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Contesting “growth” and “sustainability” in Indonesia’s  
capital city relocation: a corpus ecolinguistic study

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**Abstract.** The global environmental crisis has triggered academic discussions on how infrastructure discourse often eliminates the environment as a part of the ecosystem. One noticeable contested issue is Indonesia’s capital city relocation from Jakarta to Penajam Paser Utara, Borneo Island. Considering the island’s biodiversity hotspot, the capital city relocation has invited debates about environmental impacts. Despite the criticism and scepticism of the government’s ambitious project, the Indonesian House of Representatives passed the relocation law, followed by the president’s capital city development regulations. Some research has discussed the new capital city (NCC) discourse, but the analysis from a corpus ecolinguistic perspective is absent. It is hypothesised that the lexemes “growth” and “sustainability” in the NCC legal documents represent the government’s intention to communicate the relocation intention and legitimise the plan. Therefore, this paper investigates the employment of lexemes “growth” and “sustainability” in the NCC legal documents using Sketch Engine, an online corpus tool developed by Adam Kilgarriff. Additionally, we also observed the nominalisation and transitivity of the concordances where the lexemes were used in the documents. The analysis revealed that “growth” and “sustainability” are inextricably linked to project NCC as a tool to accelerate and catalyse regional and national economic growth. Ecologically, the NCC documents promote an eco-ambivalent discourse since the sustainability objective excludes the environment. Instead, industrial sustainability is the primary goal in the capital city relocation. The country’s welfare measured by its economic

success is salient in the discourse, whereas humans' responsibility towards the deforestation impacts of relocation is lacking.

**Keywords:** Borneo; Corpus; Ecolinguistics; Environment; Nominalisation; Transitivity

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## Introduction

Recently, researchers have shown an increased interest in the issue of the environment about development, growth, and sustainability. Global environmental policies and international agreements also align environmental challenges with common goals that require successful participation between academics, the private/business sector, policy-makers, civil societies and local constituencies (Coscieme et al., 2020). The intertwined discourse between the environment and its impacts on sustainability is evident in recent research on how 'green discourse' is projected to be 'green behaviour' and 'green impacts'. However, the nature or environment discourse is always contested (Gellers, 2015). The notion of 'nature' has been continually produced in environmental policy and planning, as obviously demonstrated in the infrastructure developments, daily needs, and mobility (Feindt and Oels, 2005). The word 'nature' is often borrowed in green advertising, which eventually aims to gain economic profit. Moreover, it is criticised that green discourse perpetuates consumerism for merely human beings' satisfaction and wealth (Abbamonte, 2021; Mühlhäusler, 1999). One of the recent environmental issues concerns the Indonesian capital city relocation, giving rise to discussions on its socioeconomic, security, and environmental ramifications.

After its independence, Indonesia's capital city was Batavia, a Dutch name for Jakarta. Due to the Dutch military aggressions, the government once temporarily relocated the capital city to Yogyakarta (4 January 1946 to 17 December 1949), Bukit Tinggi (December 1948 to June 1949, and

Aceh (a week starting from 18 June 1948) (Fitria, 2022). Following a period of national and political stability Jakarta was appointed and legalised as Indonesia's capital city in accordance with the Indonesian law of capital city No. 10, the year 1964. Because of the centrality in business and government offices, many people from rural areas and outside Java Islands migrated to Jakarta, hoping for a better future. Nevertheless, the exponential increase in population and subsequent economic expansion has led to the emergence of significant environmental challenges. The Indonesian first president, Soekarno, proposed relocating Indonesia's capital city in 1957<sup>1</sup>. However, the plan has not yet been accomplished, with the projected timeline extending until 2022.

At Indonesia's 74<sup>th</sup> independence commemoration, President Joko Widodo seriously proposed the capital city relocation to Borneo Island. Previously, Palangkaraya was mentioned as the projected new capital city, but after subsequent investigations, the government decided Penajam Paser Utara, East Borneo, as the new capital city. The government also officially named the new capital city "Nusantara", denoting Indonesia's archipelagic state. On 15 February 2022, the Indonesian House of Representatives passed the bill to relocate Indonesia's capital city from Jakarta to Borneo Island. Joko Widodo mentioned two critical intentions of the city relocation: development and economic equity to avoid Java centrism. The public also assumes that Jakarta's main problems, such as land subsidence, waste collection, and traffic

<sup>1</sup> Newspaper articles reported by Tempo, Glibal Voices, Asia Nikkei, and rdi.or.id

congestion, are motivating factors for Joko Widodo's proposal to relocate the city to Penajam Paser Utara, Borneo (Ward et al., 2013). In response to the proposal, the relocation law number 3-year 2022 about *Ibu Kota Negara (IKN)* was legalised even though some called it the most ambitious government project in history, both politically and technocratically (Nugroho and Adrianto, 2022).

Criticism also emerges due to systematic and mass migration of the capital city relocation, including linguistic studies (Van de Vuurst and Escobar, 2020). As a perspective that concerns the role of language in shaping the interrelation between society and the environment, ecolinguistics questions any kind of discourse that can lead to ecological harmony or destruction (Ming Cheng, 2022; Stibbe, 2015). Ecolinguistics also concerns the mutual influencing mechanism between language and environment (Ming Cheng, 2022). NCC legal documents are examples of discourse that potentially promote or violate ecological harmony as the legal implementation inevitably impacts biodiversity, climate change, and the island's deforestation (Van de Vuurst and Escobar, 2020). Moreover, the infrastructure expansion in the city relocation may lead to Borneo's biodiversity hotspot extinction. Borneo is known as one of the world's lungs that store various biodiversity and endemic species. However, the island's wildfires, drought, mining, and agriculture industries have caused more than 30% of deforestation (Van de Vuurst and Escobar, 2020). Therefore, it is justifiable to assert that debates around the environmental impacts of NCC are worth studying.

