

The Contribution of NGO in Public Diplomacy: A Case Study of the Singapore Institute of International Affairs in Resolving the Transboundary Haze Pollution Issue between Singapore-Indonesia (2012-2016)

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ABSTRAK

Pada 2013, negara-negara Asia Tenggara harus menghadapi bencana kabut asap yang datang dari Indonesia. Pencemaran asap lintas batas adalah kejadian mematikan yang berulang dari tahun ke tahun. Akibatnya, negara tetangga Indonesia harus menghadapi konsekuensi yang tidak menguntungkan. Salah satu negara yang terpengaruhi secara bertahap adalah Singapura, karena mereka telah melalui polusi kabut asap sejak akhir 1980-an. Berbagai upaya telah dilakukan oleh Singapura untuk mengurangi bencana. Melihat dari upaya bilateral dan regional yang tidak memberikan solusi apa pun, Singapura kemudian menyiratkan upaya diplomasi publik. Praktik-praktik diplomasi publik ini dapat dilihat dari keterlibatan salah satu LSM berpengaruh nasional, Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA). Hasilnya, mereka mampu menekan Indonesia dalam menerapkan peta yang lebih komprehensif untuk melacak sumber asap. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini berharap dapat mengundang minat pembaca dalam masalah LSM, tepatnya dalam Hubungan Internasional dan Diplomasi Publik. Studi ini secara khusus akan membahas usaha SIIA dalam upaya diplomasi publik untuk menyelesaikan masalah kabut asap dari 2012 hingga 2016.

Kata kunci: *Polusi Asap Lintas Batas Indonesia, Diplomasi Publik Singapura, Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat, ASEAN, Kerjasama Internasional, Tata kelola Lingkungan, Diplomasi Jalur Kedua*

ABSTRACT

In 2013, Southeast Asian countries have to face a disastrous haze pollution coming from Indonesia. Transboundary Haze Pollution (THP) is a deadly occurrence that repeats annually. As a result, Indonesia's neighboring countries must encounter disadvantageous consequences. One of the countries gradually affected is Singapore, since they have been through haze pollution since the late 1980's. Various attempts have been made by Singapore to mitigate the disaster. Since bilateral and regional efforts do not give any solution, Singapore then implies public diplomacy efforts. The practices of these public diplomacy could be seen from the involvement of one of the nation's influential NGOs, the Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA). As a result, they are able to pressure Indonesia in applying a more comprehensive map for haze tracker. Therefore, this study expects to invite readers' interest in the issue of NGO, precisely in International Relations and Public Diplomacy. This study will specifically discuss the practice of SIIA as public diplomacy efforts to resolve the THP issue from 2012 until 2016.

Keywords: Indonesia's Transboundary Haze Pollution, Singapore's Public diplomacy, Non-Governmental Organizations, ASEAN, International Cooperation, Environmental Governance, Track-II Diplomacy

1. Introduction

Since the early 1980's, Transboundary Haze Pollution (THP) has become a major concern for countries within Southeast Asia. It presents a serious ongoing environmental issue at international level. Knowingly, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, and even Vietnam, Thailand, and Philippines are affected annually by the THP. It has been one of the most unsettling environmental issues throughout the Southeast Asia region. Basically, THP is caused by landholders' burning peat lands for the purpose of clearing forest growth in order to start cultivation. The Government of Singapore has defined this haze pollution as an air-borne combination of chemical, which includes pollutants such as carbon dioxide, soot particles, as well as other toxic gases caused by the burning of large tracts of forested land in Indonesia (Koh & Ho, 2013). Additionally, according to the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), it only needs a few days to expose peat lands to risk extreme fire danger, when combined with dry weather (Velde, 2014). It is difficult to extinguish fire on the peat lands due to decomposed material compounds contained on the land that is also flammable. This annual problem causes the pollution level of the region to continue rising. The discussion of this issue becomes paramount due to the impacts.

In Southeast Asia, Indonesia has been regarded as the country that produces hazardous pollution the most. As the major contributor of haze pollution, Indonesia has a slow response and implementation of law regarding the THP case. It was issued that Indonesia is the most contributing country to produce this smoke, due to the discovery of numerous forest fires in Kalimantan and Riau (Ho, et al., 2014). In Singapore, this air pollution does not only affect health but also the economic and tourism sectors. Tourism is considered as the source of big revenue for Singapore's economy. It is estimated that the tourism sector related with retails sales, hotels, food, beverage, and gaming has contributed around 5% until 6% of the country's total economic output. Therefore, it is no wonder why the Singaporean government puts a high concern in solving this problem. Many actions have been conducted by government such as through talks and many conferences with Indonesian government. Even though this issue is admitted as one of the major concerns of ASEAN, where both Singapore and Indonesia are parts of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution signed in 2002, it has not produced immediate changes through the binding legal resolution (ASEAN, 2016). As an additional effort to solve this problem, Singaporean government tries another strategy which might effectively engage Indonesian to reduce forest burning in their country. It involves the participation of several NGOs. One of the most influential organizations is the Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA), whose prominent role is to assist government to encourage international community as well as civil society to apply indirect pressure towards the Government of Indonesia.

