

PRESS RELEASE

Celebrating World Wetlands Day 2018 in Indonesia:

Wetlands for A Sustainable Urban Future

Celebrating World Wetlands Day 2 February 2018, Wetlands International Indonesia conducted a series of activities mainly aimed at raising community awareness and perspective on how important it is to conserve wetlands. This year, theme of the World Wetlands Day is 'Wetlands for A Sustainable Urban Future', which basically emphasizes the importance of wetlands for the future of cities, where people flock into, and of which population becoming more and more dense. This activity is centered in the Dramaga Research Forest, Situ Gede Bogor, on Wednesday, 28 February 2018, as one of the three events fully supported by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry. The other two events of the same context take place in Jambi, South Sumatra (February 26-27) and in IPB – Bogor campus (March 1). This event, focusing on awareness raising for future generation (children), is also supported by Partners for Resilience-Strategic Partnership (PFR-SP), which in itself promoting the Integrated Disaster Risk Reduction program.

Bogor, February 28, 2018

Half of the earth's population, around 4 billion people, live in cities. Within the coming 35 years, it is estimated that this number is continuously increasing by 66 % or around 2.4 % annually. On the other hand, various facts show that the quality and quantity of wetlands are continuously degrading, including in the urban areas. Within the last hundred years, more than 60 % of the world's wetlands have either gone or converted into other functions¹. These wetlands include marshes, swamps, peatlands, and also waters on land, both natural or manmade, including lakes, rivers, reservoirs, rice fields, and fish ponds.

This is a condition very similar to the population growth and decreasing coverage of wetlands in several cities in Indonesia, taking an example in Bogor. Bogor's population growth reaches up to 2.38 % per year within the timeframe of 2000 – 2010. On the other hand, in Bogor the coverage area of a particular wetland, which is the lake, has decreased by an average of 29 % within 10 years' time². There were at least seven lakes in the city of Bogor, namely: Situ Panjang, Situ Gede, Situ Leutik, Situ Curug, Situ Anggalena, Danau Bogor Raya, and Danau Kebun Raya. Suffering from the same fate, irrigated rice fields in Bogor also decrease by more than half of what it used to be, or 57.2 % between 2013 through to 2016³.

In this event, Nyoman Suryadiputra, Director of Wetlands International Indonesia, stated his concern on the diminishing wetlands in Indonesia, particularly in Bogor. "We need to really try to maintain the remaining lakes from conversion, because there are only a few of them in overall West Java, in particular in Bogor. If these lakes in Bogor are gone or damaged, the flooding in Jakarta will only get worse. Because currently the water coming in to Jakarta through rivers like Ciliwung and Citarum, all flow down to Jakarta Bay. These lakes in Bogor function as brakes, before flowing into the main streams, water is held there."

This phenomenon is in accordance with the fact that Bogor functions as a buffer zone for Jakarta. Although it must also be admitted that Jakarta flooding is a result of a series of complicated problems that are related to one-another. Besides caused by uncoordinated runoff and poor drainage system, subsidence, which is currently a raising issue, is deemed as one of the root causes of the more frequent and worsen flooding in Jakarta.

¹ Ramsar (2018): <http://www.worldwetlandsday.org/>

² Rahman, A.A. 2010. *Potensi Pengembangan Situ di Kota Bogor sebagai Objek Wisata*. Universitas Diponegoro

³ BPS Kota Bogor (2017)

It is inevitable that increasing population will result in higher demand for space and land. This will result in, among others, conversion of wetlands into residential areas, or other functions. For these kinds of wetlands, the existing poor condition can only get worse through a shallowing process caused by sedimented mud, solid organic waste carried by water – an accumulation of both domestic and industrial waste. Head of West Bogor Sub-District, Pupung W. Purnama, conveyed the challenge this area has to face despite an effort to conserve wetlands, “We are facing a constraint, because the majority of West Bogor’s land use is really planned for agricultural functions, rice fields, that also are wetlands. However, those rice fields are mostly under private ownership, that when the land is deemed unproductive, the owner has the right to convert the function. Therefore, we think it is relevant that this wetlands issue is also incorporated into the City Spatial Plan”.