Several researchers have reported the impacts of capital city relocation on national security and the border between Indonesia and Malaysia (Hakim and Maksum, 2022; Partoga and Setiyono, 2020) and environmental problems (Azhar et al., 2020; Sultan et al., 2022). Some other studies investigating NCC discourse have been carried out on appraisal

analysis and discourse structures (Fitriana et al., 2020; Risdianto et al., 2022; Septiana and Sumarlam, 2018; Sugiharti, Susilo and Putranto, 2020). Overall, these studies highlight that NCC discourse is politically and institutionally motivated to articulate the government legitimation of the new capital city development. The appreciation, lexical and grammatical features show the media's negative attitude toward NCC. Conversely, research on Twitter analysis shows more positive public sentiments (Arsi et al., 2021; Spencer et al., 2023; Sutoyo and Almaarif, 2020). Twitter's quantitative results and algorithm show a more positive reaction and impact on the NCC development. Despite the different results, those studies prove that NCC discourse contains a dynamic and contested issue between environmental and economic justice.

Researchers have not treated ecolinguistics in Indonesia's capital city relocation discourse in much detail. Thus, this study contributes significantly to ecolinguistic research by demonstrating how linguistic strategies in legal documents articulate the ecological relationship. This research seeks to address the following questions: 1) how are the lexemes 'growth' and 'sustainability' employed in the NCC legal discourse? and 2) how does the NCC discourse articulate the ecological relationship of the capital city relocation?

### **Literature review**

#### ***Ecological discourse analysis***

Ecolinguistics was initially introduced in the 1970s by Einar Haugen as the 'language and ecology' which conceptualises language as an organism. Language diversity is regarded as an integral part of an ecosystem, thereby studies on Haugenian's approach are dominated by language diversity and endangerment. Hence, the global crisis also invites linguists to examine the role of language as cognitive and discursive properties that shape how we think, talk, and behave towards the environment. Halliday's speech at the first AILA (Association Internationale de Linguistique Appliquée or International

Association of Applied Linguistics) conference marks the intertwined relationship between ecolinguistics and critical discourse studies. Many critical discourse studies have questioned the use of ‘environment’ and ‘nature’ within neo-liberal discourses. Later in 2014, Alexander and Stibbe introduced the term Ecological Discourse Analysis (EDA) which is strongly associated with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). In 2021, He Wei introduced EDA as a novel paradigm. While CDA focuses on oppression towards marginalised human beings, EDA directs its emphasis towards future generations and non-human species as affected participants that experience oppression. Specifically, EDA aims to look for stories that depict environmental oppression and seek stories that may foster a harmonious coexistence between humans, the human-nature interaction, and nature itself (Alexander and Stibbe, 2014).

EDA is conducted based on linguistic theories and an ecosophy that leads to the judgment of the orientation of discourse (M. Cheng, 2022). Some research mentions different kinds of ecosophy adopted in the analysis, such as the concept of protection toward the planet and inhabitants over the profits, recognising the rights of all, system thinking, fairness, well-being, social justice, care, compassion, diversity and harmony, and interaction and co-existence (Franklin et al., 2022; M. Cheng, 2022). Specifically, this paper aims to criticise whether the lexemes ‘growth’ and ‘sustainability’ consider the environment thoroughly in the NCC development. Therefore, the ecosophy adopted in this research is about ‘recognising the rights of all’. Since NCC is developed on Borneo Island, a site of oxygen contribution and a home of endemic species, this paper concerns how the linguistic choice in legal documents considers the environment in the capital city relocation. The ecosophy and ecological behaviour have an interwoven relationship since ecosophy is responsible for raising ecological minds that guide the discourse and ecological behaviour, and vice versa. Three main procedures in EDA are adopted in this

paper: 1) deciding an analytic framework with a proper linguistic theory, 2) finding linguistic features by analysing discourse to find ecological orientation and hidden meanings, and 3) considering ecological measures (eco-beneficial, eco-ambivalent, or eco-destructive) (M. Cheng, 2022; Stibbe, 2015).

The field of ecolinguistics has witnessed substantial expansion across diverse areas, encompassing education, literature, and corpus-discourse studies. An exemplary illustration can be observed in the utilisation of songs to foster ecoliteracy within educational contexts (Rantung et al., 2023). In critical discourse studies, Garlitos (2020) employed Fairclough’s framework to examine Filipino mass media in portraying ecological problems. The analysis found the news media’s bias by portraying the government as a warrior in mitigating the ecological issues that are depicted as destruction, objectification, and problems. Regarding crisis, ecolinguistics was applied to discuss British online media, both broadsheets and tabloids, in framing environmental issues concerning the COVID-19 pandemic (Zeniakin, 2022). By employing verbal and visual features in the media, the analysis demonstrates the intertwined multimodal strategies to project humans as agents, humans as the culprit of the pandemic, nature as the pandemic source, and nature as a self-regulating entity. Despite the conservative viewpoint toward the world, the media also contain optimism as a form of anthropocentrism and ecocentrism that demonstrate the human-nature relationship.