This article consisted of several parts. After the introduction it will be followed by theoretical and conceptual frameworks derived from public diplomacy, international cooperation, environmental governance, and globalization. Subsequently methodological part will be presented in the next chapter. The case study of THP and the response of the Singaporean Government, in the form of public diplomacy toward the Indonesian Government, will be described and analyzed afterward. In this part, the role of SIIA will become its main emphasis in order to demonstrate the extent to which the public diplomacy contributes significantly in solving the existing THP problem between the two countries.

2. Theoretical Framework

In order to explain and analyze the topic, some theoretical frameworks related to Public Diplomacy, International Cooperation, Environmental Governance, and Globalization are utilized. Following these frameworks, the role of SIIA relating to various aspects corresponding to the THP issue is examined.

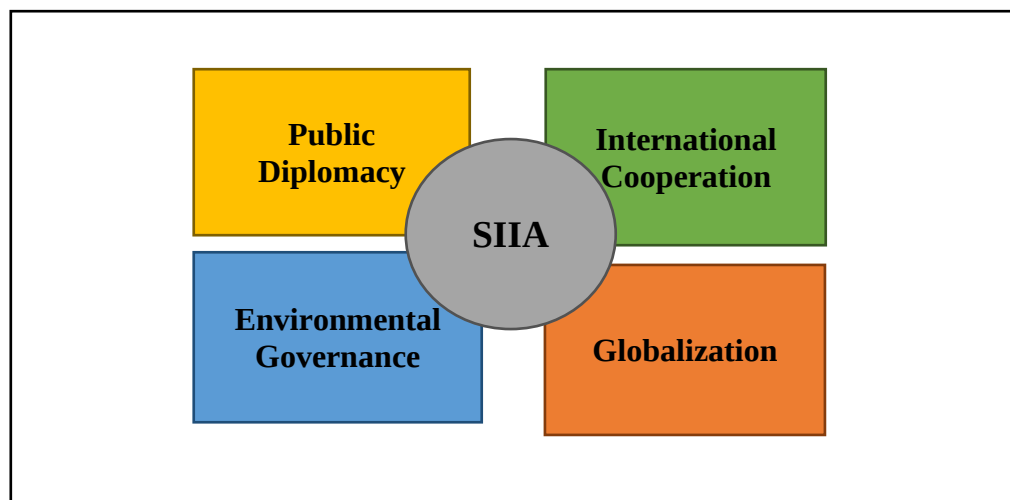


Figure 1. SIIA and the correlations with all frameworks

2.1. Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy has been considered different from traditional government-to-government diplomacy because it includes the engagement of non-state actors. Jan Melissen explains that the basic distinction between traditional diplomacy and public diplomacy is that the former is about relationships between the states representatives, or other international actors (Melissen, 2005). Meanwhile, public diplomacy leans towards the general public in foreign societies as its targets and more specific on non-official groups, organizations, and individuals (Melissen, 2005). Public diplomacy is more than a form of propaganda conducted by diplomats. According to Hans Tuch, public diplomacy is “a government’s process of communicating with foreign publics in an effort to bring about understanding for its nation’s ideals and ideas, its institutions and culture, as well as its national interests and policies” (Nye, 1990). In public diplomacy practices, large and small non-state actors, supranational and subnational players develop public diplomacy policies of their own. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have also showed that they are specialized in affecting foreign publics (Nye, 1990). In relevance with public diplomacy practices, ‘Track-II Diplomacy’ is induced. Louise Diamond defines Track II diplomacy as the practice of ‘non-state actors’ such as the non-governmental, unofficial contacts and informal also the activities between private citizens or groups of individuals (Diamond & McDonald, 1996). Track-II has its goals for resolution and reduction of conflict, within a country or between two or more countries, by lessening the tension, anger, or fear that exists, through better understanding of each other's point of view and developed communication. The realization of the attempts by

diplomats and others formal official government-to-government interactions were not effective in resolving differences and securing international cooperation.

In order to support the country's act to combat THP, the Government of Singapore has used its public diplomacy as a strategy. An enormous effort was applied by the nation's influential think-tanks such as the Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA). The Singaporean NGO is hand in hand with the government to conduct a track-II diplomacy. The Track-II diplomacy implementation is important to help government in spreading country's concern towards this issue and use transnational advocacy to encourage Indonesia to also participate in solving this issue.

2.2. International Relations Cooperation Theory

Robert Axelrod and Robert O. Keohane (1985) argue that cooperation occurs when "actors adjust their behavior to the actual or anticipated preferences of others," so International Cooperation defines the interactions to obtain same goal when actors' preferences are neither identical (harmony) nor clashing (conflict). The framework of International Cooperation refers to the processes and structures of policy-making beyond the nation-state and is used identically with global governance (Paulo, 2014). Cooperation occurs not only among individuals but also involves collective entities, including nation-states, political parties, firms, terrorist groups, IGOs, NGOs, and ethnic organizations. The rational approach to international cooperation shares common analytic elements, it typically extracts the actors and their goal as given to focus on their strategic interactions (Dai, Snidal, & Sampson, 2017).

