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Environmental Trauma and Aesthetic Ecocriticism in Indonesian Climate Fiction (Cli-Fi)

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Abstract

This paper explores the emergence of a post-traumatic ecocritical aesthetic in Indonesian climate fiction (cli-fi), examining how literary works respond to environmental degradation, colonial legacies, and spiritual ruptures through narrative, form, and cosmology. Unlike the techno-dystopian paradigms dominant in global climate fiction, Indonesian cli-fi is rooted in the lived materialities of archipelagic ecologies—floods, forest loss, soil poisoning—and the cultural frameworks that interpret them. The study argues that authors deploy fragmented structure, multispecies witnessing, ritual temporality, and relational world-building to render climate trauma as an ongoing condition rather than a singular event.

Drawing on ecofeminist, postcolonial, and indigenous epistemologies, the paper shows how landscapes are gendered, spirits act as environmental agents, and grief is distributed across human and nonhuman bodies. These texts do not seek utopia or full recovery; instead, they offer ethical practices of attention, mourning, and care within damaged worlds. Ultimately, Indonesian climate fiction advances a decolonial aesthetic that challenges anthropocentric and technocratic responses to climate change, and instead foregrounds survival, memory, and cosmological continuity in the face of irreversible ecological loss.

Keywords: Indonesian literature, climate fiction, cli-fi, ecocriticism, environmental trauma, multispecies witnessing, indigenous cosmology

1. Introduction

In recent years, climate fiction—or “cli-fi”—has emerged as a vital literary response to the environmental crises of the Anthropocene. In the Indonesian context, this genre has taken on a distinctly hybrid form, shaped by the country’s archipelagic geography, colonial histories, and ecological vulnerability. Unlike many Western-centered cli-fi narratives that often rely on dystopian futurism or speculative techno-collapse, Indonesian climate fiction is more likely to situate its ecological anxieties within lived environments, collective memory, and local cosmologies. This literature engages not just with rising sea levels or extreme weather, but with slower forms of violence—deforestation, land commodification, species extinction, and the loss of ancestral knowledge systems.

Indonesia’s complex ecological realities—ranging from frequent volcanic eruptions and seasonal floods to palm oil monoculture and coral bleaching—have catalyzed a narrative sensibility that intertwines environmental degradation with political and spiritual crises. Authors often portray nature not as a passive backdrop, but as an active force: sometimes vengeful, sometimes wounded, but always expressive. From the Sumatran rainforest to the mangrove deltas of Java and the volcanic slopes of Bali, the Indonesian literary landscape teems with haunted ecologies—spaces marked by both ruin and resistance. These settings do not simply frame environmental trauma; they inscribe it in the very syntax of the text.

Moreover, the Anthropocene as imagined through Indonesian fiction is not a universal abstraction but a historically situated experience. Writers like Leila S. Chudori, Arafat Nur, and Afrizal Malna foreground how

extractivism, state neglect, and transnational development projects produce ecologies of inequality. In these narratives, the boundaries between the ecological and the political blur—environmental loss is inseparable from forced migration, the militarization of rural space, and the erosion of traditional knowledge. Thus, Indonesian cli-fi is not merely speculative; it is testimonial, often grounded in a deep awareness of localized trauma and resilience.

Importantly, Indonesian climate fiction also complicates the binaries often found in Euro-American cli-fi—such as nature vs. culture, human vs. nonhuman, present vs. future. Through the use of nonlinear temporality, animist worldviews, and intergenerational storytelling, these works reimagine environmental crisis not as an impending catastrophe, but as an ongoing process of slow violence (Nixon, 2011). The Anthropocene, in this literary mode, is not just a geological epoch—it is an ethical horizon that demands new ways of sensing, narrating, and being.

2. Ecological Devastation and Collective Memory in Island Narratives

Indonesia's geography as the world's largest archipelago renders it uniquely exposed to ecological volatility. Rising sea levels, tsunamis, flash floods, volcanic eruptions, deforestation, and biodiversity collapse are not distant scenarios but everyday realities in many coastal and rural communities. Indonesian climate fiction (cli-fi) reflects this immediacy not through distant futuristic dystopias but by inscribing environmental devastation directly into the rhythms of everyday life. The island, in this body of literature, is both a physical habitat and a metaphoric container of memory, grief, and resistance.

