



© Aino Kostainen / WWF

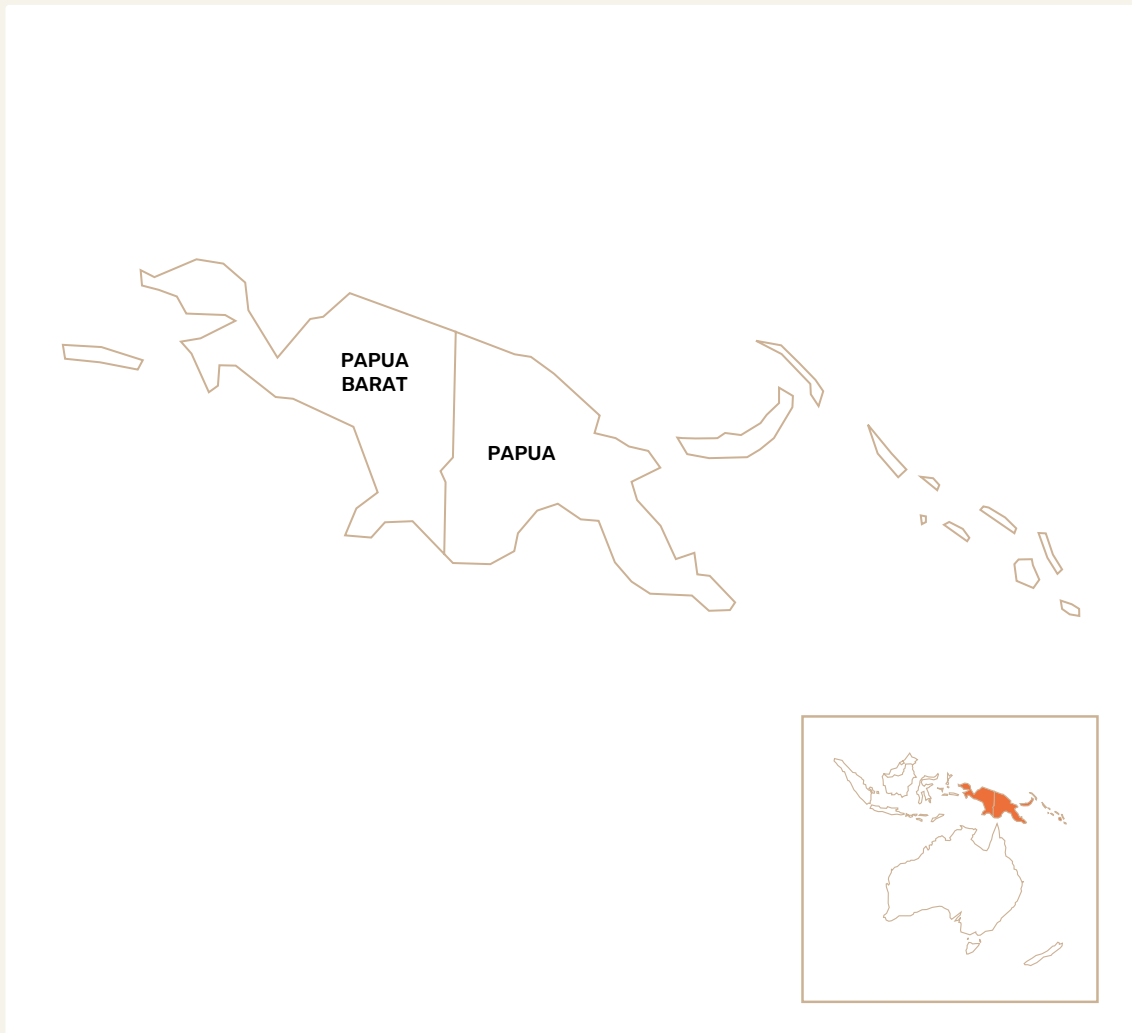
VOICES FOR JUST CLIMATE ACTION INDONESIA

Factsheet

Be one with nature

VCA CONTEXT, IMPLEMENTATION AND GOALS

WWF-VCA interventions are carried out in 20 villages in the Asmat, Jayapura, Tambrau and Teluk Bintuni reGENCY of **Papua** and Papua Barat Province in **Indonesia**.



