

UGM and APhi Collaborate in Forest Fire Mitigation

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Universitas Gadjah Mada and the Association of Forest Companies Indonesia (APhi) signed an agreement on Social Enhancement to Support Sustainable Peatland Management. The signing was carried out at the UGM Conference Room by Rector of UGM, Prof. Ir. Dwikorita Karnawati, M.Sc., Ph.D, and APhi chairman, Letjen (Purn) Sugiono, attended by UGM leadership and researchers as well as members of APhi.

The agreement is to establish cooperation in social engineering to support peatland management improvement. The rampant forest fires in 2015 that spread to an area as vast as 2.1 millions ha necessitate this agreement. Global Forest Watch noted the peatland fires occurred in locations belonging to owners of forestry permits (24%), 20% in plantations, while 56% were in open class locations.

Sugiono said the fires were very complex and multi-dimensional phenomena that require comprehensive and collaborative handling.

“The forest fires cover a large area, so, in line with these characteristics, peatland management needs to be conducted comprehensively, not partially,” said Sugiono.



APHI, which focuses in forest empowerment, is consolidating its members in order to prevent future forest fires. They are preparing early warning systems, improving peatland management, and procuring infrastructure and facilities for forest fire mitigation, as well as community empowerment and enhanced coordination with the forest fire task force.

“The steps taken by APHI will not run well if not supported by the surrounding communities,” said Sugiono.

Sugiono added UGM, as a university with strong multi-disciplinary sciences and commitment to the community, can help with the success of that process. “We hope UGM can facilitate and encourage the social enhancement to support sustainable peatland management,” said Sugiono.

On the other hand, UGM since the 1970s has made a road map related to peatland that focuses on technical and hydrologic aspects. Further developments show that UGM also focuses on social, economic, and legal aspects and others.

The Rector supports and appreciates the efforts of APHI to carry out social enhancement by supporting peatland management. “UGM is ready to support and contribute by sending researchers who will create sustainable peatland,” she said.

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