper-modern city, that has nothing to do with Indonesia. By denying the underdevelopment and issues of Jakarta, promising a better Indonesia for all, especially for Jakartans, the Indonesian government seems to replicate Brazil through and through.

At the beginning of this thesis, it was mentioned that the Indonesian government set up a contest design for the new planned capital and the winning plan will be announced in later 2019 or early 2020; it remains to be seen whether the urban plan coincides with the government strategic discourse or not. As a matter of fact, the project is not an easy task; as it was clearly explained and proven in the analysis and in the concluding chapter, the aspirations promoted by the Indonesian government for *Ibu Kota Baru* are contradictory, and building the new capital according to these will be extremely hard if not impracticable. That is to say, it is problematic to promote an inclusive and equal city, which at the same time is small and wealthier than the rest; by the same token, promoting geographical equalities between east and west Indonesia but forgetting to mention that Jakarta is one of the most unequal cities in Indonesia is inconsistent. Similarly, it is contradictory to advocate for a great (*maju*) Indonesia as a whole that is smart, green and sustainable, but at the same time not promoting *Ibu Kota Baru* as a model for the other cities. The fact that these promoted features contradict with each other does not seem to be acknowledged in the government vision and official rationale. It was also seen that the features lack of transparency and clarity and, especially when it comes to “smart”, “green”, “beautiful” and “sustainable” they appear to be used as buzzwords, almost as if they were interchangeable. I have concluded that these features are all instrumental for expressing modernity, that is the real objective of the government.

“The city of dreams”, as I renamed it, imagines a flawless and perfect city, symbol of the progress of the whole country; the truth is that it is only a *symbol*, and the country will not progress in smartness, greenness, sustainability and equality if not through real policies and measures that tackle the local problems. By arguing this, I do not want to express my rejection about the Indonesian aspirations, nor to the symbolism and aesthetics used in the discourse. The choice of moving the capital proves that the government has chosen *symbolism* over practicality, elitism over inclusivity and *beautification* over a widespread development. While there is nothing wrong in modernity, symbolism and aesthetics, it is wrong to camouflage these goals promoting different ones, such as sustainability, smart, equalities and greenness. It is to be seen how the urban plan will make sense of the political discourse.

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