

UGM Expert: Understand Climate Change Issues Correctly

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Disaster management expert, Prof. Dr. Sudibyakto, appealed to the academic community not to be fooled but can correctly understand the climate change issue. Climate change that is happening right now is in fact just climate variability. "The issue of climate change should be properly understood, don't let it mislead the public. Climate change occurs when climate variability occurs in a very long period of time, more than 30 years or even 100 years," he explained on Friday (23/9), in discussion on 'Climate Change and Disaster Management' at the UGM Center for Natural Disaster Studies.

Sudibyakto mentions the climate change has occurred in several regions in Indonesia, among others, Jakarta, North coast of Java (Tegal, Pekalongan, and Semarang), parts of East Java, and Nusa Tenggara. This is indicated by changes in seasonal rainfall patterns, shifting of seasons, extreme rains that are characterized by very high rainfall intensity, which is > 100 mm/hour or > 250 mm / day which resulted in flash floods.

The impact of climate change is felt by the people, especially farmers and fishermen living in coastal areas and small islands. In addition to the threat of climate change, fishing communities and coastal communities are also threatened by the rising of sea levels as a result of global climate change. "Sea levels rising could reach 5-10 mm/year, which means that densely populated coastal cities have a higher risk of flooding," he added.

According to Sudibyakto, the analysis of disaster risk due to climate change becomes strategic and environmental issues in the present and future. The mapping of areas at risk from climate change should be started by central and local governments. Revision of regional spatial plan based on disaster risk is also very urgent to do.

Based on that ground, the Center cooperates with National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas) to conduct ToT (Traning of Trainers) on 'Disaster Mitigation Plan' for 1 week at UGM and 2 weeks in Japan. This training is intended for the staff from Regional Development Planning Agency (Bappeda) throughout Indonesia, especially regions prone to disasters.

Sudibyakto adds that the Centre has also incorporated climate change issues into disaster management in Indonesia. "Most likely there is a change of the name of Centre, becoming Centre for Disaster Studies and Climate Change, which in the future it can also support the establishment of Master Program on Climate Change Adaptation that is being devised at the Graduate School of UGM," he said.

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