In a more advanced methodology, ecolinguistics has been used as a framework in corpus discourse studies on climate change. A comprehensive study was examined to compare the linguistic features of climate change activists and politicians related to climate emergency (Cunningham et al., 2022). With specialised corpora built by the researchers in Sketch Engine, they examined single and multiple keywords and the concordance lines. The analysis found different themes and ideologies. While activists’ discourse voices ecological-social justice and

action immediacy to mitigate the climate crisis, the politicians' discourse is loaded with economics and politics. The activists' discourse addresses anthropocentric ideology that assigns humans as the responsible actors, while the politicians' discourse devolves responsibility to non-human actors. Using different data sources, Kirk-Browne (2021) depicts how corpus-assisted ecolinguistics substantiates climate change discourse within the UK parliament. By examining the word choice in collocation analysis and topics in the corpus, the author found three major discourses: gradualism, scepticism, and catastrophism. The domination of the economic framings in UK politics shapes the frame of climate change as challenges and opportunities that motivate the UK to establish a leadership role. Climate change is portrayed as a worldwide concern that adversely affects global communities. The notable finding lies in the discourse's erasure of human agency and non-human entities. Hence, the author concludes that the UK parliament's climate change issue is subject to political manipulation, wherein the UK government is depicted as the hero.

#### ***The environment and legal discourse***

There are two main streams to criticise environmental discourse: Foucauldian and non-Foucauldian. The first concerns the role of knowledge, while the latter pays more attention to language. Both agree that the environment is often contested in policy prescriptions (Gellers, 2015). Environmental problems are not self-evident but represent complex and systematic interdependencies (Feindt and Oels, 2005). Environmental policy problems are the effect of social construction as there are struggles about the concept, knowledge, and meaning. The notion of the environment is never homogenous, yet it is challenged by the concepts of 'nature', 'progress', and 'sustainability'. The same goes for NCC legal documents encountering environmental sustainability with economic progress and growth. The environmental discourse has also been challenged in government policy, as appears in developing countries. Despite the necessity to involve

cultural and historical aspects of the environment, Takahashi and Meisner (2012) argue that environment and economic growth are often contested. The neoliberal discourse embedded in the policy environment often marginalises the environmental justice that concerns indigenous rights and anti-hegemonic perspectives. Thus, it can be said that language in legal discourse constructs and is constructed by social practice.

Law or legal documents are not merely treated as texts but as discourse based on two arguments: it is a source of the language in society and a form of expression of power (Gellers, 2015). Linguistically, some features mark legal discourse: archaic, ritualistic, elegant, and internally coherent, treated as a system of authority in a society. Those linguistic markers aim to minimise the infusion of foreign influence and to maximise stability and longevity. However, legal discourse also builds particular inequalities in discourse studies through its legal process and decision-making (L. Cheng and Machin, 2022). The legal discourse of the environment is questioned in some ways. First, it is criticised for whether it affects the continuity or change in structures governing social life. Second, it is also questioned whether it offers a sound foundation for thinking about the environment, and third, how the system may order society to realise more ecologically ways of living (Gellers, 2015).

#### **Method**

This corpus ecological discourse analysis paper draws upon the concept of asymmetrical power relations that appears in the legal discourse of Indonesia's new capital city development proven empirically. Corpus ecolinguistics has been proven reliable in criticising how the environment is used, constructed, and commodified in varied sectors, including education, literature, and critical discourse studies (Alexander, 2017; Franklin et al., 2022; Poole, 2018; Rantung et al., 2023). Those studies reveal that word frequency, keywords, collocations, and concordances provide empirical data to help us interpret a discourse's frames and ideologies. The statistical results provided by a corpus tool

do not merely define the discourse meanings, but help us support our critical interpretation based on empirical data. Therefore, conducting a corpus-based study should not be contested with micro-linguistic analysis since the micro linguistics concept still plays a significant role in discussing the interpretation of particular language patterns in a corpus.

Despite the debates and criticism towards the Borneo environment, the Indonesian government perpetuates the development plan and legitimises it through the law and regulations passed by the House of Representatives. Thus, this paper hypothesises that the lexemes ‘growth’ and ‘sustainability’ salient in the legal discourse may not articulate an eco-beneficial discourse that considers environmental justice. Language is a property that influences the way we think, talk, and act toward the world. Language represents how an individual, a group of people, or society thinks about the environment, and discourse refers to the characteristics of language shared across group members and groups that affect how we act or treat our environment. Discourse is regarded as a social practice that is formed by social structures, agents, and ideologies (Zubareva, 2018).

Stibbe (2015) exemplifies the discourse of neoclassical economics that scatters around us, implying that ‘the more we have/ buy, the happier we are’. The domination of human satisfaction and wealth does not always side with environmental impact. The same assumption can be applied to Indonesia’s capital city relocation discourse. The grand

design of ‘developing an economic justice’ is questioned in how the legal discourse locates the environment in its development plan. This paper is a mixed method since both quantitative and qualitative data were involved. The word list provided quantitative data and collocations of the lexemes ‘growth’ and ‘sustainability’ found in law and regulations, while the qualitative analysis refers to researchers’ interpretation of the linguistic analysis based on the intertextuality and interdiscursivity of environmental policy and legal discourse. The detailed data collection and analysis procedures are explained in the following parts.

### *The corpus*

The law and the president’s decree were downloaded on <https://www.ikn.go.id/> as the official platform of NCC. The main navigation provided on the website, “About *IKN*” provides essential documents and information, one of which is the regulations of NCC development. In total, there were eleven regulation documents uploaded on the website, but this research excluded data that contained maps and pictures. We focused on the regulations loaded with verbal data. For this research, there were nine documents in total containing 230,474 tokens or 7,542 sentences. The data were in the form of .pdf files and uploaded to Sketch Engine. This online corpus tool enables us to create our own corpus by crawling the data online or storing uploaded documents. Below is the summary of the collected legal documents.

