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Green Stadium Development as a Policy Instrument for Sustainable Football Governance in Jambi Province

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Abstract
The construction of a new provincial stadium in Jambi, Indonesia, coincides with mounting global pressure on the sport sector to decarbonise, democratise, and demonstrate developmental value. This article asks how green stadium development can operate as a deliberate policy instrument for sustainable football governance rather than as an isolated infrastructure event. Drawing on a qualitative systematic literature review and interpretive meta-analysis of peer reviewed scholarship, institutional reports, and official data published between 2015 and 2025, the study synthesises evidence across public policy, international relations, public administration, green economy and business innovation, and science and technology for nature-positive development. The analysis is organised through a three-dimensional theoretical framework that integrates Hood's tools of government, collaborative governance theory, and a nature-positive socio-technical transitions perspective. Findings indicate that stadiums frequently become fiscal and political liabilities when treated as symbolic endpoints, yet they can generate durable public value when embedded in instrument mixes that align authority, treasure, nodality, and organisation with grassroots development and ecological restoration. The study advances three contributions: it reframes the stadium as an instrument rather than an outcome, it repositions green design as a governance lever rather than a technical add-on, and it locates football governance within a nature-positive development agenda relevant to the global South. The article concludes with a strategic policy architecture for Jambi that couples participatory governance, blended finance, and measurable ecological performance. The argument is that legacy is manufactured through institutional design, not inherited from concrete.

Keywords: Green Stadium; Sustainable Football Governance; Policy Instruments; Collaborative Governance; Nature-Positive Development

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INTRODUCTION

Football occupies a paradoxical position in the political economy of developing regions. It commands extraordinary popular enthusiasm and yet it rarely receives the coherent, sustained public policy that would convert that enthusiasm into competitive performance, healthy communities, and durable economic activity. Jambi Province in Sumatra illustrates the paradox with unusual clarity. Local competitions such as the Gubernur Cup and various inter-district and inter-village tournaments testify to deep social demand, but provincial teams struggle to compete at the national level and the sporting ecosystem remains fragmented, event driven, and dependent on the improvised initiative of communities rather than on a deliberate developmental strategy. Into this setting arrives a new provincial stadium, nearing completion, that carries the weight of considerable expectation. The central question animating this article is whether that stadium can be governed as a policy instrument capable of restructuring football development, or whether it will follow the well documented trajectory of the underused sporting monument that consumes public money while producing little public value.

The question matters because stadiums are rarely neutral. A large body of scholarship has shown that sporting facilities routinely fail to deliver the economic returns promised to the communities that finance them, that their spillover effects are often confined to the immediate perimeter, and that they can crowd out spending that would otherwise circulate more widely in local economies (Baade and Matheson, 2016; Coates and Humphreys, 2008). At the same time, the sport sector is under intensifying scrutiny for its environmental footprint. Stadiums are energy intensive and water intensive, and their construction and operation generate substantial greenhouse gas emissions, with indirect Scope 3 emissions from spectator travel and supply chains frequently exceeding the direct emissions that organisers can most easily control (Bae, 2025; Xuan, 2023). For a middle income country pursuing an ambitious growth trajectory while simultaneously exposed to acute climate risk, the decision to build a stadium is therefore a decision about development pathways, fiscal priorities, and ecological responsibility, not merely a decision about architecture.

The difficulty is that public debate in settings like Jambi tends to treat the stadium as an outcome, a finished symbol of progress, rather than as an instrument, a means through which government mobilises information, authority, money, and organisational capacity to steer behaviour toward chosen ends. This framing has consequences. When a facility is understood as an endpoint, its opening becomes the moment of political success and the harder work of building competitions, academies, coaching pipelines, and community programmes is quietly deferred. When a facility is understood as an instrument, by contrast, its design, financing, and governance are evaluated against the developmental and ecological outcomes they are supposed to produce. The novelty this article pursues lies precisely in that inversion. It integrates the literature on green stadiums, which has largely been technical and managerial, with the literature on policy instruments and collaborative governance, which has largely ignored sport, in order to ask how a green stadium can be instrumentalised for sustainable football governance.

