


Chapter 1

Achieving Brunei Darussalam Vision 2035 (WAWASAN 2035): Overview and Open Questions on Sustainable Development

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ABSTRACT

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of Brunei Darussalam's long-term development plan, Vision 2035 (WAWASAN 2035), with a focus on sustainability and the open questions that remain in achieving its goals. It examines the strategic pillars of the vision, including economic diversification, education reform, and the development of human capital, while analyzing the country's efforts to transition towards a green economy. The chapter explores the current policy frameworks, environmental governance mechanisms, and integration of renewable energy and climate change adaptation strategies. It also highlights the challenges Brunei faces in balancing economic growth with environmental protection and social inclusion. Drawing on regional and global sustainability frameworks, such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the chapter identifies gaps in implementation, institutional coordination, and innovation. It concludes by presenting open questions and recommendations for policymakers to enhance resilience and inclusive, sustainable development.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Planning for the future is considered a relevant strategy for facing or even preventing some potential risks that a country might face in the long term. Therefore, Brunei Darussalam has been equipped with a long-term vision called the Brunei Darussalam Vision 2035 (Wikimedia Foundation, 2025). Vision 2035 sets the national or core values and long- and short-term goals on how to make Brunei Darussalam a country with a sustainable or diversified economy by 2035. To achieve these goals and sustainable development, various techniques, strategic planning, and approaches should be used to create pathways to a future vision (Shafik, 2024e). The alignment of Brunei Darussalam Vision 2035 and sustainability dates back to when the country-initiated steps towards ensuring sustainability and promoting sustainable development. The 3P approach, which can be divided into three main components: People, Prosperity, and Stability, is relevant to Vision 2035. The three main goals of the Vision are to enforce harmony and happiness in the community, to guarantee prosperity and progress, and to maintain and enhance the capacity of the environment for future generations (Shafik, 2024g). Some of the main pathways to achieving the goals of Vision 2035 include a holistic approach or interdependence, long-term planning, scientific approaches and monitoring, participative decision-making, grassroots approaches, and local participation. Several key actors who play important roles in the implementation of Vision 2035 include citizens, the public and private sectors, ministries, government agencies, and Brunei non-governmental organizations. All must work together to become the driving force behind the concept of national development (Shafik, 2024h).

This, referred to as called WAWASAN 2035, is a transformative nationwide development strategy that charts the course for Brunei's progress and prosperity in the 21st century. Conceived in 2008 under the leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah¹, this visionary roadmap represents a vibrant departure from conventional dependence on oil and gas profits (Abdul Razak, 2011). It envisions a future where Brunei progresses into a vibrant, knowledge-based economy that is durable for worldwide economic changes. By setting clear objectives and strategies, Vision 2035 aims to promote sustainable growth, social inclusivity, and environmental stewardship (Mohamad *et al.*, 2018). As the foundation of Brunei's advancement agenda, this vision plays an essential role in shaping the country's trajectory towards a vibrant and diversified economy.

At the heart of Brunei Darussalam Vision 2035 lie its core objectives and goals, created to attend to pushing obstacles and capitalize on emerging opportunities. Foremost among these goals is economic diversity, far from oil and gas, towards sectors such as tourism, technology, and farming (Haji Hashim, 2010). By nurturing innovation and entrepreneurship, Brunei seeks to unlock brand-new sources of

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