PAPUA

Papua is one of Indonesia's least developed provinces with a human development index of 0.604. The total area of Papua is 317,062 km².

Although West Papua was declared as the first conservation Province of Indonesia, the local customary conservation system is not formally recognised. The local customary conservation system creates accountability for the local community, but it has been difficult to enforce this on external actors. This is partially due to the low information flows, the absence of monitoring and is exacerbated by the weak relationship between the local government and local community, with the local people finding it difficult to seek assistance from the government.

POPULATION

The population of Papua is estimated to be approximately 1,020,190 people and can be divided into various ethnic groups. The local people in Papua suffer from tenure insecurity, local elite capture and power dynamics that limits their access to natural resources, resulting in over exploitation and unfair distribution of resources. Indigenous local governance institutions often ensure natural resources are managed and used wisely. However, without tenure and recognition of their rights, indigenous peoples are subject to displacement and evictions in the name of large-scale development projects. In some cases, local governments have excluded indigenous peoples from decisions regarding the use of their lands. They have issued permits for palm oil companies without going through a process of dialogue and consensus with those who live around or within the area where the palm oil permits are issued. This can lead to conflicts between oil palm companies and indigenous peoples and local communities.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE

Papua and West Papua is home to the third-largest tropical forest in the world and accounts for more than 20% of Indonesia's remaining forest areas. Natural resources and their use which form the basis of the economic system of indigenous peoples differ from one community to another, due to the uniqueness of the natural environment, socio-culture, institutions and customary rules of each. For indigenous peoples the value of natural resources is focused on social, cultural and religion aspects and food sustenance.

The people of Papua are officially categorised as 'poor' even though they are living in regions or islands with high natural resources. This is partly because of the lack of recognition and appreciation of the value of natural resources managed by indigenous peoples which has created an investment policy bias that tends to uproot indigenous peoples' communities from the ecosystem which their livelihoods are dependent on. Poor governance and marginalization of local rights holders both in rural and urban areas have in turn caused enduring poverty, biodiversity loss and degradation of the resource through the pursuit of short-term economic benefits.

CLIMATE CRISIS

People in Papua are living in and around crucial ecosystems and depend on natural resources as a basis for their livelihoods. The threat of climate change and extreme weather patterns are accentuating their economic and ecological vulnerability. Papua is at extremely high risk of flooding. For example, for the inhabitants in Asmat, flooding and salt intrusion have a significant impact on sago production which affects the food security and livelihoods of farmers. There has also been an increase in forest fires which has a huge impact on food security for farmers. As sea levels continue to rise, so does the issue of salt intrusion which has a significant impact on coastal agriculture. The rising sea levels and change in tide patterns limits market access by the community and their livelihoods.

SCOPE OF THE VCA PROGRAM

WWF-ID through this project has engaged and influenced stakeholders in Papua and Papua Barat Province, these include government agencies, CSOs, CBOs and local universities, which resulted in more harmonious efforts for advocating crucial policies needed for protecting indigenous people rights, intellectual property rights, integration of local knowledge, land tenure rights, local food security and gender mainstreaming, especially women empowerment.

WWF-ID recognises the importance of strengthening the dialogue and discussion among multi-stakeholder on just climate action, WWF-ID facilitated the establishment of the VCA forum in Papua. The forum aims to support the sharing and exchanging of concerns related to climate justice and developing a joint agenda and activities for campaign and advocacy works that will be used to connect to the VCA-Alliance platform in Jakarta.

This allows for a shared understanding to be formed by diverse actors and creates space for stronger collective action for the scaling of locally shaped solutions that benefit people and nature.

PAPUA IN 2026: WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE THROUGH THE VCA PROGRAMME

WWF-Papua, through VCA, seeks to strengthen collective capacity and action of local CSOs/CBOs and marginalised groups for inclusive policy dialogue on climate solutions, establish a strong narrative and shared platform to amplify voices of CSOs/CBOs for a just climate transition, and identify local climate solutions (including local food systems, new financial schemes, innovation and access to technology, knowledge and local wisdom and governance of natural resources) and ensure stakeholder buy-in for their adoption. The hope is that the VCA approach will be mainstreamed beyond the WWF-Papua office, to the whole WWF- Indonesia office.