Three research questions follow from this framing and run through the analysis without being treated as detached items. First, in what sense can green stadium development function as a policy instrument, and which instrument logics are most consequential for football governance in a decentralised, resource constrained province? Second, what governance arrangements determine whether such an instrument produces broad based developmental value or narrow symbolic value, and

how should the many stakeholders of Jambi football be configured around the facility? Third, how can the ecological ambition implied by the label green be connected to a nature-positive development agenda so that the stadium contributes to the restoration of natural systems and to green economic innovation rather than simply reducing its own harm? These questions are deliberately interdisciplinary because the object itself sits at the intersection of political science, international relations, public administration, green economy scholarship, and the science and technology of nature-positive development.

The argument advanced here is that legacy is manufactured through institutional design rather than inherited from physical structure. A stadium does not develop football and it does not protect nature. Governance does. The remainder of the article develops this claim through a review of recent literature, the construction of a three-dimensional theoretical framework, a description of the systematic review and meta-analytic method, five interlocking discussions supported by synthesis tables, and a concluding policy architecture tailored to Jambi Province.

METHODS

The study adopts a qualitative research design combining a systematic literature review with an interpretive meta-analysis. This design suits the research questions because the object of interest is conceptual and cross-sectoral, because primary experimental data on a stadium not yet fully operational would be premature, and because the aim is to synthesise dispersed knowledge into an integrated framework and a policy architecture. The systematic review supplies transparency and replicability in the identification of evidence, while the interpretive meta-analysis allows the synthesis of qualitatively heterogeneous findings into higher order themes rather than the pooling of statistical effect sizes (Moher et al., 2009; Page et al., 2021). The review followed the logic of the PRISMA approach across identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. Searches were conducted across major scholarly databases and reputable institutional repositories, using combinations of terms covering green and sustainable stadiums, sport and environmental sustainability, football and sport governance, policy instruments and tools of government, collaborative governance, mega event legacy, green economy, nature-positive development and nature-based solutions, and sport policy in Indonesia. The temporal window prioritised material published between 2015 and 2025 in order to satisfy the requirement for recent evidence, while a small number of foundational theoretical works published earlier were retained because they define the analytical vocabulary that the recent literature continues to use. Inclusion criteria required that a source be peer reviewed scholarship, an authoritative institutional report, or official data, that it address at least one of the three framework dimensions, and that it be written in English or Indonesian. Exclusion criteria removed promotional material, sources lacking identifiable authorship or provenance, and items whose engagement with the themes was merely incidental.

Analysis proceeded in three stages consistent with established qualitative procedure, namely data reduction, data display, and verification. In the reduction stage, each included source was coded against the three framework dimensions and against emergent sub-themes such as fiscal risk, participation, ecological restoration, and technological demonstration. In the display stage, coded material was arranged into synthesis matrices that made patterns and tensions visible, and these matrices form the basis of the tables presented in the following section. In the verification stage, provisional interpretations were tested against disconfirming cases, particularly the

critical mega event literature, in order to guard against an uncritical enthusiasm for green infrastructure. Triangulation across the policy science, sport management, and sustainability literatures strengthened the credibility of the synthesis, and the explicit statement of search and coding procedures supports its dependability and transferability to comparable provincial settings.

There are two limitations should be acknowledged. First, as a review of secondary evidence the study cannot capture the specific micro-politics of Jambi that only fieldwork with local stakeholders would reveal, and the policy architecture proposed here should therefore be read as an evidence informed hypothesis to be tested empirically rather than as a validated prescription. Second, the interpretive character of meta-analysis introduces researcher judgement, which the transparency of the coding framework mitigates but cannot eliminate. These limitations are appropriate to an early stage, theory building contribution whose purpose is to reframe the problem and to guide subsequent primary research.

RESULTS

The synthesis is organised into five discussions. Each corresponds to a facet of the central argument that legacy is manufactured through institutional design, and each is aligned with the three-dimensional framework. This organisation provides a systematic structure for examining how different institutional mechanisms collectively shape the production and consolidation of political legacy. Rather than treating legacy as an incidental or symbolic outcome, the synthesis conceptualises it as the result of deliberate institutional arrangements, policy choices, and governance practices. By dividing the discussion into five interconnected sections, the analysis is able to capture the complexity of legacy formation while maintaining a coherent analytical flow. Each discussion builds upon the preceding one, allowing the reader to understand how the three analytical dimensions interact to explain the institutional processes that transform political authority into enduring governance outcomes.

