



Press Release

Public Information Disclosure Shall Also Be Implemented by Relevant Ministries/Institutions in Natural Resources Management

Jakarta, 11 November 2015. *Information disclosure in forest management has entered into a new phase after the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF) was mandated to disclose the access to public data and information it possesses by the Jakarta State Administrative Court's ruling. Advocating information disclosure in public body such as MoEF was a long process. It took a number of proceedings in the Central Information Commission (KIP) and Jakarta State Administrative Court before it was achieved. Information disclosure shall also be fostered in every ministry/institution managing natural resources.*

Since 2013, as a part of independent forest monitoring, Forest Watch Indonesia (FWI) has been conducting official information request to the MoEF. The information requested were documents needed by the public to serve as reference to monitor forest management, including documents and maps attached to RKUPHHK, RKTUPHHK, IPK, and RPBB (see: <http://fwi.or.id/publikasi/banding-ditolak-kementerian-lingkungan-hidup-dan-kehutanan-klhk-dituntut-terbuka/>).

Information request to a public body is an important part of reform agenda relating to disclosure/openness, which constitutes an expression of public participation in government in Indonesia. Information disclosure is also a specific effort, which is a part of the National movement for Saving Natural Resources (GN-PSDA), particularly to combat corruption. Public as the main constituent of national development plays a crucial role in conducting check and balance on the government's performance in carrying out their mandates.

In 2010, the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) published a study on corruption potential in the Ministry of Forestry.¹ The study indicated that restriction was one of the key words of the matter, and it also revealed that inclusiveness, which was actually the core feature of reform era, was not truly implemented. Another study conducted by civil society organization also showed that the index of information restriction in forestry and land sectors in some districts remained high.² Meanwhile, in the same area within approximately the same period (2009-2013), FWI also showed that natural forest loss experienced by Indonesia was stunningly high.

In general, Indonesia suffers from natural forest loss up to 4.5 hectares, with deforestation rate of 1.13 million hectares per year, or equal to 3 times of soccer field size every minute.³ FWI Director Executive, Christian Purba, explained, "The remaining high rate of deforestation in Indonesia is an evidence that forest management is still not under control, due to its restrictive nature. With open

¹ KPK, 2010. Kajian Khusus Titik Korupsi Pada Sektor Kehutanan. <http://acch.kpk.go.id/pengelolaan-sektor-kehutanan-potensi-suap-pemerasan-dan-penjualan-pengaruh-ada-di-tiap-titik>.

² ICEL dkk, 2015. Kertas Posisi Masyarakat Sipil, Lima Tahun Pemberlakuan Undang Undang Keterbukaan Informasi: Buka Informasi, Selamatkan Sumberdaya Alam. http://fwi.or.id/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Kertas-Posisi-Informasi-LH_SDA.pdf.

³ FWI, 2014. Potret Keadaan Hutan Indonesia Periode 2009-2013



information, public control on forest natural resources use can emerge, and it will help to slow down the deforestation.”

KPK's finding on their study 2015 reaffirms that corruption is an implication of the restrictive information in forest management in Indonesia. The Ministry of Forestry recorded that within 2003-2014, commercial timber production from natural forest in Indonesia reached 143.7 million meter cubics. Interestingly, during the same period, KPK found that the total national timber production was around 630.1 to 772.8 million meter cubics. Such a data gap is considered as one of the reasons Indonesia suffered loss of around IDR 598-799.3 trillion, or IDR 49.8-66.6 trillion annually.⁴

“To prevent further loss for the country, the public must take a more active role in forest management oversight in Indonesia. The Public Information Disclosure and Forestry Law has provided guarantee to the public its rights to know about and oversee all kinds of plans to use forest resources, which are public goods”, Christian Purba reminded.