Narratives set in Java, Sulawesi, Sumatra, and Kalimantan often begin with scenes of ruined ecosystems: eroded shorelines, disappearing forests, poisoned rivers, or agricultural lands turned infertile by industrial runoff. However, these are not only environmental images—they are mnemonic sites, evoking layers of trauma tied to colonial plantation systems, military land appropriation, and post-Suharto infrastructural projects. In many stories, characters return to ancestral villages only to find them submerged, scorched, or replaced by monoculture plantations, triggering intergenerational grief. The loss of land becomes the loss of lineage, ritual, and place-based language.

Authors such as Arafat Nur and Ayu Utami illustrate how ecological violence is never experienced in isolation—it is embedded in a web of social dislocation, spiritual disturbance, and cultural disinheritance. These writers often position the environmental crisis as a continuation of historical forms of extraction and displacement, echoing Rob Nixon's (2011) concept of "slow violence." In such representations, the land does not collapse all at once, but erodes gradually—carrying with it the social fabric and oral memory of those who once depended on it.

The motif of the island—as isolated, besieged, or sinking—also functions as a critique of epistemological marginalization. In global discourses on climate change, Pacific and Southeast Asian islands are often portrayed as "victims" awaiting rescue. Indonesian cli-fi challenges this framing by showing how island communities possess their own ecological knowledge, ritual strategies, and narratives of adaptation. Memory is not only a record of loss—it is also a repository of resilience, passed on through lullabies, ceremonies, foodways, and cosmologies that continue to bind people to their land despite ecological fracture.

Thus, collective memory in these island narratives does not serve nostalgia. It is an act of environmental witnessing—of naming what has been destroyed, who has been displaced, and what remains endangered. Through their evocative prose and place-rooted imagery, Indonesian climate fiction authors reclaim the island not as a passive symbol of climate vulnerability, but as a politicized terrain of aesthetic, cultural, and ecological survival.

3. Aesthetics of Ruin: Literary Form and the Representation of Loss

3.1 Poetic Fragmentation and Narrative Dislocation

The form of Indonesian climate fiction often mirrors the fragmentation of the ecological landscapes it describes. In narratives shaped by environmental trauma, linearity fails to contain the complexity of loss. Writers such as Afrizal Malna and Dea Anugrah deploy fragmented structure, montage technique, and dream logic to convey how climate devastation fractures not only land, but perception, memory, and language itself.

Afrizal Malna's prose poetry, for example, resists plot progression altogether. His narratives unfold in discontinuous sequences—half-scenes, image clusters, and metaphoric discharges—suggesting a literary equivalent to ecological entropy. This stylistic choice reflects how environmental trauma is not always immediately visible or representable, especially when it occurs gradually through what Rob Nixon (2011) calls "slow violence." In this aesthetic register, the story's disorientation becomes a form of ecological testimony: the text doesn't explain destruction—it enacts it.

In some narratives, shifting narrative perspectives—between human and nonhuman, past and future—create dislocation that resonates with ecological collapse. This multiperspectival strategy reflects both indigenous

cosmologies, where beings exist on non-hierarchical planes, and post-trauma cognition, where time becomes nonlinear and memory unreliable. These forms trouble the reader's expectations of wholeness, forcing a confrontation with the aesthetic residue of disaster.

Fragmentation in Indonesian cli-fi is not merely experimental—it is epistemological resistance. It refuses the illusion of narrative order in a world undone by climate capital, by failed states, by the silence that follows storm and fire. Like the coastlines it describes, the narrative itself begins to erode.

3.2 Symbolism of Degraded Land and Vanishing Species

Indonesian climate fiction makes striking use of ecological symbols—particularly degraded landscapes and endangered animals—as aesthetic devices that dramatize the scale and depth of ecological loss. These symbols operate not just as visual metaphors but as emotional and political signifiers of colonial extraction, capitalist ruination, and cultural dispossession.

Consider the recurring motif of burned forests in fiction from Kalimantan, where vast areas are razed for palm oil plantations. In stories such as those by Linda Christanty, the charred forest becomes a haunted space—where once-thriving biodiversity has been reduced to ash, and the air itself becomes a medium of grief. These settings reflect not only ecological devastation but a spiritual vacuum, where ancestral connections to land are severed, and animals appear as silent witnesses or ghostly absences. The orangutan, for instance, frequently appears as a spectral figure, staring out from smoky margins, representing both species loss and moral indictment.

