

# Forest for the Komodo

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Departing from the desire to share knowledge about forests, four students of Faculty of Forestry UGM initiatively conducted community service in the form of environmental education. The importance of forests for animals was the spotlight in this environmental education. Animals are selected as the object of environmental education for their role as a biological indicator of the environment (bio-indicator). In line with this, the Komodo National Park was chosen as the appropriate place to implement the program. This education is closely related to efforts to conserve the Komodo dragons in their natural habitat.

Komodo is a unique Indonesian wildlife . Various efforts have been made by the Komodo National Park to preserve both the animals and their habitats. Forests as part of the Komodo dragon habitat supports the regeneration of this species, so an understanding of the importance of forests needs to be raised among the younger generation to participate in forest conservation in West Manggarai Regency.

The theme of environmental education is "Forests for the Komodo Dragon." Environmental education materials delivered by the facilitators include forests, komodo and their linkage with aspect of conservation for elementary school students. Wira, Lina, Hendy, and Ardy, facilitators of this program, delivered the four methods of learning and teaching (methods of lectures, discussion, demonstration, and field experience). The four methods are implemented for the student's maximum development of knowledge in teaching and learning activities. Besides, this activity focuses on social interaction among the elementary school students in the Park through the development of soft skills. It is expected that the younger generation will pay more attention towards the environment, especially in the place where the komodo lives: the Komodo National Park .

The facilitators also provide one venue for teachers, community leaders, local youth, and the Park staff to sit together and talk about environmental education in the Park . These activities serve to share experiences and knowledge related to environmental education and also to discuss the sustainability of environmental education activities in the Park.

With this program, the four senior students of UGM were hoping that a generation that cares about the sustainability of the forest for dragons and other creatures will arise in the future. They closed the program with a community service campaign for the Park to be selected as one of the New 7 Wonders Of Nature. This campaign is in line with the Vote for Komodo campaign promoted by the Ministry of Forestry, targeted at high school students. Overall, this community service program has

been running from July 19 to August 16, 2010

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