International Cooperation here resembles the actions taken by Singapore to tackle the haze pollution coming from Indonesia. It is basically based on bilateral agreement between Singapore and Indonesia. On its approach to Indonesia, the Singaporean government is committed to use the bilateral cooperation. Singapore sees this bilateral-level projects could help encourage Indonesia to take an action and solve this issue immediately. This enables Indonesia to gain help not only from the Government of Singapore, but also the NGO from the same country. Indonesia, Singapore, and SIIA have one common goal—to mitigate the destructive THP that has brought lots of loss to them.

2.3. Environmental Governance

Environmental Governance surrounds mutually beneficial decisions and actions made by the communities, corporations, state, and NGOs in order to ensure the well-being of society and the growth of economy. These interventions can take the shape of international treaties and national policies in order to sustain the quality of the environment (Lemos & Agrawal, 2006). The topic of Environmental Governance pursues to side on environmentally friendly practices through calculated costs and

incentives emphasizing on market and agent focused instruments (Islam, Pei, & Mangharam, 2016).

The framework of Environmental Governance here is used to suggest particular interventions to mitigate and reduce the effect of 'Slash and Burn' method. A multi-level governance is needed to address these issues, since the consequences of environmental conflict are felt at the local, national, and transnational levels, as in environmental governance it is believed that one of the factors that causes environmental damage is the lack of information and initiative taken by the local (Islam, Pei, & Mangharam, 2016). With the assistance of SIIA and transnational environmental institutions, the free flow of information, advance technology, and policy motivations can be created to implement safe environmental standards.

2.4. Globalization

Globalization is commonly used as a way to describe the spread and interconnectedness of production, ideas, practices, communication, and technologies between countries all around the world (Smith & Doyle, 2014). It is a common statement that NGOs do have essential roles through democracy in globalization. Aside from having programs in responding to democracy related problems, NGOs are also used as a vehicle to fight for democratization of the government by civic movements (Gudynas, 1997). Also, many organizations get involved and play in international scale, forming networks and coalitions, which seemingly show one of globalization's signs (Gudynas, 1997). The layered set of NGOs keeps on developing within a general sense of indifference toward politics as it maintains various relationships with a diverse civil society.

Globalization is chosen to explain the phenomena of the NGOs' involvement in nation's political decision. SIIA gains the authority in order to help Singapore and Indonesia, which can be said to have occurred due to the impacts of globalization. The government still has the highest authority, however, globalization are giving opportunities for civil society to be involved with the conflicts within the nation. Through interconnectedness, SIIA are possible to act as a mediator in providing information through various activities in order to solve the THP conflict.

3. Methodology

Descriptive research method is chosen to explain the case, where it is used to describe characteristics of a population or situation being studied (Shields & Rangarajan, 2013). This study describes THP as an environmental issue between Singapore and Indonesia, and how Singapore uses public diplomacy through the help of SIIA as an NGO in an attempt to resolve it. The qualitative method is also used, which is considered to be more suitable for the nature of this study and the required

data. Qualitative research is a scientific methodology of observation to collect non-numerical data (Babbie, 2016). In the perspective of academic disciplines, qualitative research approaches particularly focus on the human aspect of the natural sciences and social that exists (Babbie, 2016). This methodology are relevant for this study in order to observe the Government of Singapore implementation of public diplomacy through SIIA as their foreign affairs strategy in resolving dispute of haze pollution with Indonesia from descriptive and non-numerical data that have been gathered.

4. Discussion and Analysis

4.1. The Transboundary Haze Pollution of Indonesia

Due to its forest and timber activities, Indonesia has become the world's third-largest emitter of greenhouse gases (Atkinson, 2014). In managing tropic land, such as to the extent of clearing and even to deforestation, fire is an extensive instrument that unfairly emits out hazardous chemical such as aerosols and gases that if in contact with the climate can jeopardize public health and degrade the air quality (Marlier, et al., 2012). Generating from the slash and burn practices, Indonesia with their neighboring countries have to deal with complicated distress due to THP smoke and particular pollution coming from the Indonesia forest fires in a long-term (Marlier, et al., 2012). Regarding the source of fire issue in Indonesia, sometimes the scapegoat is small landowners (Marlier, et al., 2012). Even though in reality not only small landowners are at fault, some commercial land clearings for timber and palm oil plantations have been traced to be developing under government license, government-sponsored rice, and resettlement schemes (Mayer, 2006). Therefore, instead of focusing on the environmental sustainability, the authorities shifted their focus towards the economic success in order to not upset the whole system.

4.2. Responses from the Government of Indonesia regarding the THP Issue

From the law point of view, the legislation that exists in Indonesia clearly has the purpose to outlaw the "open burning" practices. There are several legislations of law ranging from prime-level which is '*Undang-Undang*' (Laws), to '*Peraturan Pemerintah*' (Government Regulation that provides refinement over the Laws), also '*Peraturan Daerah*' (Regional Regulations that legislate to aim for regional autonomy purpose by the local governments), which most of them have the similarity of rebuking the open burning practices and the uses of fire to cultivate large areas having high value on combustible peat material (Tan A. K., 2015). Some of these constitutionalized laws lead into explicit penalties against perpetrators, including imprisonment, withdrawal of licenses, and heavy financial fines.

