

UGM Disaster Observer: Forest Fires Expedite Climate Change

Friday, 16 October 2015 WIB, By: Marwati



Chairman of Association of Indonesian Disaster Experts (IABI), Prof.Dr. HA. Sudibyakto, M.S., said forest fires in the past years had threatened Indonesia significantly as it has damaged the ecosystem of wet tropical lands and expedited the process of climate change.

Forest and land fires in Sumatera and Kalimantan in year 2015 spanned across an area measuring 1.5 millions of hectares. The fires were due to the damaged forest ecosystem after the forest had been converted into industrial forests, particularly for palm oil industry.

Sudibyakto said the recovery for damaged ecosystem would take up to 30 - 50 years. Thus, risk management of forest and land fires need to be done integratedly and comprehensively between government agencies and neighbouring countries in the framework of ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Risk Management.

“Failures in managing forest and land will affect climate change that cause massive impacts in the future,” he said.

Sudibyakto urged the drafting of the standard procedures in controlling forest and fires by strengthening the prevailing regulations.

“The Presidential Law on Status and Levels of Disasters is urgent as it is mandated in Law No.24 Year 2007 on Disaster Mitigation,” he said. He added local government’s readiness and related agencies in risk assessment and management are a sustainable development priority, in line with the

Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

According to Sudibyakto, the people surrounding forests need to be involved directly and actively in forest and land fires. Disaster resilient villages can be set up towards society based sustainable development.

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