The five discussions are designed not only to present empirical findings but also to demonstrate the analytical contribution of the three-dimensional framework. Each section focuses on a distinct aspect of the argument, highlighting how institutional design operates through different mechanisms and governance practices to produce long-term political and developmental consequences. This sequential arrangement enables the synthesis to connect theoretical propositions with empirical evidence in a logical manner, ensuring that each discussion contributes to the broader explanation of how institutional structures influence policy continuity, administrative capacity, and governance legitimacy. By integrating these dimensions throughout the analysis, the synthesis offers a comprehensive interpretation of legacy as a dynamic process embedded within institutional development rather than as a static political achievement.

Four synthesis tables are distributed across the discussions to display the underlying evidence. These tables serve as analytical instruments that consolidate findings from multiple sources, making the relationships between concepts, empirical observations, and theoretical interpretations more transparent. Their placement throughout the synthesis allows readers to follow the progression of the argument while comparing evidence across the different dimensions of the framework. Rather than functioning merely as descriptive summaries, the tables strengthen the analytical coherence of the discussion by illustrating how the empirical evidence consistently supports the central argument. Consequently, the integration of narrative analysis and tabulated synthesis enhances the overall rigour, clarity, and credibility of the study,

enabling the findings to be communicated in a structured and accessible manner while preserving the complexity of the institutional processes under examination.

a. From Monument To Instrument: Reframing The Stadium In Policy Terms

The first and most consequential finding is that the dominant public understanding of the stadium as a monument is precisely what produces underperformance. The critical literature on sporting infrastructure is remarkably consistent in showing that facilities conceived as symbols rather than as instruments tend to become fiscal burdens whose benefits are captured narrowly (Baade and Matheson, 2016; Coates and Humphreys, 2008; Müller, 2015). The instrumental dimension of the framework offers a corrective. When the stadium is read through the tools of government, its latent capacities become visible and governable. As treasure, it is not only a sunk cost but a revenue platform and a magnet for co-investment, provided that financing is structured to share risk and reward. As organisation, it is a publicly owned asset that can host academies, coach education, and community health programming rather than standing idle between fixtures. As authority, it enables the regulation of access, safety, licensing, and technical standards that can raise the quality of local competition. As nodality, it concentrates attention and information, giving the provincial government a communicative platform to shape the norms and aspirations of the football public (Hood and Margetts, 2007; Salamon, 2002).

The analytical payoff of this reframing is that the relevant policy question shifts from how impressive the building is to how coherent the instrument mix is. Policy design scholarship warns that instruments deployed in isolation frequently fail, and that effectiveness depends on complementarity among them (Howlett, 2011). A stadium financed lavishly as treasure but unsupported by organisational programmes and regulatory standards will not develop football, just as a well regulated competition without a financed venue and communicative platform will remain marginal. The Indonesian setting sharpens this point, because decentralisation distributes the four resources across tiers of government, so that treasure may sit with the province, authority with national sport bodies, and organisation with district agencies and clubs (Nasution, 2016). Instrument coherence in Jambi is therefore not automatic and must be engineered across levels, which anticipates the governance discussion that follows. This interpretation also carries important implications for the evaluation of public investment in sports infrastructure. Conventional assessments frequently emphasise visible outputs, such as the completion of construction projects or the architectural scale of the facility, while overlooking the institutional arrangements that determine whether those investments generate sustained public value. The literature reviewed in this study consistently indicates that infrastructure alone is insufficient to stimulate long-term sporting development unless it is embedded within complementary governance mechanisms, organisational capacity, and policy coordination. Consequently, the effectiveness of a stadium should be assessed not by its physical presence or symbolic significance, but by its ability to activate the full range of governmental instruments that support football development. This perspective reinforces the argument that infrastructure functions as an enabling institution rather than an autonomous driver of change. In practical terms, successful stadium development depends upon continuous interaction between financial resources, organisational management, regulatory authority, and communicative capacity, ensuring that the facility remains integrated into broader regional development

strategies instead of becoming an isolated public asset with limited developmental impact.