The primary problem in facing THP with Indonesia legislation, however, lies on the lack of effective law implementation. In reality of the governance practices, often the

laws are manipulated by certain personal interests that lead into ineffectiveness and other means such as collusion, corruption, incapability of the authorities, and even solely confusion on the right way to enforce authority (Tan A. K., 2005). In the Forestry Law (Law No.41 of 1999), purposefully starting fire can lead to a fine of IDR 5 billion and 15 years of imprisonment. For starting fires irresponsibly, the penalty is 5 years of imprisonment and a fine of IDR 1.5 billion (Direktorat Jenderal Peraturan Perundang-undangan, 1999). There also exists separate law for Protection and Management of the Environment (Law No. 32 of 2009) that commands a minimum punishment of 3 years imprisonment and a fine of IDR3 billion with a maximum punishment of 10 years of imprisonment and a fine of IDR10 billion for setting fires intentionally (Direktorat Jenderal Peraturan Perundang-undangan, 2014). However, it is still unsettled which law is the main regulation (Tan A. K., 2015).

4.3. Transboundary Haze Pollution Originated from Indonesia and the Effects towards Singapore

According to Dr. Euston Quah from the Faculty of Economics, Singapore's Nanyang Technological University, Singapore has to 'suffer twice' while facing THP. First, Singapore has to deal with the disadvantageous effect in term of the civilian health and also the losses that impact their economy. Second, they have to suffer from giving financial aid to Indonesia and ASEAN to mitigate the THP (Tan A. K., 2015). Different from Malaysia, as another closely impacted country, Singapore does not have substantial profitable investments in Indonesia's palm oil plantations sector. Therefore, Singapore is not really invested on the open burning practices on these businesses that become the common source of the THP. In the first place, Singapore focuses on their personal interest which is to preserve the title of clean and green global business hub and the well-being of its people (Varkkey, 2011).

After sixteen years of intermediate THP episodes, the 2013 outburst became one of the most severe THP occurrences impacting the whole nation of Singapore. The PSI level reached the reading of 401 recorded on 21 June 2013, which is in the hazardous range, the highest PSI Singapore has ever experienced (Koh & Ho, 2013). At the utmost of the THP outburst, Singaporeans were recommended by the governments to reduce outdoor ventures and if they need to go outside, they need to wear N95 masks (Koh & Ho, 2013). Officials from Indonesia asserted that several of these palm oil companies are the properties of Malaysia and Singapore investors (Chua, 2013). Due to such claims, the Government of Singapore decided to forewarn that if these investors are revealed to be related with the induced THP, they would take actions against the irresponsible perpetrators (Chua, 2013). Authorities such as the Consumers Association of Singapore criticized the firms responsible for such activities and The Singapore Manufacturing Federation encouraged its members to boycott the company involved (Chua, 2013).

As a result of the 2013 THP, the Ministry of Manpower of Singapore issued a stop-work order, the Ministry of Education also announced that all school activities in June are cancelled on 21 June 2013 (Daily Mail UK, 2013). Vital tourist attractions and skyscrapers vanished from view as haze spread through the city, caging citizens indoors. The impacts were also felt by the services of public transportation, pushing train facilities to slow down due to poor visibility (Tan H. , 2013). Dr. Euston Quah pointed out that the haze occurring in 2013 led to about US\$50 million of losses to retailers, hotels, tourism, and the economy overall (The Business Times Singapore, 2015). Therefore, the impact goes beyond tourism and into the broader economy.

A study led by the Singapore General Hospital from 2010 until 2015 regarding the air quality showed that there is increasing number of out-of-hospital cardiac arrests (OHCA). Short to moderate risk of OHCA increased by up to 30% when the PSI level entered the unhealthy range of above 100 (WY, 2017). Based on the study, during the period, there were more than 8,500 such cardiac arrests that happened. Another study executed by scholars from Southeast Asian Haze Research Consortium and Institute of Medical Psychology, School of Medicine, Shandong University explained that mild psychological disturbances and severe physical symptoms may occur even with only short-term of haze exposure for healthy individuals. Physical symptoms mostly include headache, eye, nose, and throat discomfort and breathing difficulty. The physical symptoms mentioned during the haze occurrences then might lead into another problem, which is the psychological stress resulting from the thoughts of temporary anxiety on the ecosystem conditions and a span of unpredictability with hour-to-hour instability of the PSI values (WY, 2017).

4.4. Transboundary Haze Pollution and the Previous Efforts by the Governments

Domestically, Singapore alone actually has established the Ministry of Environment and Water Resources (MEWR) which is the Singaporean environmental institution of policy-making and holds primary responsibility over air quality in the country (Tan A. K., 2015). MEWR soon is involved in various activities seeking resolution over the haze. Singaporean government has used bilateral arrangement by substantially sending equipment such as images of hot spots, hand-held Global Positioning Systems (GPS), satellite equipped with computers fitted with the communication hardware, and the most important is providing C-130 aircrafts for cloud seeding to assist Indonesia. Singapore also trained the citizens of Indonesia to operate maps to indicate the possible location of forest fires (Kun, 2014). However, the attempts were greeted negatively by Indonesia who asked Singapore to conduct the act in accordance with ASEAN norms which is non-interference.

