

Preventive Legal Governance in Corporate Establishment: Notarial Responsibility for Environmental Compliance in Indonesia's Risk-Based Licensing System for Environmental Compliance and the Enforcement of Indonesia's Risk-Based Licensing System.

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ABSTRACT: Environmental governance is now integrated into business licensing, and environmental compliance is so much more than a post-operational obligation but a requirement when a company is founded. In Indonesia, the Job Creation Law and the Risk-Based Online Single Submission (OSS-RBA) system have also strengthened this integration by linking environmental approval to business licensing. However, the legal responsibility of the notaries to ensure environmental compliance during incorporation of a limited liability company is not well-defined and well-studied. Here, we have studied the legal framework of environmental compliance in company establishment and its implications for notarial policy for environmental compliance in Indonesia. The research is conducted in a normative legal research approach using statutory and conceptual tools. The primary legal materials are constitutional provisions, corporate law, notarial law, environmental law, and risk-based licensing laws, and secondary legal materials such as scholarly literature and interviews with government officials. We analyze the legal materials through qualitative doctrinal legal analysis using statutory, conceptual, and systematic legal interpretation. Even though environmental compliance has become a central element of Indonesia's integrated licensing system, the Law on the Position of Notaries does not imply that notaries are required to check environmental obligations under incorporation laws. Still, the statutory authority of notaries to offer legal counsel is a form of preventive legal duty that may entail a notification to the business founders of environmental obligations that may affect the legality of the company. We propose this study in this context to strengthen the integrated legal framework of corporate law with environmental law, administrative licensing and notarial law, and enhance preventive legal governance in Indonesia as part of the process of strengthening legal certainty and the sustainable corporate establishment.

KEYWORDS: Environmental compliance; notarial authority; limited liability company; preventive legal governance; risk-based licensing; Indonesia.

INTRODUCTION

Economic development and investment expansion have become central policy priorities in many countries to propel economic growth, employment, and sustainable prosperity (Adanma & Ogunbiyi, 2024). But the rapid growth in business formation has also led to an increase in environmental degradation, particularly in the sectors that rely on natural resources. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and especially Goals 8, 12, 13, 15, and 16, have led to the realization that development should be accompanied by environmental protection, responsible leadership, and strong laws (Ozdamirova et al., 2024).

Environmental compliance is no longer just an operational duty of corporations but has now become an essential aspect of corporate governance starting from the earliest stages of business establishment (Kavadis & Thomsen, 2023). The global trend is to move from a reactive regulatory approach to proactive legal governance that includes environmental factors in business licensing and corporate formation. In response to this global evolution, Indonesia has made significant legal reforms to bring environmental protection into the context of the country's investment and licensing policy. The Job Creation Law and the risk-based Online Single Submission (OSS-RBA) system, in particular, have led to a transition to digitalized and integrated business licensing where environmental approval is the cornerstone of business activities for businesses with environmental impact. Corporate establishment is no longer a mere formal legal procedure to get legal entity status but is now an aspect of a regulatory framework that links corporate law to administrative law and environmental law in an integrated manner. Legal certainty in company formation is now a matter of not just compliance with corporate law but also environmental compliance, which is needed under Indonesian environmental law (Hutahayan et al., 2024). Despite these legal developments, the existing legal literature does not cover the

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relationship between corporate establishment, notarial authority, and environmental compliance properly. Most previous works have studied the role of notaries in authentic deed preparation, corporate legality, legal certainty, licensing under the OSS system, or corporate social responsibility.

Recently, the topic of sustainable development and the role of notarial practice has begun to develop as well. Most studies have considered environmental responsibility as a legal condition after a company is established or during company activities, but not environmental compliance as a preventive legal condition of a company, which is in fact a legal matter of its own. So the preventive role of notaries, which is related to environmental legal compliance, is not yet fully explored. This problem is particularly pronounced in view of the current regulatory structure. In Indonesian law, notaries not only prepare authentic deeds but also provide legal advice to parties about relevant legal situations in relation to the transactions (Khusna et al., 2025).