**Table 1.** NCC Legal Documents

<b>Title</b>	<b>Tokens</b>
Law no. 3, the year 2022	8,517
Master Plan of <i>IKN</i>	28,089
Otorita	9,537
Governmental regulation No. 17, the year 2022 (funding and budget management)	25,603
The president’s regulation No. 62, the year 2022 (authority of <i>IKN</i> )	5,426
The president’s regulation No. 63, the year 2022 (details of the masterplan)	1,402
The attachment of the president’s regulation No 63, the year 2022	149,395
The president’s regulation No. 65, the year 2022	2,505
<b>Total</b>	<b>230,474</b>

### **Data analysis**

The presence of computers has benefited linguistic studies, including critical discourse analysis. Some research used computers and software to investigate sentiment analysis in social media and film reviews (Dukhovnaya, 2022; Li and Gao, 2023), while others investigated the discursive construction of particular issues from the keyness, intertextuality, and interdiscursivity (Almaghlouth, 2022). Corpus tools such as AntConc, Wmatrix, and Sketch Engine have provided beneficial tools to map news themes, lexical bundles in textbooks, and climate change frames in a political speech (Ardi et al., 2023; Liu and Huang, 2022; Willis, 2017). Those studies exemplify the possibility of corpus-assisted method in examining specialised corpora to further contextualise in varied settings. For analysis, we used Sketch Engine, an online corpus tool founded by Adam Kilgarriff, who collaborated with Pavel Rychlý from Masaryk University (Kilgarriff et al., 2014). Sketch Engine has been proven as a reliable instrument in critical discourse studies to investigate environmental discourses, as found in copper mining discourse (Poole, 2018), rhino poaching in South Africa (Engelbrecht, 2020), political election discourse (Melendres and Barea, 2021; Vollmer, 2017), and tourism discourse (Rebechi et al., 2021; Srdanović, 2020). Those studies use common tools: word lists, keywords, collocation, and concordances.

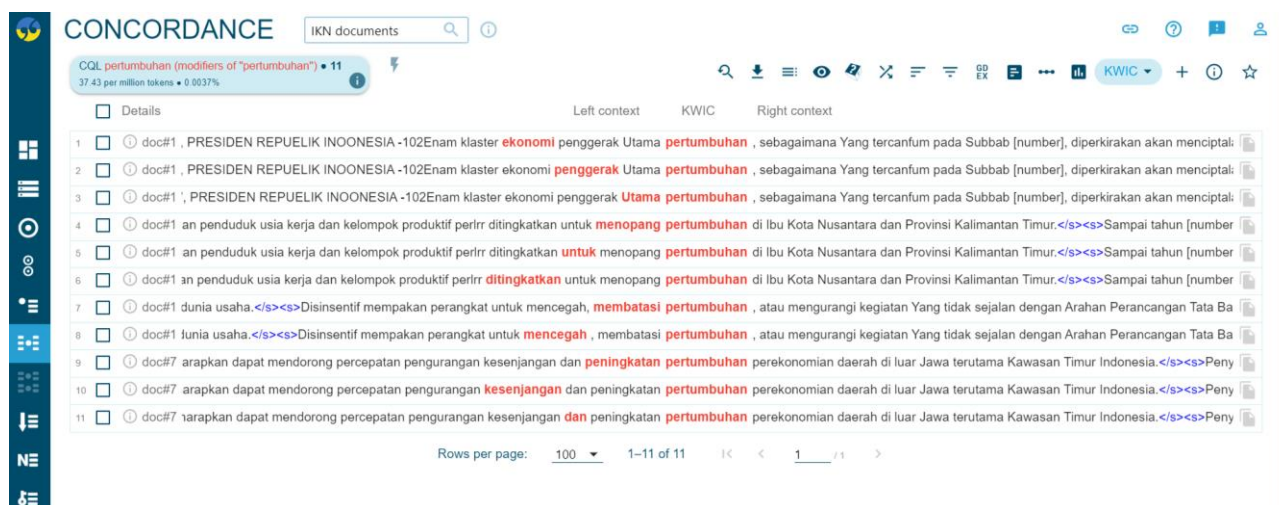
Similar to previous research, we also used the word list, collocation, and concordance tools in the analysis. The present study centres on two lexemes, pertumbuhan 'growth' and keberlanjutan 'sustainability',

and identifies their collocates by limiting them to three words on the left and three on the right (3L-3R). The selection criteria for these collocates include a minimum frequency of five in the corpus and a minimum frequency of three within the specified range. According to Krasnopeyeva (2023), examining collocations reveals the associations between words, which in turn offer valuable insights into the significant relationships within a speech.

The association strength between words is proven by log dice score, a statistical measure used to identify word co-occurrences. Unlike the mutual information (MI) score and T-value, the log dice score is not influenced by corpus size (Rychlý, 2008). We restricted the ten collocates with the highest log dice value for each of the lexemes. Following the presentation of the collocations, we proceeded to conduct a more in-depth analysis of the context through the examination of concordance lines. This approach allowed us to map out the lexicogrammatical usage of the lexemes effectively. Below is an example of the concordance lines provided by Sketch Engine (Figure).

The concordance lines of each observed collocate were obtained and analysed in a spreadsheet format to conduct a more detailed investigation into the patterns of transitivity and nominalisation. The transitivity participants of both lexemes provide insight into how NCC legal documents establish the positioning of growth and sustainability of the capital city relocation. The data was interpreted using van Dijk's concept of social actors, as some participants were nominalised.