This statement of the Head of West Bogor Sub-District is very relevant, noting the importance of wetlands to support the economic, social, and ecological functions of urban and other areas, and thus there needs to be a more serious and integrated effort by all stakeholders to preserve and conserve wetlands. Therefore, as one form of surface water source, lake, which is a part of the water system within one’s area, has the potential to serve a whole variety of functions, including the provision of standard source of water, flood control, irrigation, fishery, and tourism. Those functions are interrelated between one another and also with the existence of wetlands and their surrounding vegetations, such as rice fields and forests, and within the landscape of the river system from up to downstream.

In her presentation, the Head of Forest Research and Development, Krisfianti L. Ginoga, explained that the Dramaga Research Forest is an inseparable part of Situ Gede, the lake. As one of the few lakes remaining in Bogor, the area management objective of Situ Gede-Dramaga Research Forest are, to: extend the potentials of forest resource, develop parent stock, become the center of technology transfer, and it is currently being prepared to become an international-standard national park. Situ Gede-Dramaga Research Forest is also protected and sustainably managed to improve its forest functions, e.g. as research area, natural laboratory, and as a place for technology transfer for both vocational education and scientific tourism. The fact that natural sites are more and more sought after by people for recreation, it is thus important to also raise their awareness on the ecological roles and functions of the natural tourism area they visit, so that the risk of damage can be minimized.

World Wetlands Day

2 February 2018



Wetlands for a sustainable urban future

Celebrating World Wetlands Day

What is World Wetlands Day? Every February 2nd is commemorated as World Wetlands Day, as a follow-up of the corroboration and ratification of an International Convention on Wetlands, on February 2nd 1971 to be exact, in the city of Ramsar, Iran. The Convention was then on acknowledged as: **Ramsar Convention**.

The Convention was initially focused on water bird issue, including migratory water birds, and later on developed into issues of wetlands ecosystem conservation, including the biodiversity within. Currently, wetlands issue covers multi-issues relevant to all aspects of the human life. Looking at this fact, it can be concluded that **wetlands are supporter of life**.

According to the Ramsar Convention, wetlands cover a vast definition, including **“areas such as swamps, marshes, peat lands, and waters: natural or manmade; permanent or temporary; with puddled or flowing water upon: fresh, brackish, or salty water; also including sea water areas, of which depth reach not more than six meters during low tide”**.

Indonesia corroborated the Ramsar Convention in 1991 with the issuance of a Presidential Decree No.48 year 1991 that ratified the Ramsar Convention in Indonesia. In 1996, as one of the results of all Ramsar Convention members' meeting, **2nd of February** was ever since identified as the **World Wetlands Day**. In 1997, World Wetlands Day was for the first time celebrated all over the world by member countries of the Ramsar Convention.

The theme for 2018 Wetlands Day is **“Wetlands for a sustainable urban future”**. This theme was established based on the consideration that almost half of the total population of the world currently live in the urban areas. This amount is estimated to continue to increase, both because the increasing number of areas surrounding the city are growing into urban areas, and because more and more people move from surrounding areas into the city for a better livelihood. Therefore, there is a growing urgency for the urban areas to not only able to provide the basic needs of their inhabitants, such as food, shelter, and clothing, but also the increase of other needs, such as security, resilience, and environmentally-friendly neighborhood.

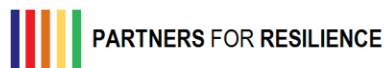
Happy World Wetlands Day 2018 “Wetlands for A Sustainable Urban Future”

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Wetlands International Indonesia adalah bagian dari jaringan global Wetlands International, yang merupakan Organisasi Non-Pemerintah dan bekerja secara global, regional, nasional hingga lokal untuk mencapai tujuan konservasi dan pemanfaatan lahan basah secara bijaksana demi terwujudnya pembangunan secara berkelanjutan. Wetlands International telah beroperasi di Indonesia sejak tahun 1987 atas dasar Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) antara Wetlands International dengan Pemerintah Indonesia c.q. Kementerian Kehutanan c.q. Direktorat Jenderal PHKA (d/h PHPA). Selanjutnya dengan surat no.1659/Menhut-VI/95 tanggal 17 November 1995, Menteri Kehutanan RI menyatakan Indonesia bergabung menjadi anggota Wetlands International.