Table 1. Reframing the stadium through Hood's tools of government: from symbolic monument to governed instrument

Instrument resource	Monument logic (symbolic endpoint)	Instrument logic (governed means)	Governance requirement for Jambi
Nodality (information)	Ribbon cutting and prestige imagery	Platform to publish standards, fixtures, talent data, and sustainability performance	Transparent data systems and public reporting
Authority (rules)	Little regulatory follow through	Licensing, safety, competition standards, and access rules that raise quality	Clear provincial and national mandate alignment
Treasure (money)	One-off capital spend	Revenue platform and blended finance vehicle sharing risk and reward	Ring-fenced reinvestment into grassroots pipeline
Organisation (capacity)	Idle asset between events	Base for academies, coaching, and community health programmes	Professional venue operator with developmental remit

Source: Compiled by the author based on the literature synthesis (2026).

Table 1 synthesises the instrumental dimension by demonstrating that each governmental resource performs a distinct yet complementary function in transforming the stadium from a symbolic structure into an active policy instrument. The evidence indicates that treasure provides the financial foundation for sustainability through diversified revenue generation and co-investment opportunities, while organisation strengthens institutional capacity by facilitating athlete development, coaching programmes, and community engagement. Authority contributes through regulatory mechanisms that improve governance quality, competition standards, and operational safety, whereas nodality enhances the government's ability to disseminate information, coordinate stakeholders, and cultivate public support for football development. Collectively, the synthesis highlights that no single instrument is sufficient in isolation; rather, their effectiveness depends

on coherent integration across policy domains and administrative levels. The table therefore reinforces the central argument that institutional coherence, rather than physical infrastructure alone, determines whether stadium development can produce sustainable sporting and governance outcomes in Jambi.

b. Governing The Instrument: Collaboration, Autonomy, And The Decentralised State

The second discussion turns to the governance dimension and to the finding that the value of the stadium instrument depends overwhelmingly on the arrangements that surround it. Collaborative governance theory predicts that problems distributed across state, market, and community require formal, deliberative, consensus oriented forums that give non-state stakeholders genuine influence over decisions rather than token consultation (Ansell and Gash, 2008; Emerson, Nabatchi and Balogh, 2012). Football in Jambi is exactly such a distributed problem, involving the provincial government, district administrations, the provincial football association, local clubs and academies, schools, supporter communities, and private sponsors and operators. The evidence suggests that the decisive variable is not the presence of these actors but the quality of their engagement, specifically whether there is credible leadership, whether interdependence is recognised, and whether early cooperation builds the trust and shared capacity that sustain collaboration (Emerson, Nabatchi and Balogh, 2012).

Two tensions complicate this in the Indonesian context. The first is the autonomy tension inherent to sport governance, in which football bodies assert independence from political authority while relying on public assets and funds, a tension that can either protect sporting integrity or shield poor governance depending on how it is managed (Chappelet and Mrkonjic, 2013). The second is the decentralisation tension, in which overlapping mandates across tiers of government can produce either productive complementarity or paralysing ambiguity (Nasution, 2016). The critical Indonesian commentary on inverted pyramids and white elephants is best read as a symptom of collaboration failure, where centralised, spectacle oriented decisions proceed without the participatory base that would give them developmental meaning (Sulistiyowati, Juwono and Thamrin, 2026). The prescription that follows is not merely to consult communities but to institutionalise a standing governance forum with real authority over the stadium's developmental remit, so that the instrument is steered collectively rather than captured politically.

Table 2. Stakeholder configuration and collaborative governance functions in the Jambi football ecosystem

Stakeholder	Primary resource contributed	Collaborative governance function	Risk if excluded
Provincial government	Treasure and strategic authority	Convener and steward of the instrument mix	Fragmented, politically captured decisions

Stakeholder	Primary resource contributed	Collaborative governance function	Risk if excluded
District administrations	Local organisation and land	Delivery of grassroots facilities and programmes	Urban bias and neglected periphery
Provincial football association	Technical authority and legitimacy	Competition design and talent pathways	Loss of sporting credibility
Clubs, academies, and schools	Participation and coaching	Base of the development pyramid	Inverted pyramid and weak talent supply
Supporter communities	Social capital and voice	Accountability and demand articulation	Alienation and stadium violence risk
Private sponsors and operators	Capital and management	Financial sustainability and innovation	Fiscal burden falls wholly on the state

Source: Compiled by the author based on the literature synthesis (2026).