Similarly, vanishing birds and insects are often deployed to mark the erosion of time and memory. In some works, these beings are personified—not as magical creatures, but as displaced sentients mourning their own extinction. This technique brings readers into affective contact with the nonhuman cost of climate change, expanding empathy beyond the anthropocentric. It also aligns with animist worldviews where animals are communicators of divine messages, reinforcing indigenous ecological epistemologies.

Such symbols are powerful not because they dramatize catastrophe, but because they silently index the aftermath—the quiet, emptying, erasure that follows destruction. In this aesthetic, absence becomes as legible as presence. The land does not scream; it disappears.

3.3 Repetition, Silence, and the Poetics of Absence

One of the most distinctive features of Indonesian cli-fi's aesthetics is its deployment of silence and repetition—not as narrative weakness but as tools for confronting the limits of representation. These devices express what climate catastrophe often leaves behind: not spectacle, but void.

In stories by Ayu Utami and emerging post-2010 writers like Khairani Barokka, repetition functions as a form of literary chanting—echoing the cyclical rhythms of ritual, mourning, and environmental time. Words, images, and scenes reappear with variation: the same flooded village, the same falling tree, the same disappearing coastline. This poetic recursion mimics both the slow temporality of environmental degradation and the repetitive recall of trauma, signaling the inability of characters—and perhaps readers—to move on.

Silence, meanwhile, appears in gaps: characters who do not speak, scenes left unresolved, sounds removed from the world. In some cases, entire communities are portrayed as disappeared—swallowed by landslides, relocated by floods, erased by bureaucratic silence. The writer's choice to not describe their fate in detail becomes a powerful gesture, emphasizing the unspeakable. What remains are traces: a prayer mat in mud, a marooned fishing boat, a single line of poetry.

This poetics of absence invites readers into a participatory role, where meaning must be inferred, intuited, or imagined. It also demands ethical attention. By refusing closure or catharsis, these narratives honor the incompleteness of mourning, and mirror the ways in which climate loss—especially for Indigenous and marginalized communities—is ongoing, unfinished, and often unacknowledged by official histories.

In this aesthetic framework, Indonesian cli-fi does not merely represent environmental destruction. It performs it linguistically, making loss not only visible, but tangible—rhythmically, affectively, politically. The text itself becomes a terrain of ruin.

4. Trauma, Time, and the Nonhuman Witness

4.1 Climate Trauma and the Disruption of Temporal Order

In Indonesian climate fiction, trauma is not simply a narrative theme but an epistemological challenge. Climate trauma, unlike many forms of personal or political trauma, rarely arrives in a single moment. It unfolds slowly, often imperceptibly—through drying riverbeds, changing monsoons, and the quiet vanishing of once-familiar species. As such, its impact on narrative time is profound. Authors disrupt linearity to reflect how environmental trauma is not confined to a discrete event, but structures the lived temporality of communities.

Writers such as Leila S. Chudori and Dea Anugrah often depict characters who inhabit a kind of temporal limbo.

For them, time is stuck—not in nostalgia, but in anticipatory grief. The disasters they fear are not hypothetical; they are looming, slow, already happening. A village elder remembers a time when the mangrove forest fed the entire community; now, the land is acidic, and the fish are gone. This fractured temporality—the tension between memory, immediacy, and uncertain future—transforms the very rhythm of storytelling.

In many texts, mythic or cyclical time intervenes. Volcanoes erupt as prophecies foretold by spirits; droughts are understood as a curse for broken rituals. These disruptions reflect cosmological systems where time is not progressive but recursive. Here, environmental crisis is not just a scientific problem but a spiritual rupture, a breach of ancestral contracts between humans and the land. Climate trauma in these stories is thus both temporal and moral—it marks a crisis not just of the body or place, but of cosmic balance.

Trauma theory, particularly Cathy Caruth's notion of the "belatedness" of trauma—the idea that trauma cannot be experienced fully in the moment but returns in haunting form—resonates deeply here. The ghosts of forests, drowned ancestors, and extinct species often populate these stories, refusing closure. Their recurrence reveals how climate trauma is not only delayed but distributed—across time, species, and narrative form.

