



Education on Maritime and Geostrategic Issues in the Pacific Region for Students at Kamasan Fisheries Academy or Kamasan Fisheries Academy's student

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ARTICLE INFO

Kata Kunci: Maritime, Biak, Geostrategic, Pacific, Academy, Education

Received : 6 June 2026

Revised : 27 July 2026

Accepted: 28 August 2026

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ABSTRAK

Maritime issues are a very important topic because they deal with the sovereignty of Indonesia, sea security, economic growth, and ecosystem sustainability. The goal of this outreach is to provide information and broaden students' understanding of the importance of maritime sovereignty in Biak, as well as the common threats, such as being targeted by foreign fishing vessels (like from the Philippines) that fish illegally, threatening resource sustainability and the welfare of local fishermen. Through this education, it is hoped to increase the knowledge of students at the Kamasan Biak Fisheries Academy about maritime issues and Biak's geostrategic potential near the Pacific region. The education is carried out through lectures, discussions, and Q&A sessions. As an archipelagic country, this advocacy is vital to addressing threats like illegal fishing and smuggling. If the seas are safe, the welfare of Biak's community will improve

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a maritime country with a very large sea area, making it rich in marine natural resources (Hesti Hermisa, 2022). This makes Indonesia prioritize maritime issues as an important matter to protect sovereignty, since it is vulnerable to smuggling and illegal fishing (IUU Fishing) by foreign parties, so strong oversight and management are absolutely necessary. In addition, for the development of the blue economy, the abundant potential of marine data can boost economic growth, improve fishermen's welfare, and develop the tourism and logistics sectors.

The maritime issue also needs to be studied because of its connection with Indonesia's vision as a global maritime axis through improving port infrastructure and connectivity, as well as supporting Indonesia's maritime diplomacy to assert territorial boundaries and maintain maritime security. Several provinces and regencies in Indonesia play an important role in realizing this vision, and Biak Regency is one of them. Its strategic position, located in Cendrawasih Bay, near the northern coast of Papua Province, Indonesia, and northwest of Papua New Guinea, makes it significant. Biak is the largest island among a chain of small islands and has many atolls and coral reefs. Moreover, its location right in the Pacific Ocean makes it an important point that can serve as a meeting point or passage from the Asia-Pacific region.

Biak's marine potential, located on the edge of the Pacific Islands with a fishing area of 717, has marine resources like yellowfin tuna, mackerel, and various coral reefs along with the animals that inhabit them. The island is rich in maritime natural resources and was then designated as a Marine Tourism Park Area through the Minister of Forestry Decree No.91/Kpts-VI/97 (Times Indonesia.co.id). Biak's maritime natural resource wealth attracts investors to develop marine and fisheries potential to improve the welfare of the indigenous Papuan people. Besides that, the island also has tourism potential with incredibly beautiful natural scenery.

On the other hand, this marine wealth has become a source of threat because it attracts foreign fishermen to fish illegally. This has harmed the regions and also disturbed Indonesia's sovereignty. Several foreign Filipino ships were caught in 2025 in Biak for carrying out illegal fishing in very large quantities, with potential state losses of 50.4 billion that could have been saved (ppid.kkp.go.id). Therefore, not only should the development and conservation of maritime natural resources be carried out, but there also needs to be efforts to protect and preserve them.

Geographically, Biak Island becomes vital when viewed from geostrategic and geopolitical aspects. Geopolitics is the study of how geographical factors influence a country's political behavior and policy strategies. This concept is rooted in classical thinking like Mackinder with the 'Heartland' theory and Spykman with 'Rimland', which suggests that controlling certain areas can determine global dominance (Faslah, 2024). Meanwhile, geostrategy includes the tactical steps and policies a country takes to ensure its stability and influence, whether through international cooperation, strengthening defense, or optimizing infrastructure (Faslah, 2024).

During World War II, Biak became a strategic airfield owned by the Imperial Japanese Forces as a command base in the Pacific War. The United States Army later took control of the island. Then, on May 29, 1944, a tank battle took place in this area. The historical traces are evidence of Biak's strategic position. This area was also chosen by Indonesia as the location for the National Institute of Aeronautics and Space (LAPAN), which is now known as BRIN (National Research and Innovation Agency). At the end of 2019, Biak became a candidate site for a spaceport because it is very close to the equator, with coordinates around 1 degree from the equator and directly facing the Pacific Ocean. The location also has an ideal rotational speed in relation to the equator (setkab.co.id).

From the 1980s until 1998, Frans Kaisiepo Airport in Biak served popular trans-Pacific routes like Jakarta-Denpasar-Biak-Honolulu-Los Angeles, before its status was downgraded to domestic due to the economic crisis. Then in 2025, the airport regained international status through Minister of Transportation Decrees No. KM 37 and KM 38. Restoring its international status wasn't just administrative; it was a government strategy to boost global connectivity, drive regional economic growth, and revive international flight routes (ceposonline.com).