However, notarial services often stress the legal validity of corporate documents but do not pay enough attention to whether the business plan is legal in relation to spatial planning, environmental approval, or risk-based licensing conditions that permit the issuance of licenses through the OSS system. This creates a legal problem where a company can be legally incorporated and take on the legal status of a company but still not get licensed, as environmental requirements are not met (Xu et al., 2022). This situation shows a tension between formal corporate law and substantive environmental law, which has not been studied in academic literature. Although research has concerned notarial responsibility, OSS-based licensing, corporate social responsibility, and sustainable legal development, no legal analysis has investigated how notaries have a preventive legal responsibility to promote environmental compliance in the context of the development of limited liability companies in Indonesia under the integrated licensing regime.

The existing literature has not paid much attention to the relationship between the Law on Notary Position, Company Law, Environmental Protection and Management Law, and the risk-based OSS regulatory framework. In light of this, the interaction between these legal regimes is still underdeveloped and practically uncertain. The scope of notarial authority to prevent environmental legal disputes arising from corporate formation is also left open to research (Khusna et al., 2025). Based on the above reasons, in this work, we plan to analyze the legal requirements of environmental compliance in the establishment of a limited liability company and to determine the legal responsibility of notaries to ensure that environmental obligations are in place for the preparation of deeds of incorporation.

In particular, we will be investigating whether the legal role of the notaries should be expanded beyond formal document authentication to include legal advice on environmental obligations in Indonesia's integrated licensing system. First, it adds to the theoretical framework of notarial responsibility and is consistent with notarial law, environmental law, and administrative licensing for corporate law and administrative licensing in the field of preventive legal governance. Second, it adds to notarial scholarship in the field by making environmental compliance a central part of legal certainty and not only an operational corporate obligation. Third, it has practical implications for policymakers, notaries, and business providers through a more integrated understanding of notarial function in Indonesia's risk-based licensing system, thereby supporting sustainable corporate governance and strengthening legal certainty in environmentally responsible business formation.

Notaries play a vital role in civil law in legal life in the presence of legal certainty through authentic deeds and legal counsel in private legal transactions (Sari et al., 2025). Notaries are most important in Indonesia in terms of the Law on Notary Position (Undang-Undang Jabatan Notaris), which gives the notaries the power to prepare authentic deeds and counsel the parties in legal actions to make them legally valid. That is the preventive function of notarial practice: to prevent any future legal disputes by making sure the legal acts correspond to what is the required law. It is widely accepted that notaries do not only document authentication but also provide legal advice before real deeds are made.

However, most studies have viewed this preventive role from a civil and corporate standpoint, focusing on document validity, shareholder identity, corporate capital, procedural legality, and their application in corporate law rather than regulatory compliance. Recent legal reforms introducing electronic licensing systems have also led to a greater participation of notaries in corporate establishment. The notarial role in business licensing has been studied through the Online Single Submission (OSS) system insofar as notaries assist businesses with powers of attorney even if the law does not specify which ones. Most of the studies are concerned with legal authority, administrative responsibilities, and licensing procedures, but no studies have considered whether notarial legal services are also about environmental compliance before corporate establishment. So, in general, notarial authority is considered to be a protection mechanism for the legal system, but its environmental enforcement is still poorly understood.

Environmental protection has evolved from a regulatory duty of legal action in the conduct of business to a key part of corporate governance (Primec & Belak, 2022). Environmental compliance has become more and more of an international concern as environmental and social governance (ESG) and SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) are being increasingly discussed worldwide, and corporate decision-making is more and more important to ensure that environmental factors are incorporated in the business decision-making process and are integrated from the start of the corporate development process. In the Indonesian legal framework, environmental obligations are mainly under the Environmental Protection and Management Law, and environmental

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approval from AMDAL, UKL-UPL, or other environmental documents is required before any business activity can be undertaken (Akinsola, 2025).

Furthermore, risk-based licensing by Government Regulation No. 5 of 2021 integrates environmental approval into the framework of business licensing in the whole business licensing process to ensure that environmental legality is inextricably linked to corporate legality. Although there have been legal studies on corporate environmental liability, environmental licensing, CSR, and environmental liability in companies have been the main topics in that literature (Jansen et al., 2024). The extent to which corporate establishment is linked to environmental compliance is very limited. Notaries have mostly been associated with CSR implementation or legal support on statutory requirements (or legal advice on corporate legality), and environmental legality has not come under the microscope since the incorporation of the company. This shows that environmental law scholarship is still focused on environmental compliance as a matter of operational practice rather than a legal obligation for company formation.