Therefore, Singapore believed ASEAN to be the best platform for Singapore to direct their persuasion to help Indonesia, without appearing as overly patronizing (Kun, 2014). The policy adopted by Singapore as a regional effort to solve this issue is the

ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AATHP) which was agreed to be implemented by member countries in 2002. In order to show its assistance for AATHP, the first country to voluntarily present to the AATHP Haze Fund as a form of contribution in an amount of USD50,000 is Singapore (Varkkey, 2011). Nonetheless, the problem still exists due to Indonesia's reluctance to ratify the agreement. Then, in 2013, the ASEAN member countries have adopted the ASEAN Haze Monitoring System (AHMS) which would support the tracking activity to find factor behind the annual THP (Sunchindah, 2015). The tool is an apparent example of exceptional cooperation among governments, yet there is still a flaw, which is the ASEAN leaders unable to agree on sharing compromised maps publicly (Tay, Park, & Wei, 2014).

4.5. Singapore Public Diplomacy in Foreign Affairs

The Government of Singapore thought that credibility is a necessary element in creating trust, which is the ultimate goal of public diplomacy (Somasundram, 2012). To pursue public diplomacy, according to the Government of Singapore, there are many reasons to collaborate with non-state bodies. As information cross freely these days, there is also increasing number of the possibility in becoming "flag-bearers" abroad such as from the people, services, commodities, academics, NGOs, business, and even general citizens. In addition to their nation-branding, especially since 2012, the Government of Singapore has decided to maximize their pursuit on public diplomacy activities (Somasundram, 2012). These include Singapore's efforts to involve in various public diplomacy activities such as encouraging some form of peer-to-peer networks, outreaching Diasporas, reaching out for foreign opinion, as well as involving journalists and think tank (Somasundram, 2012).

4.6. Singapore Public Diplomacy in Foreign Affairs

NGOs are defined as legally-constituted organizations that are diverse and independent from the government of the country, are mostly non-profit, and exist to pursue wider aims (The Independent, 2013). In Singapore, NGO tends to be on 'advocacy', which focuses on education and creating awareness among legislators and the public in general about an issue. In Singapore, the national level environmental policies are focused on the advocacy of "environmental sustainability" (Haas, Keohane, & Marc A. Levy, 1993). The context of these environmental policy in Singapore is fundamentally striving on the combination between environment and economy, where in carrying out the economy it will not harm the sustainability of the environment.

In 2002, Singapore delivered a 'Green Plan' with the goal of achieving sustainable environment by 2012, as well as launching a blueprint guide in order to direct these strategy plans until 2030 (The National Environment Agency, 2018). Singapore's environmental strategy plans include the main targets of waste and water

management, climate and air change, as well as international environmental relations. To achieve their target, Singapore involves variety of stakeholders which they call as the "3Ps, knowingly stand for people, private and public," collaborating purposely to promote the environmental ownership (The National Environment Agency, 2018). Hence, the key to achieve the sustainable environment is to be informed and advocated by the agreement among these different stakeholders such as; corporate sector, NGOs, businesses, and the Government. To enhance the 3P partnership, the Government of Singapore has encouraged the NGOs and corporations to maximize their role in giving education and involving more participation from the general public in the process of policy decision-making (Ooi, 1999).

4.7. SIIA Involvement in Transboundary Haze Pollution during 2012-2016

4.7.1. The Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA)

Established in 1962, the Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA) is Singapore's oldest think tank dedicated to the discussion, analysis, and research of regional and international issues (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2018). The SIIA is an independent and non-profit think tank. From their policy dialogue and research, SIIA is committed in bridging the performance between several sectors such as the private sector decision-makers, policymakers, and experts to alter public influence as well as the impact of social and policy responses.

The SIIA is an organization that, based on the membership, permits the involvement of prominent figures in the society particularly those who have contributed constructively in their professions and sectors. The early council members as well as the founders of SIIA include honored academics and leaders such as Professor Tommy Koh, Singapore's Ambassador at Large, the late Mr. G.G. Thomson of the post-independence Political Studies Centre, and Dr. Lau Teik Soon, who was a Member of Parliament, and chaired the SIIA from the 1980s to the early 1990s (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2018). From 1999, SIIA has been chaired by Associate Professor Simon SC Tay, a professor of law at the National University of Singapore, who also worked as a Nominated Member of Parliament and Chairman of the government's National Environment Agency (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2018).

Primarily, SIIA focuses their research on the theme around Regionalism, ASEAN, and widely extended into the relations between US-Asia. Moreover, they have been focusing over the climate change, energy issues, environment, and currently are preparing the conference regarding nuclear energy and energy security (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2018). Besides doing researches, SIIA also produces

many influential conferences, reports, as well as recommendations. Other efforts by the SIIA include recommendations for an ASEAN Economic Community, dialogues for a growing regionalism in East Asia, and an assembly for non-governmental organizations and community groups in ASEAN.