Over time, the world's political map and international relations have shifted from the Western world to the Asia-Pacific region and then expanded to the Indo-Pacific area. The Indo-Pacific region is highly strategic in the context of global geopolitics and geostrategy because it brings together the interests of various major world powers. This area is not only rich in natural resources and vital international trade routes, like the Strait of Malacca and the South China Sea, but it's also a stage for influence competition among major powers such as the United States, China, India, and Japan. This competition creates a complex security dynamic, where military alliances, economic agreements, and maritime diplomacy play key roles in maintaining the region's stability.

In the context of International Relations, thinkers of the Realist school argue that a country will adopt defense strategies against threats from other countries by increasing the number of troops and combat fleets both in the air (first strike) and through patrols in territorial areas. Kenneth Waltz, who focused more on analyzing the international system, stated that the characteristics of the system can change a country's behavior. A country doesn't just focus on boosting its power; it also has to maintain its position within the anarchic international system (Waltz, 1979), which in turn influences how countries act. Therefore, countries need to consider their national security and economic interests when making decisions. This view aims to give an understanding of how the international system works and how countries interact with each other, whether prioritizing their own national security or aggressively focusing on increasing power and pursuing hegemony in their region. From the realist perspective, the most important thing is material power capabilities (Mearsheimer, 2001).

The team wanted to share this kind of thinking in the context of international relations with students at the Kamasan Biak Fisheries Academy. Indonesia's geopolitical and geostrategic position in the Pacific region needs to have space in scientific discussions for the people of Biak so they can play their

role in managing existing potential, because threats to Indonesia's defense and security can also happen or start from the easternmost regions. Indonesia isn't strong enough on security alone if its people in the Pacific gateway area aren't equipped with knowledge.

Furthermore, with maritime education activities and the fisheries potential carried out in Biak to enrich fisheries students academically in facing threats like ecosystem damage, overfishing, and marine pollution, it becomes quite important. Even though, at present, Biak Island can still be considered safe from maritime crimes, sustainable efforts and policies from stakeholders are still needed. This has become an issue for partners who still have minimal maritime literacy, which is why the service team feels the need to carry out this education so the public becomes aware of the role and importance of the sea for national life. Fisheries students at Kamasan Biak were chosen as the location for Maritime and Geostrategic Education activities in the Pacific Area because the majority are indigenous people of Biak, and some are also civil servants (ASN) from Biak Numfor Regency. Biak, as a region that has successfully exported tuna to Japan and also an area whose waters are used for the Indonesian Navy's defense, needs a community that is aware of the importance of maritime issues, which play an important role in the global economy, natural resources, and in maintaining the balance of marine ecosystems and the environment.

IMPLEMENTATION AND METHODS

This community service activity was carried out in several stages, starting from the preparation stage, task division between the service team and partners, implementation, final documentation, and evaluation. The preparation stage started with creating a cooperation agreement letter to carry out the service between the service team and the Kamasan Biak Fisheries Academy, up to preparing the location for the activity. Then, materials related to the education to be provided were prepared. In addition, the service team also prepared the media to be used, such as PowerPoint slides, banners, etc.

In the division of tasks for the community service implementation, the team leader coordinates with the Kamasan Biak Fisheries Academy as the location for the community service activities. Based on the communication between the community service team leader and the Kamasan Biak Fisheries Academy, the activities were held on June 4, 2026, in the hall of the Kamasan Biak Fisheries Academy. Meanwhile, team members helped prepare administrative letters and assignment notes, set up the room and supporting facilities, provide educational materials, and close the activities. As a lecturer for the South Pacific dynamics course, one member also played a role in delivering strategic Pacific region material. Furthermore, the partner also took part by providing material, represented by the Deputy Director of the Kamasan Biak Fisheries Academy, who also gave a speech/opened the activities.



Figure 1. Activity Flyer

Before the activity took place, the service team also made a coordination visit to the partner on June 3, 2026.



Figure 1. Coordination of the Service Team with Partner Parties

The implementation of this education program initially targeted 35 participants, but in reality, the number of students who attended reached 48. The education activity started with material on maritime and geostrategic issues in the Pacific region, as well as Indonesia's strategies in the Pacific regarding maritime security. After that, an internal speaker from the Kamasan Fisheries Academy Campus also provided material about the fisheries potential in Biak and how to manage fish and non-fish seafood products.

The next step is the final documentation. At the end of the activity, a report of the results will be prepared and given to the campus, as well as to the target partners. In addition, there's a video of the activities uploaded to YouTube as part of the publicity. Finally, the evaluation stage is carried out by the service team by looking at the enthusiasm of the students and also the academic community at

the Kamasan Biak Fisheries Academy. At the end of the activity, the team observed a positive response. The service team will propose follow-up activities in the form of field programs such as collaborative research or guest lectures through a Cooperation Agreement scheme to maintain this relationship.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Biak Island has a very strategic position because it is located in the northwest of Papua Province, facing directly the Pacific Ocean. Biak is just about 1 degree below the equator, making it an ideal location for satellite launches. Historically, Biak was a strategic military base during World War II and played an important role in Indonesia's maritime defense. Furthermore, as the largest island in the Schouten Islands, Biak has great fishing potential and diverse coral reefs in Cenderawasih Bay. In fact, Biak is one of the cities supplying fresh tuna from Indonesia for export abroad, with Japan being its trading partner. Export activities themselves are the driving engine of a country's economy. In the era of globalization, countries rely on each other to support their needs or interests. Biak Island has tourism potential that is also rich in marine diversity and maritime tourism, including island clusters like Padaido, which are supported by unique coral reef ecosystems.