Figure. An example of the concordance lines provided by Sketch Engine



We adopted the ‘recognising the rights of all’ philosophy to characterise the utterances containing ‘growth’ and ‘sustainability’. The step adopted here follows Cheng and He (2021) and M. Cheng (2022), which categorises the utterance as either eco-beneficial, eco-ambivalent, or eco-destructive. The eco-beneficial judgment is concluded when the utterance recognises non-human species and other voiceless agents involved in the discourse. Conversely, the eco-destructive label is applied to utterances that prioritise human beings’ needs and satisfaction by neglecting the non-voiceless agents in the discourse. Eco-ambivalent discourse is characterised by ecological attributes that deviate from and contravene ecosophy (M. Cheng, 2022). Furthermore, according to Bryson (2001), the concept of ecological ambivalence plays a significant role in the division between humans and nature in an ecosystem. This is particularly evident in climate change discourse, where the focus is primarily on the impact on human beings, neglecting the broader ecological implications.

### Results and Discussion

The lexemes ‘sustainability’ and ‘growth’ in Indonesia’s capital city relocation

are salient in the law and the president’s regulation. Those two data types are categorised as a legal discourse with specific compositional and stylistic characteristics that maximise stability and longevity, avoid ambiguity, emphasise clarity, and minimise the incorporation of external influences (Gellers, 2015). Legal discourse is socially rooted in particular cultural and political formations (Feindt and Oels, 2005). According to Foucault’s conceptual framework, the legal discourse serves as a means of legitimation and power relations, thus allowing discourse consumption, production, and reproduction in everyday policy and planning. Specifically, environmental discourse is part of a broader discursive landscape that competes with another discourse, as shown in the discourse of economics and growth; in other words, environmental discourse is intricately interconnected with other discourses (Feindt and Oels, 2005).

Based on the corpus analysis, the lexeme ‘growth’ appears in 81 tokens, and the lexeme ‘sustainability’ occurs in 210 tokens, closely associated with their collocates, as shown in Table 2.



**Table 2.** Ten Collocates of the lexeme 'growth' and 'sustainability'

<i>pertumbuhan</i> "growth"				<i>keberlanjutan</i> "sustainability"			
collocate	Freq.	coll. freq	log Dice	collocate	Freq.	coll. freq	log Dice
economy (n)	25	402	10,80	agriculture (n)	20	114	11,04
population (n)	8	237	9,8	world (n)	11	86	10,3
sustainability (n)	5	117	9,45	industry (n)	16	275	10,12
become (v)	10	416	9,4	easy (adj)	7	19	10,06
drive (v)	3	95	9,34	mode (n)	8	76	9,91
new (adj)	5	239	9,11	accessed (passive v)	6	10	9,89
support (v)	5	267	8,98	agroforestry (n)	6	13	9,87
industry (n)	4	275	8,63	inclusive (adj)	7	89	9,65
access (n)	3	199	8,59	city (n)	10	643	9,60
Kalimantan (n)	3	223	8,46	growth (n)	5	56	9,34

Table 2 presents two comparable collocates within the lexemes 'growth' and 'sustainability': 'industry' and 'access' (both noun and verb). Upon analysis of the collocates' parts of speech, nominal collocates exhibit a greater degree of prominence within the corpus compared to the verbs and adjectives. For the lexeme 'growth', the nominal collocates construct the aims of capital city relocation, as seen in the words 'economy', 'population', 'sustainability', 'industry', 'access', and 'Kalimantan'. Conversely, the verb collocates 'become' and 'drive' position 'growth' as the subject/ Actor to achieve the Goal. The only adjective collocate 'new' refers to the new capital city. Similarly, the lexeme 'sustainable' is also closely associated with nominal collocates, as the words 'agriculture', 'world', 'industry', 'mode', 'agroforestry', 'city', and 'growth' show. There is a knotted collocation between 'growth' and 'sustainability'. The verbal collocates 'accessed' and the adjectives 'easy' and

'inclusive' indicate the sustainable relocation plan for the capital city.

Statistically, collocation is empirically proven by the log Dice score, showing that a score above 5 signifies a significant co-occurrence of two words. In other words, the co-occurrences of the words are not coincidental. There is a positive correlation between the log Dice score and the likelihood of collocations selected through deliberate intention. Therefore, collocation analysis can serve as an initial approach to discern the underlying purpose of the legal discourse to incorporate 'growth' and 'sustainability' in the capital city relocation. As evidenced by the collocation analysis presented in Table 2, the primary objective of the capital city relocation is identified as 'economic growth'. Echoing Joko Widodo's statement on the relocation plan, NCC documents legalise the president's utterance by rewording the terms 'economic' and 'growth'. Though the collocate 'sustainability' is near 'growth', its transitivity

process and participants do not project environmental growth and sustainability. Instead, ‘sustainable economic growth’ is more emphasised.

To comprehend the context where those collocates are found, we closely examined the

transitivity processes of the lexemes and collocates. The table below summarises the transitivity participants and eco-characteristics of the clause based on the ‘recognising the rights of all’ philosophy, adopting Wei (2022) and Cheng (2022).