The implementation of the Online Single Submission Risk-Based Approach (OSS-RBA) is one of the most significant regulatory changes in Indonesian investment law. The OSS-RBA system is not only a separate entity of formation from business licensing, but it also unifies company registration and sectoral licensing, spatial planning, as well as environmental approval, and thus is a single system of electronic governance (Olyhabana Situmorang, Martono Anggusti, 20225). Legal scholars have recognized the change in legal law from corporate law to administrative law. Businesses can no longer rely on the success of a legal entity to carry out business activities and are forced to obtain licensing that is based on business risk. Studies on OSS generally imply that legal uncertainty still surrounds the extent to which notaries can play a role in business licensing, especially when licensing arises from private powers of attorney rather than legislative power. But the literature in this area has not paid enough attention to the legal impact of this integrated licensing system for notarial duties (Hadi et al., 2025). Most of the literature does not take environmental compatibility into account in preparing deeds for the establishment process, such as zoning compatibility, environmental approval, and business risk classification.

As a result, the link between corporate incorporation and environmental licensing is still a little patchwork within current legal studies. The above review highlights three major gaps in the literature. First, previous studies have mainly discussed notarial responsibility from the perspective of authentic deed preparation, formal legal certainty, business licensing administration, or corporate social responsibility but not environmental compliance as part of the incorporation process. Second, studies on environmental governance mainly focus on environmental permits, environmental liability, and corporate responsibilities after a business starts, but do not consider the preventative legal frameworks available in the establishment of a company. Third, despite the evolution and implementation of Indonesia's risk-based licensing system, no comprehensive study has systematically examined the legal frameworks for notaries to protect the environment when establishing limited liability companies by applying the Law on Notary Position, Company Law, Environmental Protection Law, and OSS-RBA regulations (Fahira & Mahmudah, 2024). There is therefore a gap in the literature on the extent to which notarial authority can be interpreted as preventive environmental legal governance and not just formal document authentication.

Based on these gaps, this study takes into account the integrated legal framework that includes corporate law, notarial law, environmental law and administrative licensing policy in Indonesia. In contrast to previous studies, which treat these legal regimes in isolation, this study considers notaries as preventive legal actors whose legal advice to the company can be used to ensure that the company is legally compliant with the environment before the company gets operational. Thus, the legal certainty in company formation needs to not only be compliance with corporate formation requirements but also actual compliance with environmental obligations, which are embedded in Indonesia's licensing policy. In this respect, the research aims to enhance the knowledge of preventive legal governance which can support sustainable corporate establishment and provide legal certainty for business actors, notaries, and regulatory bodies.

METHODS

This study employs normative legal research (doctrinal legal research) to examine the legal framework for the responsibilities of notaries in environmental compliance for the establishment of limited liability companies in Indonesia (. et al., 2023)(. et al., 2023). Normative legal research is applicable because the study focuses on the legal norms, statutory rules, and legal principles relating to the establishment, environmental protection, and notarial authority of a company.

The research adopts two complementary approaches. First, the statutory approach is concerned with the hierarchy and interaction of legal instruments for company incorporation, environmental protection, and risk-based business licensing. Second, our conceptual approach is based on the legal doctrine and scholarly perspectives for legal certainty, notarial authority, preventive legal protection, and sustainable development in the context of law. The study largely relies on legal evidence rather than on empirical data. The main legal materials in this study are the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, Law No. 40 of 2007 for Limited Liability Companies, Law No. 2 of 2014 for the Position of Notaries, Law No. 32 of 2009 on Environmental Protection and Management,

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Law No. 6 of 2023 on Job Creation, Government Regulation No. 5 of 2021 on Risk-Based Business Licensing, and Ministerial Regulation on company registration and incorporation. The secondary legal materials are peer-reviewed journal articles, legal textbooks, scholarly commentaries, and previous literature on corporate law, environmental law, administrative licensing, and notarial practice. In addition to the legal literature, legal dictionaries and encyclopedias are used to clarify legal terminology when necessary. To further cement the context of regulatory implementation, we also cover expert interviews with officials from the Investment and One-Stop Integrated Service Office (DPMPTSP) and the Environmental Agency of Bali Province. These interviews are just support of the legal framework and not as evidence of the test of legal practices.

