

Government Asked to be Serious in Handling Coral Reef Damage in Raja Ampat

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Coral reef ecosystem around Kri island in Raja Ampat, West Papua has been damaged due to the incident after the MV Caledonian Sky ship crashed into the reefs recently. The crash has damaged the reefs measuring 13,533 m².

Chairman of Consortium of Indonesian Biologists (KOBBI) who is also Dean of Faculty of Biology UGM, Dr. Budi S. Daryono, has asked the government to take serious measures dealing with the incident because it has become a tragedy to the national maritime ecology.

“The compensation that is recommended to be asked from Nobel Caledonia worth US\$1,28-1,92 million is a figure far below the required amount to replace such damage. Nobel Caledonia ought to restore the damaged reefs to normal,” he said after the consortium meeting in Purwokerto, Central Java, from 20-21 March.

Things urgently needed to do by government include the formation of an adhoc team comprising biodiversity conservation experts to enable and facilitate restoration efforts.

“The government needs to set up an ad hoc team to enable restoration efforts as mandated in Law No. 28 Year 2011 on Management of Natural Heritage and Areas of Natural Conservation,” said Budi.

Raja Ampat has been the habitat of 537 reefs that accounts for as high as 75 percent of world coral reefs. The ecosystem of such coral reefs has high ecological role to the waters habitat and benefits humans.

“Coral reefs are living beings that grow very slowly. It takes at least 20 years of reefs to grow into an ecosystem,” he said.

The incident that damaged the coral reefs in Raja Ampat, said Budi, not only related to the maritime sovereignty and conservation of biodiversity in the country. This should also be made a lesson for Indonesia.

“This incident is a bitter pill for Indonesia. Hopefully, this would not happen again in the future,” he concluded.

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