**Table 3.** Transitivity processes and participants of the lexeme ‘growth’ and ‘sustainability’

Transitivity		Growth		Sustainability	
Processes	Participants	Freq.	Eco-characteristics	Freq.	Eco-characteristics
Material	Actor	2	Ambivalent	10	Ambivalent
Material	Goal	19	Ambivalent	20	Ambivalent
Material and Relational	Circumstance	8	Beneficial	17	Beneficial
Relational	Carrier	2	Beneficial	3	Beneficial
Relational	Attribute	12	Beneficial	11	Beneficial
Relational	Token	-	-	1	Beneficial
Relational	Value	-	-	4	Beneficial

Table 3 above shows some similarities of transitivity patterns in which the lexemes ‘growth’ and ‘sustainability’ are found. Both lexemes are used in material and relational processes, dominated by Goal as the participants. The participants present in the corpus are Actor, Circumstance, and Attribute. The sole discernible distinction is found in the relational process in which Token-Value is only found in the lexeme ‘sustainability’. Both Actor and Goal participants express ambivalent discourse, whereas the remaining participants articulate beneficial discourse.

In light of the ‘recognising the rights of all’ philosophy, the presence of an Actor and Goal expresses a discourse that is ambivalent towards ecological concerns. The material process involving Actor and Goal participants is characterised by nominalisation and passivation. The repetition of the pattern can be observed in the concordance lines pertaining to the terms ‘growth’ and ‘sustainability’. According to the adopted ecosophy, the utilisation of nominalisation in NCC legal documents serves to obscure the government’s role to legitimise their action, including forest clearings. The following

example shows the context where the Goal is found.

- (1) *Pengembangan kluster ekonomi selanjutnya diarahkan untuk ekspansi serta penguatan daya saing dan kontribusi pada pertumbuhan ekonomi yang berkelanjutan.*

Further development of economic clusters [Actor] is aimed to [Material process] expand and strengthen competitiveness and contribute to **sustainable economic growth** [Goal].

The nominal phrase ‘further development of economic cluster’ lacks explicit mention of the Actor responsible for the development of the cluster. As the relocation is legalised by the law and presidential regulation, the infrastructure development that impacts forest clearance is left implicit in the regulation. The activities of deforestation in Borneo will result in an ecological imbalance within the region. Furthermore, the use of passivation in example (1) also serves to downplay the significance of the Actor (van Dijk, 2008).

Similar to example (1), the lexeme 'growth' is also observed as a Goal in a passive sentence below.

- (2) *Selain itu, terdapat sejumlah skema insentif yang dapat diterapkan untuk **mendorong eksplorasi dan pertumbuhan produksi** antara lain Risk Sharing Contract (RSC) untuk mendorong pengembangan proyek-proyek marginal serta skema bagi hasil yang kompetitif.*

In addition [Circumstance], several incentive schemes [Actor] can be implemented [Material process] to **encourage exploration and production growth**, including the Risk Sharing Contract (RSC) to encourage the development of marginal projects and competitive profit-sharing schemes [Goal].

Example (2) above presents a nominalised Actor, 'several incentive schemes'. The Agents offering the incentive schemes in the NCC legal documents are left implicit by focusing on the verb 'implement'. The documents do not explicitly mention the role of the government in providing incentive schemes, which contribute to the successful implementation of the relocation plan. As illustrated in example (2), the Goal elucidates that the incentive plan establishes a competitive bidding process. The government intends to achieve equitable distribution of economic growth although its emphasis on economic justice remains evident.

The lexeme 'growth' that collocates with 'exploration' and 'production' highlights a human-human relationship of the capital city relocation. The documents consistently emphasise the significant economic advantage anticipated from the city relocation. This euphemistic expression bears resemblance to the strategy employed in describing the repercussions of the global economic crisis, as evidenced by the terms 'battered economy', 'economic disruption', and 'economic downturn' (Mironina and Porchesku, 2023). From an ecological perspective, this linguistic

strategy expresses an ambivalent discourse. On the one hand, the city relocation promotes the rights of all, particularly by fostering the development of Borneo and the eastern regions of Indonesia to avoid Java centrism. On the other hand, the rewording of 'economic growth' neglects the role of the voiceless agents in the relocation. Efforts to maintain environmental sustainability are lacking in the documents. Instead, the government implicitly creates competition to accelerate the city relocation success. The nominalisation and passivation are assumed to justify the government's actions that may have the potential to pose a threat to the Borneo forests and their diverse species.

Another manifestation of ambivalent discourse is illustrated by the absence of environmental impacts stemming from deforestation and land clearings. NCC documents eliminate the agents through nominalisation and passivation by exploiting linguistic choices to convey specific meanings in the most subtle and indirect ways (Biadi and Zih, 2021). Moreover, as NCC documents are categorised as legal discourse, the employment of passivation is selected to avoid responsibility (Fairclough, 1995), particularly on the environmental impacts of relocation development. Economic growth is projected as a positive impact of the relocation, but nature, as an essential component of an ecosystem, is overlooked. The other nominalisations functioning as Actor of the lexeme 'growth' are 'capital city relocation', 'economic cluster', 'infrastructure investment', 'this effort', 'strengthening higher education', 'prime economic cluster', 'competitive economic sector', and 'transportation infrastructure'.

From an ecological perspective, it can be argued that NCC legal documents do not articulate a beneficial discourse to promote environmental justice and the rights of non-human species. The positive impacts associated with infrastructure development, specifically of enhancing distribution and transport accessibility to foster a more competitive economic cluster. A repetition of

lexemes denoting ‘economy’ and ‘infrastructure’ voices the human-human relationship as the centre of the city relocation. NCC legal documents fail to adequately address the preservation of Borneo’s environment, which serves as a crucial habitat for endemic and endangered species. The present findings resonate with the role of nominalisation and passivation as ideologically motivated choices to delete agency and maintain unequal power relations (Billig, 2008).