4.7.2. The Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA)

An enormous effort in mitigating THP was applied by the nation's influential NGOs, one of them is the SIIA (Varkkey, 2011). SIIA can be considered as an NGO, since think tanks are a part of NGO due to their existence as non-governmental or independent organization that generates policy research and analysis (The Regents of the University of California, 2018). Therefore, SIIA is hand in hand with the government to conduct track-II diplomacy (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2018). SIIA coordinates with MEWR to share their concern towards this issue, bringing it into international community and Indonesian government through a continuously transnational dialogues and advocacy, as well as approaching Indonesian civil society (Tay, Park, & Wei, 2014).

In dealing with the THP issue, SIIA has been involved since the first worst occurrence within 1997-1998 episode. In connection with the 13th Meeting of the Sub-Regional Ministerial Steering Committee on Transboundary Haze Pollution by ASEAN, in June 2012 SIIA also assembled a special Forum with officials from Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia, and Malaysia (Tay, Park, & Wei, 2014). With another worst haze episode in 2013, SIIA is actively committed in forming policies related to the THP issue. It was done through a continuous consultations with several activities organized by SIIA. The first was conducted in September 2013 at the 6th ASEAN-Asia Forum (AAF) in which addressing the haze as the key theme (Tay, Park, & Wei, 2014). With the title of "ASEAN's Resources: Solving the Haze, Sustaining the Future," the discussion invited several key corporate actors to take part in the panel discussions to review the attempts made by the sector, where they are participating in the supply chain of palm oil, namely Standard Chartered Bank, Olam, Wilmar International, and Unilever (Tay, Park, & Wei, 2014).

SIIA organized another discussion inviting concerned citizens and experts. The panel discussion was titled "Haze and Singapore Perspectives", conducted in October 2013 (Tay, Park, & Wei, 2014). In this opportunity, several local experts and NGOs assessed the responses of the Government of Singapore regarding the THP issue as well as the environmental initiatives by the civil society. The participants also discussed about the ways for various stakeholders to cooperate in tackling this issue and achieve regional sustainability. For the last discussion in 2013, SIIA organized "The NGO Roundtable on Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change in Singapore" on November 1. The participants shared their advocacy on government's environmental efforts. These representatives of more than 30 participants came from

several universities and NGOs in Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia (Tay, Park, & Wei, 2014). Besides advocacy, through this opportunity the participants also discussed the ASEAN Haze Monitoring System (HMS), which was recently adopted, and recommended ideas for the engagement of NGOs regarding the sustainability progress in ASEAN's resource sector.

To address the current THP issue in a wider context of regional agro-forestry sector, on 20th May, 2014, SIIA organized "The Singapore Dialogue on Sustainable World Resources". The event's primary activities included inaugural dialogue, which through the opportunity several stakeholders, were able to convey recommendations as well as solutions for sustainability efforts (Tay, Park, & Wei, 2014). SIIA convened the annual Singapore Dialogue on Sustainable World Resources (SWR) in 2014 to encourage higher levels of active corporate involvement in sustainability dialogues in respond to the 2013 THP (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2016).

On 13th May 2015, over 300 invited guests attended the 2nd SWR dialogue with the topic of "Sustainability: A New Profit Driver?" at Ritz-Carlton Millenia. Singapore's Minister for the Environment and Water Resources, Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan, and Indonesia's then Deputy Minister of Environment and Forestry were among the keynote speakers (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2016). Participants of the panel discussions included CEOs and senior speakers from a number of key commodities companies including Asian Agri, Bunge, Cargill, IndoAgri, Wilmar, and financial institutions, such as HSBC Bank, OCBC Bank, and Singapore Exchange (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2016). In addition, the dialogue also featured the launch of the SIIA's Haze Tracker website, a one-stop portal that provides news, commentaries, and maps associated with the fire and THP issue (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2016).

To facilitate safe exchange of authentic perspectives between corporates and NGOs, SIIA also established two closed-door roundtable sessions in 2015. The first session, was a focused discussion on the various fire tracking and haze monitoring technologies and their efficacies and shortfalls with the theme of "Eye in the Sky: Has Satellite Monitoring been Effective?" In the second session, "The Haze Tracker Working Group Meeting", 30 experts in public information law, environmental protection policies, and community mapping gathered to exchange information regarding the legality and viability of publishing maps for public monitoring (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2016).

SIIA recognizes that prolonged public interest is important in ensuring the continuity of collective anti-haze efforts. Thus, SIIA has enhanced its schedule of public outreach activities, collaborating with local NGO People's Movement to Stop Haze (PM.Haze). Following the first joint run public exhibition in November 2014, "Haze: Know it. Stop it." at Vivocity, during that opportunity SIIA re-staged the event with

updated content at City Square Mall, Science Centre Singapore, and Nex Shopping Mall in 2015 (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2016). The last exhibition, which was held at the height of the haze season in October, included a talk series featuring SIIA Chairman and their partners from PM.Haze, Relief.sg, Singapore Environment Council (SEC), and Haze Elimination Action Team (H.E.A.T.) (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2016).