The main research instrument is a legal analysis matrix to identify, classify, and compare legal provisions in various regulatory frameworks. The matrix maps statutory provisions, legal doctrines, judicial interpretations, and scholarly arguments according to the research questions. To help us to make sure the analysis is credible and consistent, we cross-reference statutory provisions with legal doctrine and the literature to improve the context of the content. Expert interviews also provide context-based validation of the practice of environmental licensing by using the Online Single Submission Risk-Based Approach (OSS-RBA) system. Legal materials were gathered through a thorough library-based documentary review. The relevant laws and regulations were then retrieved based on the hierarchical relevance of the legal literature on notarial authority, environmental compliance, preventive legal governance, and sustainable corporate regulation.

These legal materials were then grouped according to the relevant research topic. The interview data with relevant government officials handling business licensing and environmental administration in Bali Province were also obtained to clarify administrative processes of environmental approval under the OSS-RBA. The legal materials were analyzed with a qualitative doctrinal legal approach using statutory interpretation, conceptual interpretation, and systematic legal interpretation. It shows normative consistency, legal gaps, and the link between corporate law, environmental law, and notarial law to determine the preventive legal responsibilities of notaries in the future. Legal reasoning was developed by comparing statutory provisions and scholarly opinions to create coherent normative arguments.

RESULTS AND DISCUSS

Our results demonstrate that the Indonesian legal reform has considerably changed the relationship between incorporation and environmental regulation. When it comes to environmental requirements only as operational requirements, the present legal framework is more and more integrated with environmental approval in terms of investment and licensing. These findings lend weight to other studies that have argued that environmental governance has moved to preventive regulation based on risk-based licensing. However, while these studies have primarily focused on administrative licensing processes, the present study shows that the integration also has legal implications for the preventive role of notaries in the organization when business is launched.

This can be explained by the concept of preventive legal protection: legal certainty is not only based on the resolution of disputes but also on the prevention of legal conflicts before they actually arise. Because notaries are legally allowed to provide legal counsel, preventive legal protection would be more than simply preparing a legal document - it would also need to inform parties about legal needs that could be relevant in the future of the business. From a policy point of view, these results suggest that more professional guidance on environmental compliance needs to be developed by notaries in terms of the scope of legal counseling they need to provide.

This would add to the legal clarity for business actors and reduce the risk of companies being incorporated but unable to obtain operational licenses if the environmental requirements are not met.

Notarial responsibility for environmental compliance is ambiguous. Although environmental obligations are the basis for a company to legally do business, these obligations were traditionally separated from the legal process of incorporation. This separation in the literature was generally interpreted as being related to the differences between corporate law and environmental law. The OSS-RBA system has blurred this distinction because environmental approval is now more and more integrated into business licensing (Haisa et al., 2025). This finding is somewhat different from others that only consider notarial duty to certify authentic deeds.

In this study, the preventive legal counseling role established in the Law on the Position of Notaries provides an empirical basis for telling clients about environmental obligations that might affect business legality. From the theoretical point of view, this result is representative of integrated legal governance, whereby various legal regimes are interacting to achieve a coherent regulatory objective. In this sense, corporate establishment can no longer be seen simply as company law but rather as environmental and administrative legal requirements which will define the success of incorporation in practice. In practice, recognizing this preventive role would help to prevent the issue of environmental licensing requirements from being missed earlier, reduce regulatory uncertainty, and improve the coordination of notaries, licensing authorities, and environmental agencies (Khsan Lubis, Duma Indah Sari Lubis, 2025).