NCC project is associated with particular labels, as proven in relational processes and participants as exemplified below.

- (3) *Infrastruktur transportasi akan menjadi katalisator pertumbuhan ekonomi dengan akses langsung di dalam Wilayah Ibu Kota Nusantara dan Daerah Mitra serta akses ke jalur nasional dan internasional.*

The transportation infrastructures [Carrier] **will become** [Relational process] **a catalyst for economic growth** [Attribute] with direct access within Ibu Kota Negara regions and partner regions as well as access to national and international routes [Circumstance].

The relational process in utterance (3) is marked by a linking verb ‘become’ modified by a modal ‘will’. The modality shows optimism that project city relocation as a ‘catalyst’ for economic growth, labelled as the Attribute of the Carrier ‘transportation infrastructures’. Repeatedly, the nominalisation of transitivity participants is intended to delete the agency (Billig, 2008). Transportation infrastructures cannot be done without deforestation and land clearings. Instead of negotiating the rights of nature, NCC legal documents select a relational process to associate infrastructures with economic growth. The Carrier-Attribute participants are inseparable as one participant characterises the other. This utterance shows

an intertwined concept between the capital city relocation and economic growth.

In a different participant role, the lexeme ‘growth’ is located as a Circumstance of manner to realise the Goal, the vision of Indonesia 2045, as shown in example (4) below.

- (4) *Pemindahan Ibu Kota Negara dilakukan sebagai salah satu strategi untuk mewujudkan Visi Indonesia 2045, mendorong transformasi pembangunan sosial, budaya dan ekonomi bangsa, serta mendorong percepatan pembangunan kawasan timur Indonesia melalui pertumbuhan ekonomi yang lebih inklusif dan merata.*

The relocation of the National Capital [Actor] was carried out [Material process] as one of the strategies to realise the Vision of Indonesia 2045, encourage the transformation of the nation’s social, cultural and economic development, and encourage accelerated development of eastern Indonesia [Goal] **through more inclusive and equitable economic growth** [Circumstance].

The passive clause in example (4) is realised in the material process with the nominalisation ‘the relocation of the National Capital’ as an Actor. The Goal to realise the vision of Indonesia 2045 is expected with the Circumstance ‘through more inclusive and equitable economic growth’. The Goal is projected for eastern Indonesia’s development, promoting the rights of all philosophy. Utterance (4) echoes Joko Widodo’s attempt to avoid Java centrism by developing more equitable economic growth. However, the nominalisation functioning as an Actor above does not explicitly show who is responsible for the Indonesian vision 2045 realisation. The question still arises in the way the relocation is conducted. It goes without saying that the capital city relocation is assumed as an ambitious project. The

ambivalence of sustainability and economic growth is prevalent in the absence of environmental impact in the relocation plan.

Another example of how 'sustainability' is involved in the NCC documents is shown below.

(5) *Peningkatan investasi untuk klaster industri berbasis pertanian berkelanjutan, dan kapasitas produksinya di Daeral Mitra*

**Increased investment for sustainable agriculture-based industrial clusters, and their production capacity in Partner Regions**

The adjective 'sustainable' functions as a modifier of 'agriculture-based industrial clusters' phrase. The pattern is repeated in the NCC legal documents to explain the agriculture-based pharmacy and industry, green-sustainable city, and ecotourism to accelerate economic growth. The noun phrase 'increased investment' is projected as an Actor to achieve the sustainable industrial cluster. There is an intertwined relationship between investment, sustainability, and competitiveness. The other example supporting the previous interpretation is shown in example (6) below.

(6) *Pengembangan klaster industri berbasis pertanian berkelanjutan yang akan berfokus untuk meningkatkan daya tarik bagi perusahaan dan pelaku industri untuk berinvestasi dan mendirikan basis penelitian dan pengembangan di Ibu Kota Nusantara*

**Development of sustainable agriculture-based industrial clusters that will focus on increasing attractiveness for companies and industry players to invest and establish research and development bases in the Ibu Kota Nusantara**

In the example above, 'sustainability' is present with the nominal head 'development' as the Actor that enhance the industry. The

repetition of nominalisation of development and sustainability transforms verbs into entities that, in particular case, can be abstract, perplexing, and even threatening (Fairclough, 2001). The notion of 'sustainability' is projected to maximise industrial growth based on the agricultural sector. Example (6) clearly depicts that NCC legal documents encourage industrial growth by inviting industry players and investors. The rewording of the terms 'growth' into 'development' and 'research' conceals financial growth as the primary purpose of the capital city relocation. However, with nominalisation used in the NCC discourse, the government obscures the relocation's sustainable development, yet focuses on the development as the 'correct' result of the capital city relocation.

The absence of 'environment', 'forests', and 'animals' in the NCC legal discourse depicts an 'erasure', referring to "a story in people's minds that an area of life is unimportant or unworthy consideration" (Stibbe, 2015: 146). Based on the collocation analysis of the lexemes 'growth' and 'sustainability', the environment is marginalised in legal documents. The government deliberately erased the environment as a direct consequence of the city relocation. Instead, the data suggests that the capital city relocation is more likely to contribute to the improvement of a country's economic growth. Conversely, the government agency is also lacking in the legal discourse. The nominalisation of 'infrastructure development', 'relocation of capital city', and 'increased investment' is another powerful strategy device of erasure. It affirms previous studies about using nouns to wrap the underlying forms of 'X degrades Y' (Schleppegrell, 1997).