With regards to the 2015 THP occurrences, in November 2015 SIIA hosted a public seminar "Fighting the Haze: Insights from Indonesia's Worst-hit Provinces," featuring speakers from Riau, Jambi, and Central Kalimantan who lived through the worst of the 2015 haze crisis (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2017). This brought the Singaporean public closer to the hardships and sufferings in the affected provinces. SIIA also jointly launched a public campaign "We Breathe What We Buy: XtheHaze" with WWF Singapore and PM.Haze to promote public support for sustainably produced palm oil (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2017).

SIIA established the 2016's SWR which involved these keynote speakers: Singapore's MEWR, Masagos Zulkifli; the Head of Indonesia's Peatland Restoration Agency, Nazir Foad; and the Chairman of Indonesia's Financial Services Authority (OJK), Muliaman Hadad (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2017). They were accompanied by panelists which included senior representatives from major agroforestry companies, such as Royal Golden Eagle, Musim Mas, and Double A; financial institutions, such as Standard Chartered Bank and the China Finance Society; and non-profit organizations, such as WWF Indonesia, Solidaridad, and Singapore Environment Council. Notably, 2016's SWR also featured speakers from China for the first time. China is a significant investor in Southeast Asia's agricultural sector as well as a growing market for forest commodities (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2017). Also in the 2016's SWR, the participants saw the premiere of the documentary "No Smoke without Fire," which was created jointly by SIIA and the Indonesian NGO Sawit Watch. The documentary was shown in international conferences on palm oil, and used as an education tool for members of the financial industry to gain better knowledge of the impact caused by unsustainable palm oil cultivation (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2017).

Another major milestone for SIIA's sustainability program in 2016 related to THP was the "Regional Peat Restoration Workshop", held on 27th October at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Jakarta, Indonesia. The Workshop was co-organized with the Indonesian Conservation Communication Forum (FKKI), a coalition of ten major Indonesian environmental NGOs, and was the first regional NGO-led event to focus on the progress of peat restoration efforts in Indonesia and how non-state actors can better support the activities of Indonesia's newly-established Peatland Restoration Agency (BRG) (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2017). It was attended

by 120 representatives from Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia, and also featured strong representation from multiple stakeholders, including NGOs, agroforestry companies, academics, development agencies, and financiers.

Although Singapore experienced only one day of significant THP in 2016, SIIA recognizes the importance of keeping haze in the public agenda even during haze-free periods. In 2016, SIIA continued its collaboration with local NGO, People's Movement to Stop Haze (PM.Haze), to raise awareness among the public about the factors behind haze and what the public can do to support sustainable agriculture. In 2016, with the support of the SIIA, PM.Haze successfully conducted 14 roadshows as well as 23 talks and workshops at schools, organizations, green events, and other venues (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2017). PM.Haze also organized the 2nd People's Forum on Haze, a forum for the public to ask in-depth questions about the haze issue. Finally, in the latter half of 2016 campaign, PM.Haze launched their "#gohazefree" campaign to encourage local restaurants and food service companies to switch to RSPO-certified sustainable palm oil (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2017).

To support the increasing momentum behind sustainable palm oil in Singapore, SIIA became an Associate Member of the newly-formed Singapore Alliance on Sustainable Palm Oil in November 2016 (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2017). As an Associate Member, SIIA hopes to take an active role in steering the direction of the local palm oil consumer industry by improving uptake and acceptance of RSPO-certified sustainable palm oil. Also, SIIA continued to be a leading media commentator on haze and related issues such as deforestation and climate change. SIIA's insights on these issues and sustainability-related policy recommendations were published and broadcasted through major media outlets such as Channel NewsAsia, The Straits Times, TODAY, The Jakarta Post, and China Daily (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2017). SIIA also provides articles news on their web mainly concerning about the Southeast Asia land and fires management, government efforts, agro business sustainability, as well as other relevant information regarding the haze situation (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2016).

SIIA realizes that one of the main obstacles in responding to the THP was the problem in publicizing official and updated compromised maps that would help on the traceability (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2016). The existence of these concession maps will be very useful in indicating the exact source of fires and companies involved. In one thought with the WRI, SIIA believes that public data is essential in coordinating between local agencies and the officials, as well as an effort for NGOs to monitor (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2016). Without these official and exact data, it would be another obstacle for the countries to establish fire prevention policies and immediate respond on upcoming THP

phenomenon (Zelin, 2013). In response to the lack of effort from Indonesia, SIIA also established their own 'Haze Tracker' in May 13, 2015. Further, in 2016, SIIA collaborating with WRI Indonesia launched the Haze Tracker website (www.hazetracker.org) to ease the general public on concession maps to find those who burn land illegally (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2016). The revamped HazeTracker features an improved interface, an interactive map that overlays real-time hotspot information over maps of plantations and peat lands in Indonesia, and an automatic newsfeed that collates the latest haze-related news articles (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2017). It would allow the public to view Singapore air quality data, the location of the likely wind and fire direction, and where exactly the haze might occur. The table below (Table 1) summarizes SIIA's contributions from 2012 until 2016 and their implementations:

Year	SIIA Implementation on the THP issue
2012	In June, assembled a special Forum with officials from Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia, and Malaysia.
2013	- September 2013, addressed the haze as key theme at the 6th ASEAN-Asia Forum (AAF). - October 2013, convened the Concerned Citizens and Expert Panel Discussion titled “Haze and Singapore Perspectives”. - November 2013, organized “NGO Roundtable on Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change”.
2014	- May 2014, organized “The Singapore Dialogue on Sustainable World Resources (SWR)”. - Held a campaign with PM.Haze titled “Haze: Know it. Stop it.” - Published Special Report on the 2013 THP.
2015	- May 2015, held 2nd SWR dialogue with the topic of “Sustainability: A New Profit Driver?” - Established haze tracker. - Held two closed-door roundtable sessions; “Eye in the Sky: Has Satellite Monitoring been Effective?” and “The Haze Tracker Working Group Meeting”. - Hosted a public seminar “Fighting the Haze: Insights from Indonesia’s Worst-hit Provinces”. - Held campaign titled “We Breathe What We Buy: XtheHaze” with WWF Singapore and PM.Haze. - Published Policy Brief over the haze issue.
2016	- Held 2016’s SWR. - October 2016, held “Regional Peat Restoration Workshop”. - Revamped haze tracker tool with WRI. - Supported PM.Haze to organize public “2nd People’s Forum on Haze” and the “#gohazefree” campaign.

Table 1. SIIA Implementation on the THP issue.

4.8. The Prominence of SIIA Involvement in Mitigating THP Issue between Indonesia and Singapore

Track-II diplomacy has been considered as the best way to engage with Indonesia in tackling this issue. Looking back to the ongoing relation between both countries, they essentially are in a good relation as they are reliant on each other mainly in term of FDI. However, socially and historically, the relationship between Singapore and Indonesia has been described as complicated. Another factor creating a relation gap between both countries is unresolved sovereignty issues, involving Bintan and the Riau islands of Batam, which are located near Singapore (Varkkey, 2011). Therefore, the Government of Singapore since the early years has been very careful in executing acts related to Indonesia, especially in engaging the THP issue.

Singaporean public diplomacy has succeeded to influence the Indonesian government to ratify the ASEAN Haze Agreement on September 2014 after 12 years of delay (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2016). SIIA's dialogues which invited NGOs and representatives from surrounding countries worked as a platform for them to share their concerns towards this issue. It could also ease the community to map and analyze the root causes of the haze and identify where the error lies. Most significant, this activity could indirectly give pressure for Indonesian government to take a movement rather than being silent.

Singaporean public diplomacy has also succeeded to involve the Singaporean in monitoring and suspending the operation of company in Indonesia or another country linked to the haze causes. It is more efficient to watch over the perpetrators in the future rather than only waiting for the response from Indonesia alone. The role of NGOs is not only to bridge the talks between countries, but also to help ASEAN as an entity to solve this regional issue. As a way to deal with the inefficient implementation of 2013 ASEAN Haze Monitoring System, in 2016 SIIA engaging with the WRI Indonesia launched their improved Haze Tracker website, which allow for the general public to access information regarding the THP (Singapore Institute of International Affairs, 2016). Therefore, SIIA as an NGO has been able to perform one of the public diplomacy roles, which is to advocate in order to resolve an issue.

5. Conclusion

During the haze pollution that emerged in 2013, the civilians of Singapore were suffering. Seeing this urgency of hazardous situation, the government of Singapore through the aid of SIIA has proven the effectiveness of public diplomacy. Rather than adding more problem to both countries by using traditional diplomacy, and to avoid interfering the Indonesian constitution, track-II diplomacy is the best solution. This is because the track-II diplomacy is more flexible, but still suppressing. Through the efforts of the Singaporean government and also SIIA, the occurring haze pollution and its perpetrators could be located more easily. The goals of living in sustainability are also proven by the efforts of SIIA to update their haze tracker due to the 2015 haze pollution. SIIA may have not done a lot to the point where they stop the haze

completely, since to do so it may seem to interfere with Indonesian governance. Yet, SIIA is able to implement transparency by giving access to everyone who wants to track the haze through their website. This is one of the aspects that Indonesia has missed, which may lead into the practices of inefficient governance.

For recommendations, internal resolution will be more efficient rather than involving external actors. Indonesia must be able to solve these illegal practices of S&B and provide education towards the oil plantation workers. Giving out sanctions is very crucial. Therefore Indonesia should have not discriminated against certain groups in implementing their law. Through applying public diplomacy and the involvement of NGOs such as SIIA, the current situation may be mitigated. If there is no measure taken by the Indonesian government, the THP case may still occur in the future. The last recommendation is for ASEAN to rely more on track-II diplomacy. In ASEAN, NGOs could act more on being an intermediary when governments-to-governments communication does not achieve any impactful result. In the future, the involvement of public diplomacy should be more enhanced, as it could be seen from the study case of THP between Indonesia and Singapore that public diplomacy is able to resolve the tangled issue when the government of each of the countries involved has reached a 'dead end.'

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