

UGM Urge Government to Replace Forestry Laws

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Universitas Gadjah Mada has urged government to revise Law No 41 Year 1999 on Forestry based on clear spirit, philosophy, and sociology related to natural resource management, especially on the forest. This needs to be done because the existing forestry laws cannot yet restore the condition of Indonesian forests that is deplorable.

This issue emerged in a national seminar titled the *Urgency of Replacements of Law No 41 Year 1999 on Forestry*, held on Wednesday (12/4) at Faculty of Forestry UGM. It is a collaboration between the Faculty and Expertise Board of DPR RI (Parliament). Attending the event were UGM forestry and legal experts, chief of the Expertise Board and Chairperson of Commission IV of the DPR RI.

“The condition of Indonesia’s forest is very much in emergency, which needs to be restored. Unfortunately, the Forestry Laws cannot yet fix the problems that these laws need to be replaced instead,” said forestry expert from UGM, Dr. Satyawan Pudyatmoko.

Deforestation in Indonesia continues to increase due to land conversion, which is the highest in the world with 2 million hectares per year. Thus, Satyawan saw the necessity to change the paradigm on forest management. Currently, the laws are seen as reducing the concept of forest ecosystem into

separate functions whilst current forest management is exploiting the resource that relies on corporations rather than giving access to society. In the future, the management should be based on the ecosystem.

Satyawan explained things to be included in the new laws, including making the forest as one way for disaster mitigation, change of regime in forest management, competitiveness enhancement, and commodity enhancement at the global market.

UGM legal expert, Prof. Maria S.W. Soemardjono, proposed that the DPR would not only use partial approach to legal drafting. “Hopefully, the DPR would consider to adopt a total approach to legal drafting that can produce a new, comprehensive, and participative law,” she said.

Head of the Expertise Board, K. Jhonson Rajaguguk, M.Hum., said the Forestry law had undergone dynamics in its existence. Many problems arose related to forest management, such as function transformation, poaching, destruction, fires, and conflict against indigenous people. The DPR responded to these by including amendments to the national legislation programme (prolegnas).

Johnson explained there are 12 new materials for amendments to the old laws that include forest status, planning, management, controlling, data and information, etc. “Hopefully, there would be more thoughts on this coming further from UGM,” he said.

Chairperson of Commission IV of DPR RI, Edy Prabowo, M.B.A., welcomed suggestions and inputs from UGM academics, saying “We are open for input and discussion to reach an agreement in the legal drafting of Forestry Laws,” he said. He hoped these could be made a point for consideration to be submitted as recommendations to the government.

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