The finding of this paper depicts that NCC relocation legal documents resonate with corporations' policy that often juxtaposes 'growth' and 'sustainability' with economic progress to legitimise the corporations' plans and actions. Environmental impacts, on the other hand, are regarded as prevalent issues

that can be addressed through technological advancements (Fernández-Vázquez and Sancho-Rodríguez, 2020). This ecomodernist viewpoint aligns with the messaging propagated by contemporary media to promote material growth and consumerism (Chen, 2016). In contrast to the linguistic features of legal discourse, NCC law and regulations tend to intertext with popular discourse loaded with descriptive words. The syntactical characteristics are loaded with passivation and nominalisation to focus on the actions or verbs that try to show the government's optimism about the relocation's success. The NCC discourse is a counterpoint of public pessimism and scepticism. The linguistic patterns in the NCC discourse reveal that the government strategically employs language to express its ideology and power (Afdholy et al., 2022; Gellers, 2015).

Regarding the 'rights of all' philosophy, based on statistical reports of Tables 2 and 3, the NCC discourse does not mention non-human species in the collocates of 'growth' and 'sustainability'. Thus, the NCC legal discourse voices an anthropocentric viewpoint that positions human stewardship of an ecosystem. This finding contradicts a constitution's function to acknowledge non-human beings in its regulations. As actors who judge rights and responsibilities, humans should use language as an instrument to acknowledge and recognise non-human entities juridically (Knauß, 2018). The absence of non-human species and environment collocates of the lexemes 'growth' and 'sustainability' affirms Gellers' criticism of legal discourse's role in sustainability (Gellers, 2015). The legal documents pertaining to the capital city relocation lack a robust basis for incorporating environmental considerations. In contrast, the documents exhibit intertextuality by incorporating terminology borrowed from corporate reports.

While NCC legal discourse does not fall under the classification of environmental policy, the process, development, and relocation of the capital city to Borneo have

significant implications for the island's biodiversity, forest, and endemic species. The relocation policy should also underline the principle of ecological priority to pursue 'green development' through measures aimed at protecting the climate and environment (Zhang et al., 2023). One unanticipated finding was that the NCC legal discourse does not include the ecological aspects of the capital city relocation. The language choice in legal documents is selected to perpetuate and legalise the government's plan to achieve the relocation goal. The legislation and presidential regulations paid more attention to inviting investors and industrial players' contributions to actualise the proposed plan. This finding substantiates prior research that has raised concerns regarding the environmental issues associated with the capital city relocation (Azhar et al., 2020; Sultan et al., 2022).

The centrality of economic growth and progress in the NCC discourse endorses previous assumptions about the environmental impacts of the capital city relocation. Legal documents do not explicitly associate sustainability with the environment or ecosystem. Instead, the issue of sustainability is borrowed as a normative agenda to project a sustainable industry that does not benefit the environment (Walker, 2017). This paper also affirms how companies borrowed the terms 'sustainable' and 'sustainability' as an elusive strategy to divert the focus from actual company actions (Fernández-Vázquez and Sancho-Rodríguez, 2020). However, government or the Agent responsible for the capital city relocation is omitted in the nominalisation and passivation found in the NCC legal discourse. This finding demonstrates a potential connection to existing research on pessimism and ambitions for relocating the city to Borneo Island (Ariyanti et al., 2022; Risdianto et al., 2022). The concerns raised by researchers regarding the environmental consequences of the relocation of the capital city appear to be disregarded. The legal discourse of the NCC prominently prioritises economic growth over

the consideration of a sustainable environment.

### Conclusion

Ecologically, this paper addresses the contestation of the lexemes 'growth' and 'sustainability' in Indonesian capital city relocation legal documents. From the collocation statistical results, this paper finds that the collocates of 'growth' and 'sustainability' project economic progress as the most crucial element to reach justice and avoid Java centrism, resonating with President Joko Widodo's proposal of the city relocation. Upon closer examination of the nominalisation and transitivity processes, it becomes evident that the omission of the Agent indirectly signifies the elimination of environmental impacts resulting from the relocation. The transitivity processes and participants do not involve entities referring to the environment. Instead, the data often indicates the presence of economic growth and progress. The concept of sustainability is primarily aligned with a normative agenda instead of a science that aims to consider the non-human species and future generations on the island. This paper concludes that Indonesian NCC legal discourse articulates an ambivalent discourse since the domination of human-human relationships is loaded in the discourse. The discourse constructed in the legal documents does not progressively promote the 'rights of all' philosophy. The recurring use of 'relocation', 'development', and 'growth' implies that capital city relocation is perceived and widely accepted as a national agenda. Ecologically, the elicitation of environment-related words in the legal documents demonstrates how government systematically locate economic growth as the primary driver in the capital city relocation.

By applying a corpus ecological discourse analysis, this paper contributes to how taken-for-granted documents may articulate an eco-ambivalent ideology. The statistical relations shown in the collocations, transitivity, and nominalisation provide an empirical finding on how the government's legitimation is addressed in a discourse. The

generalisability of these results is subject to certain limitations. For instance, the analysis focused on two contesting lexemes, growth and sustainability. Further examination can be addressed by investigating the topics of NCC legal documents from keyword analysis. The scope of this study was limited in terms of legal documents in Indonesia's capital city relocation. Hence, the expanding study can be employed to compare legal documents in other ecological issues, such as the president or ministry's regulations in mitigating disasters. Since the capital city relocation still provides a promising possibility in critical discourse studies, future research can select another genre, such as news media and public comments, regarding the city relocation. Notwithstanding these limitations, the study suggests that corpus-assisted ecolinguistics serves as a reliable methodological framework for (non)ecological issues.

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