

UGM & Peatland Restoration Agency Cooperate to Prevent Forest Fires

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The rampant forest fires that occurred last year in Indonesia drew attention as it had brought huge losses. This year, approaching the dry season, worry emerged if similar cases would re-occur. Government now needs to pay more attention on how to prevent the forest fires from happening again.

Deputy Head for Planning and Cooperation of the Peatland Restoration Agency, Budi Wardhana, talked about these issues when visiting UGM on Friday (1/4) as a follow-up to previous meetings in Jakarta. "We did hold talks previously, and now we want to follow up on cooperation plans that we have discussed before. What is important now is mapping," he said.

Peatland mapping is an important issue to prevent the fires. The Agency is targeting to complete indication maps of peatland fires by mid-year, ready for field operations. They will also invite other shareholders, including local community, business players, and academics to contribute to restoration efforts.

Budi particularly mentioned the plan for students on community service to engage in this programme. "We expect that universities can generate their assets, including research outcomes and student community service," he said.

Rector of UGM, Prof. Ir. Dwikorita Karnawati, M.Sc., Ph.D, welcomed the plan, saying she fully supported the plan. "We have already prepared some things to support the restoration plans. UGM



Student Community Service has gone well in Jambi and Central Kalimantan,” she revealed.

Similarly, Vice-Rector for Cooperation and Alumni, Dr. Paripurna, S.H., M.Hum., LL.M., explained the student community service was one of preventive measures to resolve forest fires. Coordination is planned to be held between UGM, the Agency, and Research, Technology, and Higher Learning Ministry. “Currently, students have been engaged in efforts, but not much on the centre. If they are supervised by the Agency, they can be more involved and cooperate with the community,” he said.

The Student Community Service Program in the peatlands is planned to involve students from various universities. As such, students will jointly contribute to community in line with their field of expertise.

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