Disseminating the Spirit of Information Disclosure in Ministry/Cross-Sectoral Institution

Advocating for public disclosure should not only in forestry sector, but rather, it shall be pushed in all sectors relevant to natural resources management. There is obvious connection between forestry sector and other sectors, such as plantation, agriculture, energy and mining sectors, coastal area and smaller islands sectors, as well as infrastructure development, particularly in term of land-use and its impact to the society. “The principles of openness and public participation are positively correlated. Information disclosure will create a space for the community affected by the development to make up their mind to whether accept or reject a plan for natural resources exploitation in their area, and also participate in controlling the implementation afterwards,” Linda Rosalina, FWI Campaigner, said.

“The paradigm of openness must continuously be built, and it requires cross-sectoral collaboration, particularly between relevant ministries/institutions, to bring the issue forward and to achieve a better governance of the government,” she added.

A similar statement was also expressed by Yhannu Setyawan, a Commissioner of the Central Information Commission. “After such a long process, the MoEF should be ready to carrying out the mandates from the Public Information Disclosure Law. If the mandate is applied, there will be no longer need to acquire public information through dispute such as what FWI experienced”.

The spirit of disclosure must be disseminated to other ministries/institutions so as to push them to improve themselves in implementing the mandates from public information disclosure in all natural resources management-sectors. “Certainly we understand that there remain some issues in natural resources management in Indonesia, which have to be made more open. Once so, it will create a space for public participation to safeguard natural resources management and governance, which will in turn lead to a more accountable natural resources management in the future.”

⁴ KPK, 2015. Mencegah Kerugian Negara Di Sektor Kehutanan



Editor Notes:

- Forest Watch Indonesia (FWI) is an independent forest watcher network consisting of individuals who share commitment to create an open forestry data and information management in Indonesia, in order to guarantee a fair and sustainable forest resources management. Currently, FWI is commissioned as the Secretariat of Governance Forestry Initiatives (GFI) – Indonesia, and also as National Secretariat of Forestry Independent Watchers Network (JPIK). FWI is also involved in the Forest Governance Working Group, which members consist of: DKN, PUSIJAK, FWI, ICEL, TII, UNDP, JARI-KALTENG, and GEMA ALAM-NTB.
- RKUPHHK (Work Plan for Timber Forest Product Use) is a work plan for the entire work area of the IUPHHK (Timber Forest Product Use Work License) for 10 (ten) years, which includes aspects of forest sustainability, business sustainability, environmental balance, and local community social economic development (Minister of Forestry Regulation Number P.56/Mnehut-II/2009 jo. P. 24/Menhut-II/2011; Minister of Forestry Regulation Number P.62/Menhut-II/2008 jo. P.14/Menhut-II/2009).
- The Annual Work Plan for Timber Forest Product Use (RKTUPHHK) is a 1 (one) year work plan made according to RKUPHHK. (Minister of Forstry Regulation Number P.56/Menhut-II/2009 jo. P. 24/Menhut-II/2011; Minister of Forestry Regulation Number P. 62/Menhut-II/2008 jo. P. 14/Menhut-II/2009).
- Timber Use Permit, here in after referred to as IPK, is a permit to cut down timbers and/or collect non-timber forest products as consequence of non-forest permit activities, including from production forest area which can be converted and has been released, production forest area, by exchanging forest area, the use of forest area with borrow-use permit, and from Other Use Area which specific purpose permit has been determined. (Minister of Forestry Regulation Number P. 62/Menhut-II/2014).
- The Plan for Primary Industrial Material Fullfillment from Forest Timber (RPBBI) is a plan that specifies the raw materials needed and raw material supply coming from legal source and the use/utilization of such raw materials and production in accordance with the forest product primary industry permit capacity and availability of raw material supply guarantee for the period of 1 (one) year, which is a system of raw material supply control. (Minster of Forestry Regulation Number P.9/Menhut-II/2012).

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Contacts for Interview:

1. Christian P Purba, FWI Director Executives. Email : bob@fwi.or.id; Ph: +628121105172
2. Linda Rosalina, FWI Campaigner. Email: linda@fwi.or.id; Ph: +6285710886024
3. Yhannu Setyawan, Commissioner of Central Information Commission. Email: yhannu_setyawan@ymail.com; Ph: +6281911056600
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