



## **ILLEGAL ACTIVITY IN THE LEUSER ECOSYSTEM CONTINUES**

BANDA ACEH --- 19 Juli 2017 --- In early 2017, illegal forest activity in the form of poaching, encroachment, illegal logging, and road developments continues in the Leuser Ecosystem (LE). In addition, poor governance on forest management, especially in LE, impacted on the forest destruction. This was stated at the press conference by Forest, Nature, and Environment of Aceh Foundation (Yayasan HAKA) and Leuser Conservation Forum (FKL) in Banda Aceh 19 July 2017.

In the press conference led by Agung Dwinurcahya, GIS Manager of HAKA and Ibnu Hasyim, Database Manager of FKL, they presented data on illegal activity findings in the Leuser Ecosystem during the period of January 2017 and June 2017.

Based on field monitoring data in 13 districts/city, there were 1241 cases of illegal logging during that period with a volume of approximately 6312 cubic meter of wood. The rest was spread out over the other 12 city and districts within the Leuser Ecosystem.

Next, the destruction inside LE in the form of encroachment was also rampant. The largest encroachment happened in Subulussalam City which reached 1972 hectares, Aceh Tamiang district reached 765 hectares, and Bener Meriah district 728 hectares. The total forest destruction due to encroachment is 5415 hectares.

Data on poaching activity and road developments was not missed out in the press conference. Based on the data, there were 143 cases of poaching and 205 snares that was later destroyed found during that period. For road developments, the data stated that 298.4 km road development happened inside LE.

Next, the LE forest destruction is also periodically monitored from satellite imagery. Deforestation in LE through satellite imagery during the period of January 2017 to May 2017 amounted to 2686 hectares. The most forest cover loss was in East Aceh at 760 hectares, followed by South Aceh at 626 hectares, and in third place Nagan Raya at 278 hectares. Analysing the data shows that there is a decreasing trend in comparison to the data in 2015 and 2016. In 2015, the forest cover loss during that period reached 10433 hectares. While in 2016, in the same period reached 4609 hectares. The deforestation rate of LE itself reached 12000 hectares per year.

HAKA and FKL's monitoring data are presented every 6 months and hopefully it is used as one of the indicators for Irwandi-Nova government on forest management especially in the Leuser Ecosystem inside the province of Aceh.

In the press conference, HAKA and FKL also requests the Aceh government to revise the Aceh Spatial Plan, also known as Qanun Aceh No.19/2013 that does not include LE as a National Strategic Area. LE is a source of water for Aceh and also contributes to mitigate disasters such as flood. Hopefully the revision can be done in the near future so that LE can be protected for the future of the world.

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