Table 2 demonstrates that collaborative governance in the Jambi football ecosystem depends on the complementary contributions of multiple stakeholders, each providing distinct institutional resources that cannot be substituted by any single actor. The Provincial Government occupies the central coordinating role by combining financial capacity and strategic authority to steward the overall instrument mix, while district administrations translate provincial objectives into grassroots programmes and local facility provision. The Provincial Football Association contributes technical legitimacy by designing competitions and establishing athlete development pathways, whereas clubs, academies, and schools constitute the operational foundation of the football pyramid through coaching and player development. Beyond formal institutions, supporter communities provide social capital, public accountability, and channels for articulating community demands, thereby strengthening the legitimacy and responsiveness of football governance.

Meanwhile, private sponsors and stadium operators contribute investment, managerial expertise, and innovation that enhance financial sustainability and reduce dependence on public expenditure. The risks identified in the final column further reinforce the interdependent nature of this governance arrangement: excluding any stakeholder generates institutional gaps ranging from fragmented decision-making and uneven territorial development to declining sporting credibility, weakened talent pipelines, social conflict, and increased fiscal pressure on government. The table therefore supports the argument that sustainable stadium governance requires collaborative institutions capable of integrating diverse actors, resources, and

responsibilities into a coherent regional football development strategy rather than relying solely on government-led intervention.

c. Greening As Governance: From Footprint Reduction To Nature-Positive Development

The third discussion addresses the ecological and innovation dimension and argues that the word green in green stadium must be understood as a governance choice rather than a technical specification. The technical literature demonstrates that venues can reduce energy and water demand, procure renewable power, select low carbon materials, and divert waste, and that spectators may even pay a premium for such features (Kellison and Hong, 2015; Lyu, 2023). Yet the critical literature warns that visible environmental gestures can substitute for substantive change and that credible performance requires confronting indirect emissions and the full life cycle of the facility (Bae, 2025; Death, 2011; Xuan, 2023). The nature-positive agenda raises the bar further, moving beyond doing less harm toward measurable restoration of ecosystems, which in an infrastructure context means integrating nature-based solutions such as urban green space, water sensitive design, and biodiversity habitat into and around the venue (Cohen-Shacham et al., 2016; Frantzeskaki, 2019; Seddon et al., 2020).

Reading greening as governance connects this dimension back to the instrumental and collaborative dimensions. Ecological ambition becomes an authority instrument when it is written into building standards and operating licences, a treasure instrument when green finance and efficiency savings are structured into the business model, a nodality instrument when transparent environmental reporting shapes public expectations, and an organisation instrument when the venue operator is mandated to deliver restoration outcomes. The transitions perspective clarifies the strategic prize, which is that a flagship green facility can function as a niche that demonstrates new practices capable of influencing the wider regime of provincial construction and event management (Geels, 2011; Loorbach, 2010). Business innovation scholarship indicates how this demonstration converts into enterprise, through circular procurement, local green supply chains, and sustainable service models that create employment and diffuse capability (Bocken et al., 2014; Geissdoerfer et al., 2017). The green economy framing thus repositions environmental spending as productive investment rather than cost, which is particularly salient for a global South province seeking growth that is not ecologically self-defeating (Loiseau et al., 2016; UNEP, 2011).

d. Manufacturing Legacy: Instrument Mixes, The Development Pyramid, And Avoiding The White Elephant

This discussion synthesises the preceding three around the study's central claim that legacy is manufactured rather than inherited. The mega event legacy literature is unambiguous that positive legacies do not flow automatically from infrastructure and must be planned, resourced, and monitored across the post construction period, failing which facilities become the burdens that the critical literature documents (Gratton and Preuss, 2008; Preuss, 2015; Preuss, 2019; Müller et al., 2021). For Jambi the operational meaning of manufactured legacy is the deliberate coupling of the stadium at the apex with a broad participatory base, so that the facility funds and showcases a pyramid of school football, community clubs, and academies rather than substituting for them. The sport policy literature is emphatic that skewing resources toward the apex starves the base and ultimately undermines even elite ambitions, which is the

analytical core of the inverted pyramid critique (Green and Houlihan, 2005; Grix and Carmichael, 2012; Coalter, 2013).