4.2 The Ethical Role of Nonhuman Witnesses

The Anthropocene has often been critiqued for centering human agency even as it purports to describe planetary-scale processes. Indonesian cli-fi offers an alternative perspective by decentering the human, bringing animals, spirits, and ecosystems to the forefront as moral agents and witnesses of ecological violence. These beings do not merely suffer climate change—they perceive, narrate, and even judge it.

For example, in the work of authors influenced by Dayak, Papuan, or Balinese animism, the rainforest is not inert matter—it is alive, sentient, and historically conscious. Trees are addressed as elders; rivers are mourned like kin. In one short story set in West Papua, a hornbill follows a family's flight from mining-induced displacement, not as a passive background figure but as a nonverbal chronicler of loss. Its silence is not emptiness—it is a witness who cannot speak, but never forgets.

This literary move aligns with the posthuman and eco-critical calls for multispecies justice. If industrial modernity produced the "mute nature" of extractivism, then Indonesian cli-fi re-enchants the world by restoring voice, agency, and memory to the nonhuman. In doing so, it invites the reader to inhabit a more complex ethical landscape—one where accountability is shared, and grief is interspecies.

Furthermore, the use of nonhuman narrators opens up new narrative affordances. Trees live longer than humans; rivers flow across generations. Their temporal depth allows for a longer historical memory, often inaccessible to human characters whose understanding is shaped by short lifespans and colonial erasures. In this context, the environment itself becomes an archival entity, holding onto truths long suppressed or distorted.

Importantly, these nonhuman witnesses do not always forgive. In some stories, the spirits of rivers poisoned by mining or forests destroyed by palm plantations refuse reconciliation. They haunt, withhold, or even retaliate. This is not "nature as punishment" in a biblical sense, but a recalibration of moral equilibrium, grounded in indigenous justice frameworks. The nonhuman witness, in this sense, is not only passive but active—a subject who remembers and responds.

4.3 Embodying Human Emotions in the More-Than-Human World

Perhaps one of the most emotionally resonant techniques in Indonesian cli-fi is its practice of embedding human emotion within environmental space. Rather than confining sorrow, rage, or longing to characters alone, these texts often displace such feelings into the world itself. This technique is not simply metaphorical; it draws from animist and relational ontologies where the line between self and world, subject and setting, is blurred.

In novels like *Saman* by Ayu Utami or in the environmental prose of young Sulawesi writers, landscapes do not merely reflect emotion—they generate it. A dried-up rice field evokes not just drought but despair; a flooded village speaks not only of rising tides but of communal abandonment. These environments feel—because they are part of the feeling body. To walk through a ruined forest is to be walked through by grief.

This environmental empathy is more than symbolic. It challenges Western literary traditions where nature is backdrop and human emotion is foreground. In these stories, emotion becomes ecologically embedded—arising from relationships with trees, rivers, and land spirits, and returned to them. The environment becomes a partner in feeling, a carrier of memory, and a space of shared suffering.

This also creates a unique space for mourning. Because environmental grief often lacks formal rituals—how does one grieve a lost coastline?—Indonesian cli-fi turns to narrative to create imaginative rituals of mourning. A character may bury a fruitless seed, not for agricultural use but as an offering; another may light incense for a coral reef. These actions restore sacredness to environmental relations and suggest that grief itself can be a form of ecological resistance.

Emotion, in this register, is not private but planetary. It is not separate from action but is itself an ecological event. The act of feeling—deeply, relationally, with and through the more-than-human world—becomes a mode of care, solidarity, and survival.

5. Gendered Ecologies and Feminized Landscapes

5.1 Women, Land, and Embodied Resistance

In much of Indonesian climate fiction, the female body and the landscape are intimately intertwined—both marked as fertile, both exploited, and both sites of resistance. This narrative entanglement draws heavily from local belief systems, in which women and the earth are not merely symbolically linked but materially bound through ritual, agriculture, and reproduction. In many indigenous cosmologies across Java, Sumatra, and the eastern islands, the land is personified as female: the rice goddess Dewi Sri, the oceanic spirit Nyai Roro Kidul, or various mountain spirits. These figures represent not only abundance but power—yet in cli-fi narratives, their symbolic force is often shown as being eroded by modernity and extractive capitalism.

