

# UGM Academics: Seine Net Not Environmentally Friendly

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UGM academicians have regretted the decision made by President Joko Widodo and Ministers of Marine and Fisheries Susi Pudjiastuti which permitted fishermen to use seine net again to catch fish. Seine net is known to be not environmentally friendly as it impacts the decrease of fish population and the livelihoods of fishermen. This issue emerged in a discussion at Department of Fisheries, Faculty of Agriculture UGM, on Monday (22/1).

Marine and fisheries observer, Ir. Sukardi MP, said the ministerial ban on use of seine net was for conservation purposes. The revocation of the ban will make conservation efforts difficult, especially in North Java coasts. "In the North coasts, fishermen use seine net to catch fish," he said.

Reportedly, the number of seine nets has jumped sharply from 5,781 units in 2015 to 14,357 units in 2017. This made the catch of small fish bigger. "I think the benefit and conservation purposes have been ignored due to the ban revocation," he said.

UGM lecturer in fisheries, Ir. Supardjo, SD, MS., said seine net is often used by traditional fishermen in North Java on the distance of 2-3 miles at a depth of 30-60 meters. Supardjo said that the catch of seine net included non target fish, small fish, which is bigger in amount than the target fish.



Supardjo added, based on his research, half of the catch was not on target. In Lamongan, East Java, for example, fishermen were able to catch 51 percent of main target of fish while 41 percent were non target. In Tegal, Central Java, the target was around 46 percent while the non target was 54 percent. The target fish is sold to companies while the rest is sold to be made fish powder and to cover operational costs.

In his opinion, to conserve the fish sustainably, the fishermen in the North coasts need to use environmentally friendly tools, such as fish trap.

Dr Suwarman Partosuwiryo from Yogyakarta Marine and Fisheries Agency, said the seine net issue had been used as political commodity. He viewed that those who rejected the seine net ban were not just fishermen, but also companies that had benefited from the catch of small fish.

“Those who have protested (against the ban) are politicians and companies, scared of the halt of their business and making the seine net issue a political issue,” he said.

He criticised the unlimited extension of seine net use. This would just add to the number of the net because, as a matter of fact, more ships use bigger sized net and better technology. “Now the ship has utilised machines, the target of this net is small fish,” he said.

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