Manufacturing legacy therefore requires an instrument mix that is intentionally redistributive. Treasure generated by the stadium must be ring-fenced for reinvestment in grassroots infrastructure and coaching rather than absorbed by operating deficits. Authority must set standards that connect local competition to the venue through a genuine promotion and development pathway. Nodality must make the performance of the whole system visible, including participation rates and ecological indicators, so that accountability is continuous rather than confined to opening day. Organisation must ensure that the venue operator carries an explicit developmental and ecological mandate. The convergence of these requirements is what distinguishes a governed instrument from a monument, and it is the practical expression of the framework's insistence that value is an emergent property of alignment across dimensions.

Table 3. Synthesis of the three-dimensional framework applied to green stadium governance in Jambi

Dimension	Core theoretical anchor	Failure mode if neglected	Design principle for Jambi
Instrumental	Tools of government and policy design	Symbolic monument with incoherent instruments	Engineer a coherent nodality, authority, treasure, and organisation mix
Governance	Collaborative governance and sport autonomy	Political capture and inverted pyramid	Institutionalise a standing multi-stakeholder forum with real remit
Ecological and innovation	Green economy, transitions, nature-positive	Greenwashing and cost framing	Embed restoration and green enterprise as investment

Source: Author's compilation based on the literature synthesis (2026)

e. Football, Soft Power, And The Province In a Nature-Positive Development Agenda

This discussion situates provincial football governance within the broader horizons of international relations and development, which are directly relevant even though Jambi is a subnational actor. The literature on sport and soft power shows that football operates as a resource of attraction and image, and that investment in the game is frequently motivated by the desire to project identity and to attract attention, tourism, and investment (Grix and Houlihan, 2014; Grix and Lee, 2013; Nye, 2008). For a province, the analogous prize is regional branding and the mobilisation of civic pride, which a well governed green stadium can support by signalling competence, modernity, and ecological responsibility to national and international audiences

(Nauright, 2004). This soft power potential is nonetheless contingent on substance, because the same visibility that rewards genuine achievement magnifies the reputational cost of a visible white elephant, which returns the argument to governance.

The development framing completes the picture. The alignment of sport with the Sustainable Development Goals has been advocated and simultaneously questioned for its policy coherence, and the honest conclusion is that sport contributes to development only under specific, well designed conditions (Lindsey and Darby, 2019; Coalter, 2010). Locating the Jambi stadium within a nature-positive development agenda gives those conditions ecological content, requiring that the facility contribute to biodiversity, water security, and low carbon enterprise rather than to their erosion (Seddon et al., 2020; Death, 2015). The science and technology of nature-positive development supplies the means, from nature-based solutions to smart resource management, while the green economy supplies the rationale that such measures generate jobs and innovation (Frantzeskaki, 2019; UNEP, 2011). The strong claim of this article is that a province that governs its stadium as an instrument, collaboratively and nature-positively, can convert a contested building into a demonstrable contribution to sustainable development and into a modest but real source of soft power, whereas a province that governs it as a monument will inherit cost and disappointment.

Table 4. From Risk To Strategic Value: Manufactured Outcomes Of Green Stadium Governance In Jambi

Domain	Default trajectory (monument)	Governed trajectory (instrument)	Enabling mechanism
Fiscal	Operating deficits and public burden	Blended finance and reinvested surplus	Ring-fenced developmental fund
Sporting	Idle venue and weak talent supply	Functioning development pyramid	Pathway linking grassroots to venue
Ecological	Greenwashed footprint	Measurable nature-positive restoration	Standards, reporting, and green finance
Economic	Enclave spending	Local green enterprise and jobs	Circular procurement and supply chains
Reputational	Visible white elephant	Regional brand and civic pride	Transparent performance and soft power

Source: Author's compilation based on the literature synthesis (2026)

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this article is to empirically show the premise that sustainable development in Indonesia includes certain contradictions of economic growth, environmental conservation, social welfare and institutional governance as related. These paradoxes are expressions of the problem a resource dependent country has while trying to achieve competing development objectives [2]. The paradoxes found in this research are not isolated problems but rather overlap and aggravate the broader systemic problems that have been plaguing the development system of Indonesia.

The main result is a paradox, no doubt, of becoming richer while living within our means. The Indonesian economy is still heavily reliant on extractive industries, including mining, forestry and palm oil plantations. While these sectors are some of the major employers, exporters and producers of foreign money in many countries, they also have tremendous externalities since they lead to deforestation, loss of biodiversity and pollution[3]. This conclusion is in line with recent reports showing economic expansion in many poor nations is still strongly associated with excessive resource use and environmental deterioration [31]. Indonesia indicates that methods of growth-oriented development entail that short-term productive benefits come at the expense of a common objective for environmental sustainability in the future.