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The results also show that sustainable corporate governance starts not after a company starts to operate but in the legal process of incorporation itself. Most of the studies that have been done on sustainability have been concerned with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) or Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) responsibilities that are incurred after incorporation (Lumentut, 2026). These results add to this idea by showing that sustainability also has a preventive legal aspect embedded in the form of a company. From a theoretical point of view, this finding allows us to better understand the legal certainty concept by combining corporate law, environmental law, and administrative licensing into one framework of preventive governance (Bakung et al., 2024).

This view is consistent with the current regulatory policy in which law enforcement is based on compliance with the law first and enforcement later on. From a policy perspective, these results would support more integrated regulatory guidance that allows notaries to take environmental legal aspects into account for legal counseling without expanding the statutory power to the extent that already exists under the current law. This is also a legal certainty, environmental compliance, which would enable Indonesia to stay at the forefront of sustainable development with respect to investment regulation.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the legal framework governing environmental compliance in the establishment of limited liability companies and analyzed the preventive legal responsibility of notaries within Indonesia's integrated business licensing system. The findings demonstrate that Indonesia's regulatory reforms, particularly the implementation of the Job Creation Law and the Risk-Based Online Single Submission (OSS-RBA) system, have transformed environmental compliance from a post-establishment operational obligation into an integral component of the business licensing process. Consequently, environmental legality has become increasingly interconnected with corporate establishment, although it continues to be regulated under separate legal regimes.

The study further finds that the Law on the Position of Notaries does not expressly authorize or require notaries to verify environmental compliance before preparing deeds of incorporation. Nevertheless, the statutory obligation of notaries to provide legal counseling establishes a preventive legal function that may reasonably encompass informing founders about environmental obligations that could affect the legality and continuity of business activities. Accordingly, legal certainty in company establishment should not be understood solely as compliance with corporate law formalities but also as awareness of environmental requirements embedded within Indonesia's integrated licensing framework. This research therefore contributes to the development of an integrated legal perspective that connects corporate law, notarial law, environmental law, and administrative licensing within the broader framework of preventive legal governance and sustainable corporate establishment.

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

We investigated the legal framework for environmental compliance in the establishment of limited liability companies and the preventive legal responsibility of notaries in Indonesia's integrated business licensing system. The results show that Indonesia's regulatory reform, particularly the Job Creation Law and the risk-based Online Single Submission (OSS-RBA) system, is turning environmental compliance from a post-establishment operational duty to a part of the business licensing process. As a result, environmental legality is more and more connected to corporate establishment and is still regulated under separate legal frameworks. We also found that the Law on the Position of Notaries does not explicitly authorize or require notaries to check environmental compliance before writing deeds of incorporation.

However, the statutory responsibility of notaries to provide legal counseling is a preventive legal function that may reasonably entail informing founders about environmental obligations that may be relevant in the context of legal or business activity. Therefore, legal certainty at the moment of company establishment should not be just about corporate law formalities but also an awareness of environmental requirements inherent in Indonesia's integrated licensing mechanism. As such, this study contributes to the development of a holistic perspective on corporate law, notarial law, environmental law, and administrative licensing in the context of preventive legal governance and sustainable corporate establishment. This research is limited by several factors.

As a normative legal work, the analysis is based on statutory regulations, legal doctrines, and literature and has not empirically evaluated how notaries apply environmental legal counseling in practice. The supporting interviews with government officials were conducted to clarify how environmental licensing is used in the OSS-RBA system and not to provide a comprehensive empirical picture of notarial practice in Indonesia. Third, the analysis is focused on the Indonesian legal system, and we are not able to compare preventive notarial duties with those in other legal systems or jurisdictions. There is a need for future research that should complement the normative analysis with empirical socio-legal work involving notaries, environmental authorities, business actors, and licensing institutions to understand how environmental legal counseling is implemented in practice and to identify the challenges encountered by companies when they are incorporated. Comparative legal studies in jurisdictions with similar civil law traditions could also provide valuable insights into the evolving role of notaries in promoting environmental compliance within business

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establishment procedures. Future research should also look at the integration of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles and sustainable corporate governance within notarial services in the context of the digitalization of public administration and the development of risk-based business licensing systems. This would promote preventive legal governance as well as legal certainty and sustainable economic development.

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