

Government Should Take Part in Solving Water Management Conflict

Thursday, 02 March 2017 WIB, By: Marwati



Almost 80 million of Indonesian people have yet to fulfill their daily water needs. Water needs will increase while the water availability is decreasing which leads to water use rivalry between community and water businessmen. Even though the State Guidelines clearly stated that earth, water and its natural resources are managed by the nation and used as much as possible for nations' prosperity, it still requires a clear and firm regulation to organize water management right to guarantee the authorization of water is really intended for nations' prosperity.

"This water resource problem will lead to water use war among domestic needs, agricultures, fisheries, and industries. In this situation, the government should take action because it will be a source of conflict," said a researcher from Centre for Population and Policies Studies UGM, Dr. Jangkung Handoyo Mulyo, M.Ec., on Wednesday (3/1) in the Centre's office.

This case was delivered in a public discussion on Water Right as a Fundamental in Making New Water Laws, held by cooperation among Communities Coalition for Water Rights (KRuHA), OXFAM, Population and Policies Study Center, KMJ KOMAHI, and BEM KM UGM. The discussion became a part of advocacy and campaign to support communities in encouraging the government and Parliament to use water rights as a foundation in making new water laws.



Jangkung deplored the government attitude who has yet to guarantee restriction of water management by private sectors which leads to open opportunity for water management commercialization which would harm communities, particularly poor people, as well as violating the State Guidelines article Article 33. During economic rivalry in water utilization, the government is asked to take side on communities as mandated in the State Guidelines Article 33 paragraph 3.

“The government alignment can be shown in the form of water use priority which is for fulfilling daily water needs at first, then for irrigation, etc.,” said Jangkung.

After the issuance of Constitutional Court Verdict number 85/PUU-XI/2013 which cancelled Law Number 7 in 2004 on Water Resources, the Court also stipulates re-imposition of Law Number 11 in 1974 about irrigation. However, this constitution is considered inappropriate to solve recent water problem related to situation background, problem complexity, as well as its priority which is different from recent situation and development context.

Meanwhile, Lecturer of Faculty of Social and Political Sciences UGM, Dr. Arie Sudjito, M.Si., also spoke about the deterioration of government’s authority and responsibility in managing water resources which is shown by the excessive of privatization, the increment of water commercialization by private sectors particularly foreign private and public resource business.

“Water problem is not only caused by our incapability of technical aspect in water management, but also political commitment. The government should not be snared by technocracy approach,” said Arie.

Water exploitation for business, according to Arie, can lead to water scarcity as public ownership as well as environmental disaster and massive impoverishment in communities.

“We have to realize that private sectors involvement in fulfilling water needs for communities precisely causes water exploitation instead which leads to poverty and ecological inequity,” he added.

Moreover, Arie said we require new policy to fix Law Number 11 in 1974 considering the problem complexity, context alteration, and with hope of transformation of natural resources based on equity and ecological preservation. He is optimistic that political situation and the rise of communities’ attention on this issue will give opportunity to make new constitution which can guarantee water utilization for nations’ interests.



“This momentum gives a huge opportunity to make a constitution which is pro-communities and pro-environment. We should oversee this matter together,” said Arie.

In this occasion, the participants and keynote speakers also discussed about Water Bill Academic Manuscript which had been compiled by Communities Coalition for Water Rights (KRuHA) and Water Rights Advocacy Network as a reference for making and discussing water bills. This academic manuscript contains important concepts needed as foundation in making the new constitution, such as water paradigm as Human Rights, nation’s prosperity and social equity principles, as well as the nation authority right and its responsibilities.

Related News

- [Religious and Counseling Teachers Followed School-Based Conflict Management](#)
- [To Minimise Deforestation, Forest Resource Management Planning System Needs to be Changed](#)
- [UGM Expert: Lampung Conflict, Part of Previous Conflict](#)
- [Government Needs to Facilitate Din Minimi Group Negotiation Request](#)
- [Prof. Fatchan: Integrated Institution for Water Resources Management is Needed](#)