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Moreover, the research points out that institutional and governance failures compound numerous sustainability paradoxes. While Indonesia is aware of international accords on sustainability, the implementation of these agreements at the national and regional levels is still impeded by tremendous hurdles. The influence of environmental governance is reduced by insufficient law enforcement, overlaps in regulation and choices amongst mandates, weak coordination amongst decision making processes as well as low institutional capacity [8]. The results show that the sustainability concerns are not just technical or environmental problems but also institutional and political problems, calling for systemic transformation [5,21].

These paradoxes are interconnected and hence, sustainable development in Indonesia cannot be seen in a uni dimensional perspective. Economic, environmental, social and political issues are continually interacting with each other [2]. The economic expansion pursuit that does not care much about the environmental restrictions tends to put two-fold pressures on the woreda ecosystem while regulations that aim at conservation may result in disparities [4]. Weak governance structures, however, provide a challenge to the implementation of integrated sustainability measures as well.

Therefore, this research argues for a comprehensive and integrated approach to sustainable development. Among others, it is necessary to strengthen environmental governance, improve institutional coordination, enhance inclusive involvement and promote green economic transformation in order to address these sustainability paradoxes in Indonesia [3]. Sustainable development does not mean simply expansion, but it is also a path that is protective of ecological and promotes social fairness. In the absence of unified policies, unreasonable trade-offs and contradictory paradoxes between development and sustainability would be increasingly common and less readily addressed.

CONCLUSIONS

This article set out to determine whether green stadium development can serve as a policy instrument for sustainable football governance in Jambi Province, and the analysis supports a clear and deliberately strong conclusion. The stadium in itself develops neither football nor nature. What determines its value is the institutional design that surrounds it, and value is best understood as an emergent property of alignment among three dimensions, namely the instrumental, the governance, and the ecological and innovation dimensions. When these are designed together, a contested building becomes a governed instrument capable of manufacturing durable developmental, ecological, and reputational value. When they are neglected, the same building becomes the fiscal and symbolic liability that the critical literature has documented across many settings.

Three contributions follow. Conceptually, the study reframes the stadium from an outcome into an instrument by reading it through the tools of government, which exposes latent capacities of nodality, authority, treasure, and organisation that are otherwise invisible in monument centred debate. Theoretically, it integrates policy instrument thinking, collaborative governance, and nature-positive transitions into a single framework tailored to a decentralised global South province, an integration that neither the green stadium literature nor the governance literature has previously offered. Practically, it proposes a policy architecture for Jambi built on a standing multi-stakeholder governance forum with a genuine developmental remit, a blended finance model with ring-fenced reinvestment into a grassroots pyramid, ecological standards and transparent reporting that make greening a governance obligation rather than a slogan, and the cultivation of local green enterprise so that ecological ambition becomes economic opportunity.

The overarching lesson is that legacy is manufactured through institutional design and is not inherited from concrete. For policymakers in Jambi and in comparable provinces, the imperative is to begin governing the facility as an instrument before the ribbon is cut, to embed collaboration and ecological performance in its operating mandate, and to measure participation and restoration continuously rather than celebrating a single opening day. Future research should test this framework through

primary fieldwork with Jambi stakeholders, through longitudinal measurement of participation and ecological indicators once the venue is operational, and through comparative study across Indonesian provinces, so that the hypotheses advanced here can be refined into validated guidance for the nature-positive governance of sport in the global South.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that the study was undertaken in the absence of business or financial ties that may be interpreted as a possible conflict of interest.

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DECLARATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE USE

The research employs the following capabilities using artificial intelligence (AI) technologies and methodologies: Manuscript writing assistance: We have employed AI-based language models (ChatGPT) for the following:

1. Improvement of the language, i.e. polishing of writing to improve the grammar, structure and readability of the work);
2. Summarizing content (helping to express facts and conclusions from the literature simply);
3. Technical writing aid (consulting on how to properly arrange and structure your academic work).

The authors rigorously reviewed all processes using AI assistance to make sure the findings were legitimate and trustworthy. The final selections, interpretations, analyses and findings in this paper are the authors' alone.

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