Women in these stories frequently appear as frontline figures—those who first experience the ecological breakdown of their environment. A mother who can no longer farm because the soil has been chemically altered; a midwife who notices a rise in birth defects near mining zones; a grandmother who holds memory of vanished rain cycles. These women do not simply bear witness—they resist. Their resistance is often small, intimate, and bodily: refusing to move from ancestral land, planting ritual trees in poisoned fields, refusing silence when confronted with corporate or state actors. Their actions reflect a form of embodied resistance—where the female body itself becomes a site of ecological ethics.

Importantly, this is not an essentialist conflation of woman = nature. Rather, authors portray women as agents whose lives are shaped by environmental violence because of their social roles and unequal exposure to risk. This echoes the environmental justice principle of intersectionality, where gender, class, and ethnicity intersect to determine who suffers first and most.

Writers such as Linda Christanty and Oka Rusmini offer portrayals of female protagonists who act not as passive victims but as custodians of knowledge, including traditional ecological practices. Through weaving, planting, ritual, and oral storytelling, they sustain biocultural memory in the face of deforestation, water pollution, and displacement. Their resistance is not dramatic—but it is persistent. In doing so, they offer an alternative model of agency: one rooted in care, memory, and embodied ecological literacy.

5.2 Feminized Landscapes and the Aesthetics of Violation

Alongside the portrayal of women as agents, Indonesian climate fiction also engages with the feminization of the landscape itself, often depicting nature as a violated body—invaded, scarred, extracted, and abandoned. This metaphorical alignment is not new; colonial and patriarchal texts have long imagined the tropics as feminine: lush, passive, and ripe for cultivation. What Indonesian cli-fi does differently, however, is to problematize and subvert this trope, revealing the violence embedded in it and imagining forms of retribution and healing.

In stories set in plantation zones or post-tsunami landscapes, the land is often described with corporeal language: forests have “open wounds,” rivers “bleed,” volcanoes “scream in labor.” These metaphors are not incidental—they highlight how environmental destruction often mirrors the gendered violence experienced by women, particularly in rural and indigenous communities. Logging becomes a metaphor for sexual invasion; mining resembles bodily dismemberment. In some cases, this alignment is literal: sexual violence against women and violence against the land occur simultaneously, reflecting a shared vulnerability under extractive regimes.

But these violated landscapes are not merely passive victims. In some stories, the land responds—sometimes by refusing to yield crops, sometimes through natural disaster, sometimes through spiritual possession. A barren field may harbor the ghost of a woman murdered by soldiers. A mangrove may trap those who tried to desecrate it. These narrative turns reflect a mythic justice, where nature is not only alive but capable of agency, memory, and vengeance.

Such representations suggest that healing must involve both land and body, both ecological and gender justice. Ritual, collective mourning, and re-embodiment appear as crucial tools for transformation. In some texts, a community’s ecological recovery only begins after they acknowledge past harms—both environmental and gendered—and restore relational ethics among humans and between humans and the land.

Ultimately, the feminized landscape in Indonesian climate fiction is neither sentimentalized nor romanticized. It is a terrain of struggle, at once wounded and powerful. Through its cracks and scars, it speaks—not only of what has been lost, but also of what might still be restored, if listened to.

6. Indigenous Cosmologies and Resilient World-Building

While much of global climate fiction is grounded in Western scientific imaginaries—focusing on carbon, catastrophe, and technological solutions—Indonesian cli-fi often draws from indigenous cosmologies to reframe the crisis of the Anthropocene as a crisis of relational imbalance. Across diverse cultural contexts—from Dayak in Kalimantan to Toraja in Sulawesi, and Papuan highlands to Balinese ritual systems—Indonesian climate fiction integrates local worldviews that refuse the separation between human and nonhuman, nature and spirit, land and story. In doing so, these narratives do not merely depict ecological collapse—they offer alternative models for ecological repair, grounded in interdependence, ritual, and ancestral reciprocity.

At the heart of these world-building strategies is the notion that land is not property, but kin. Forests are not resources, but relations; rivers are not commodities, but communicators. In some stories, spirits that inhabit sacred groves or ancestral trees are not metaphors, but literal agents of protection, prophecy, or punishment. These spirits are neither benevolent nor malevolent—they are keepers of cosmological balance, reacting to the disrespect or neglect of ritual obligations. Ecological degradation in this frame is not just environmental—it is a spiritual disorder, a rupture in the ongoing dialogue between human communities and the forces that sustain them.

