

Minister of Environment Installs Environment and Disaster Mitigation Clinic at UGM


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Minister of Environment and Forestry, Siti Nurbaya, installed the Environment and Disaster Mitigation Clinic on Tuesday (26/9) at the Faculty of Geography UGM. The existence of this environmental clinic, according to Minister Siti Nurbaya, means it can become a forensic laboratory to reveal crimes related to forest and environmental destruction. "We hope it will be a forensic laboratory dealing forest and environment crimes, and so generate data to uncover those crimes and encourage law enforcement," said Minister Siti after installing the clinic, assisted by UGM Vice-Rector, Prof. Djagal Wiseso Marseno, and Dean of Faculty of Geography, Prof. Dr. Muh Aris Marfai, S.Si., M.Sc.

Minister Siti said that, up until now, it has been difficult for both corporate and individual crime suspects to be prosecuted according to the law. According to the Minister, the existence of the laboratory can help the government bring environment and forest destruction cases before those who enforce the law. "If there is a tanker that spills oil and damages the environment, we can also investigate and report it," she said.

In addition, she hopes this environmental clinic will be able to provide theoretical, empirical, and practical data regarding environmental condition mapping. Moreover, the result of study and research on the environment can be utilized to support government policies that address climate



change and global warming issues. “We hope there will be research regarding changes in our environmental condition that contributes to maintaining the climate condition,” she added.

During a seminar on management of coastal and watershed areas, Minister Siti explained that, from 190 million hectares of watershed areas in Indonesia, some 34 million hectares are predicted to be in critical condition. Improving fifteen of the critical cases within five years has become the government’s priority, including watershed areas in Asahan, Musi, Cisadane, Citarum, Serayu, Brantas, and Kapuas.

According to the Minister, the implementation of critical watershed environmental restoration is not easy although there has been cooperation between the central government, the directorate general, and the regional government.

The Minister admitted that the destruction of watershed areas can lead to environmental disasters such as floods, landslides, and droughts. Fortunately, the number of droughts during the dry season drastically declined compared to the previous year. “The area afflicted by drought is between 30,000 and 50,000 hectares while the areas where there have been harvest failure is approximately 35,000 hectares,” said Siti.

Meanwhile, Dean Prof. Aris Marfai said the Environment and Disaster Mitigation Clinic has been established as a deliberate response to the current environmental issues in Indonesia. “We are trying to contribute by preparing this environment and disaster mitigation clinic,” said Aris.

In this environment clinic laboratory, according to Aris, there are various research results and data regarding environmental geomorphology, satellite imagery, a geographical information system, cartography, various facilities, and technologies, as well as a collaborative research office. “We are ready to engage in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry in addressing various environmental issues,” he added.

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