

COP21

Wow, almost two weeks in Paris and almost daily visits to COP21. It is impossible to even begin to summarize all the discussions I had or to mention all the people I met at Le Bourget, the small airport north of Paris, where a large number of giant tents housed 151 world leaders on one podium and where more than 50.000 people came together for almost two weeks to discuss the future of our planet.

I was a member of the Indonesian delegation and was personally involved in a number of the discussions and did one short and one long presentation, both in the Indonesian pavilion, in the so-called Blue Zone. It was quite amazing to regularly see so many famous faces passing by e.g. Arnold Schwarzenegger and Robert Redford and even better to be able to hear so many of them speak so passionately in our Indonesian pavilion like for instance Al Gore and Jeffrey Sachs!

The conference was extremely well guarded in view of the recent terror attacks in Paris. The first day, the day of the opening ceremony, our vehicle had to pass more than 20 checkpoints on various streets approaching Le Bourget. Armored cars blocking streets, police on horses, police and army waling around with guns everywhere and checking everyone, helicopters flying above us all the time! But once inside the first tent, past the airport like security and after getting our badges, it was a joy to see the extremely well-organized set up.

There were a huge number of pavilions and stands, a well working Internet, good and healthy food, information stands and everything ran as clockwork, except that today, Friday December 11th 2015, we were told that the conference will be extended with one day. From day to day we heard the number of square brackets in the text (indicating the parts of the text on which there was no agreement yet) decreasing. Tonight I will fly to The Netherlands so will have to learn about the final text when the delegates will hopefully produce their end document.

The highlights of the conference for me were the opening remarks, especially by the president of the conference, French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius, who spoke without written notes and in words that touched my heart. The USA stand, beautifully open, had a huge earth hanging against this space-like dark background on which all kinds of data were projected. They showed just how much we already knew, going from the well known CO₂ emissions and ozone gap to melting ice, particulate matter as dust, salt, sulphur, etc. swirling over our small earth dissipating our Indonesian emissions as well as the Sahara dust all over the world and over time. Hugely impressive! What a tool to show that we are truly all just together on this small speck in space called earth!

I am not going to write too much more about the conference but just present you some pictures I took during the conference. Needless to say it was an historic event for me personally as well. There was this special atmosphere (pun intended) at the conference of frantic people, some masses demonstrating while shouting and singing, other persons at restaurant tables discussing the issues at stake privately with the same fervor. I was happy that the presentation by HashimDjojohadikusumo and myself was well attended with the likes of ministers and former country leaders and that it was

well received. Lots of parties came up with questions and requests to cooperate and follow up on our lecture titled “Nature knows best”. Merci COP21, merci Paris!



A selfie with my 1975 study friend, former Dutch senator and now member of the parliament, Erik Smaling, whom I had not seen in 20 years. And he still works for energy, water and environment!

At the right with former president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono & businessman Hashim Djojohadikusumo, talking about sugar palms and his support for opening the Masarang palm sugar factory in Tomohon.



On the left Prof. Jeffrey Sachs and the moderator, my old friend Dr. Yatna Supriatna of Universitas Indonesia, who is still with me in the Bornean Orangutan Survival Foundation, in the Indonesian pavilion taking questions from the public. We recommended to him that he should give more potential to biomass based energy.

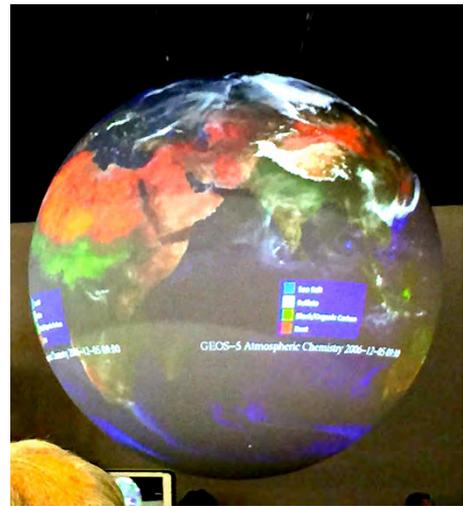
The honorable Al Gore did not disappoint. Repeatedly he received applause for his succinct and inspiring remarks and answers to the many questions. And what a patience and warmth he had for the many people eager to have their picture taken with him while trying to leave the Indonesian pavilion afterwards!





To the left: Former Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, after attending our presentation, together with other Malaysian attendants. He showed a very keen interest to apply our methods in Malaysia.

Below: The awe-inspiring globe in the US pavilion. Beautiful and very scary presentations of earth's processes in space and time. It is one small world!



Here on the left with one of the arch of Noah sculptures that decorated the Paris venue. Hope that the orangutans have less reason to see blue soon...

Beneath the left Mr "Smiths" ;-) presenting.

To the bottom right Mr. HashimDjojohadikusumo speaking during our joint presentation on "Nature knows best". On the stage from left to right: Me, former Indonesian Minister of Environment Mr. Sarwono, NICFI director Per PharoDirector of the Government of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative, Joule's Tom Jensen, the moderator, former Minister of Environment Mrs Erna Witular and my friend and partner, owner of the Indonesian Arsari Group, Mr. HashimDjojohadikusumo.