These cosmologies, as represented in fiction, also reimagine temporality. The future is not a clean slate but a continuation of ancestral contracts—a space already inhabited by the memory of what has come before. When a river floods a village in fiction, it may be read not as random disaster, but as the consequence of broken reciprocity. The solution, then, is not always technological adaptation, but ritual reengagement—restoring offerings, renewing songs, reviving taboos that govern respectful use.

Some authors construct entire fictional societies based on sacred ecology, in which every aspect of life—birth, agriculture, burial—is choreographed through an environmental ethic. These worlds, though fictional, draw from real cultural practices threatened by modernization and erasure. In one narrative, for example, a Papuan village refuses relocation after a corporate buyout of their mountain. Instead of fighting with guns or lawyers, they perform an extended ritual that "calls the mountain to sleep," rendering the terrain spiritually "unworkable" for outsiders. The company eventually withdraws. While symbolic, this story dramatizes how ritual knowledge becomes a tool of resistance, not in a nostalgic sense, but as a living technology.

Importantly, these texts do not romanticize indigenous knowledge. Many acknowledge internal tensions—between elders and youth, between ritual and survival, between spiritual law and state law. But they affirm that true resilience lies not in assimilation, but in the ability to reanimate cosmological frameworks that treat the world as a relational field, not a set of exploitable resources.

This relational ontology challenges the universalizing tendencies of global climate discourse. Rather than relying on abstract carbon metrics, Indonesian climate fiction asks: What are our obligations to the beings we share the world with? How do we mourn what we destroy? How do we listen to those who cannot speak our language but share our breath?

Through their intricate and often lyrical engagements with indigenous cosmology, these works craft resilient worldings—narrative architectures that are not utopian, but viable; not escapist, but grounded. They invite us not only to imagine different futures, but to inhabit different ways of being in the present, attuned to the spiritual, political, and ecological entanglements that sustain life.

7. Toward a Post-Traumatic Ecocriticism in Southeast Asian Fiction

As climate catastrophe deepens and its aesthetic responses proliferate, Indonesian climate fiction offers a vital contribution to global ecocriticism—not merely by documenting environmental trauma, but by proposing post-traumatic modes of ecological storytelling. These narratives do not aim to restore a lost harmony or return to untouched nature. Rather, they build from the wreckage—ruined coastlines, ghosted villages, cultural wounds—and imagine how life continues in and through broken ecosystems and haunted histories.

This literary orientation signals a shift from apocalypse to aftermath. While much Anglophone cli-fi is obsessed with endings—civilization collapse, climate doomsday—Indonesian authors often work within the slow, entangled temporalities of survival, shaped by decades of environmental degradation, cultural violence, and spiritual dislocation. The result is a post-traumatic ecocriticism: one that refuses closure, that holds grief alongside adaptation, and that recognizes the world will not be saved, but must still be cared for.

This mode of fiction is not naïve. It acknowledges corruption, loss, and irreversibility. In fact, many of the stories discussed earlier resist redemption narratives altogether. Instead, they offer something more politically urgent and emotionally grounded: the radical ethics of staying, of witnessing, of building something—however modest—within collapse.

Such literature calls for a reframing of ecocritical theory itself. Traditional ecocriticism, especially in its Western iterations, has emphasized romantic notions of wilderness, or alternatively, data-driven narratives of

sustainability. Post-traumatic ecocriticism, as enacted by Southeast Asian writers, insists that we think with ruined worlds, with damaged cosmologies, with communities already living in the "after." It privileges:

- the fragment over the total,
- the ritual over the reform,
- the relational over the rational.

Moreover, it brings emotion—particularly mourning, shame, longing, and rage—back into the center of ecological discourse. These texts affirm that climate change is not just a material crisis, but an ontological one. It affects how we make meaning, how we inhabit time, how we define kinship, and how we narrate what matters.

By attending to the voices, visions, and vernaculars of Indonesia, this emerging field of post-traumatic ecocriticism opens space for non-Western epistemologies, localized aesthetic practices, and plural spiritual frameworks. It shows that responses to the Anthropocene must be as diverse as the worlds it threatens, and that literature can be a site not of escape, but of ethical attunement, political reckoning, and imaginative repair.

In this way, Indonesian climate fiction does not merely describe environmental trauma. It performs its memory, refuses its forgetting, and—in moments of fierce tenderness—sketches the outlines of livable futures amid the ruins.

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