Looking at the situation and conditions mentioned above, the Service Team carried out community service activities to address the existing problems, namely the lack of information related to maritime and geostrategic issues in the Pacific region of Biak Numfor Regency, and the need for introducing and educating people about the importance of maritime matters for Indonesia's sovereignty, as well as in the global economy, natural resources, and protecting marine ecosystems and the environment.



Figures 3 & 4. Material Presentation

In carrying out this community service activity, the team provided education about maritime and geostrategic issues in the Pacific region of Biak Numfor Regency to students of the Kamasan Biak Fisheries Academy. The service team shared literature related to maritime security, the maritime axis in the Joko Widodo era, naval power (sea command), and strategic positions that

can be used as international trade routes. This broadened the students' knowledge, enabling them not only to understand tourism and fisheries potential in Biak but also to see it in the context of maritime security and threats.

The collaboration on material between the community service team and partners was also strengthened by having discussions and introductions related to the maritime defense functions in supporting maritime potential, whether local, national, or international. The community service team formed discussion groups in this educational activity, allowing for the transfer of knowledge or literature about maritime security. Furthermore, the team shared information about international issues that fishery students might not have studied before, namely Indonesia's (Biak) position in the Pacific in responding to maritime issues. The education helped improve students' understanding of regional and global dynamics.

During the material presentation, the students as the audience were very active. Many questions were asked, and then the students also answered questions posed by the three speakers. The students realized that behind the advantages of Biak Island, which is strategically located north of Papua and the Pacific Ocean, with its incredible fisheries potential (tuna, skipjack, lobster), there are serious maritime challenges. Likewise, the teaching staff at the partner institution mentioned that the main issues there include illegal fishing by foreign vessels, limited infrastructure/technology, and delays in the development of the Ocean Port due to customary land rights problems.

This is in line with data obtained by the community service team from the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (KKP), which recently caught an illegal fishing vessel from the Philippines operating in the waters of Biak. While operating, the vessel did not have permission from the Indonesian government, and certain catches were found, namely skipjack and tuna (Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia, 2025). In their operation, the two illegal boats used large purse seine nets. This gear is very productive for catching skipjack and tuna (TTC), and even baby tuna were caught. This illegal activity certainly has a negative impact on the sustainability of fish resources and causes economic losses. Furthermore, the Class II Immigration Office TPI Biak deported 26 Filipino nationals who were the crew of the fishing vessels FB Twin J-04 and FB Yanreyd-293 after they were found to have committed immigration violations and illegal fishing activities in the Biak waters (Devi, 2025).



Figure 5. Material Slide

The results of this discussion and community service activity will be presented in the form of a report and also a YouTube video so that many people can access it. This is intended so that students stay aware of maritime issues and can also conduct research in the future related to Indonesia's maritime strategy in the Pacific region.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATION

With maritime and geostrategic educational activities in the Pacific region as well as the fishing potential in Biak, students of Kamasan Biak's Fisheries Academy can be enriched with literature to tackle ecosystem damage, overfishing, and marine pollution. Although Biak Island can currently be considered safe from maritime crime, continuous efforts and policies from stakeholders are still needed. This becomes an issue for partners who have limited maritime literacy, so the service team feels it is necessary to carry out this education so the public is aware of the role and importance of the sea for national life.

Kamasan Biak Fisheries Academy students were chosen as the location for maritime and geostrategic education activities in the Pacific region because the majority are indigenous Biak people and some are also civil servants of Biak Numfor Regency. Biak, as a region that has successfully exported tuna to Japan and also an area whose waters are used for the Indonesian Navy's defense, needs a community that is aware of the importance of maritime issues, which play a key role in the global economy, natural resources, and in maintaining the balance of ecosystems and the marine environment.

Seeing the participants' enthusiasm, this activity can be said to be successful. So in the future, there's a chance that activities with the same theme can continue, while also strengthening the cooperation between the two educational institutions. This community service activity can also serve as a reference for conducting research in the future, related to Biak's strategic position in the Pacific. In addition, Uncen and the Biak Kamasan Fisheries Academy can carry out collaborative research on interesting issues, such as fisheries potential and Indonesia's response to the AUKUS agreement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thanks to the Institute for Research and Community Service (LPPM), Cenderawasih University as the fund provider. Thanks also to our partner, the Kamasan Biak Fisheries Academy, Biak Numfor Regency.

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