

Anak Krakatau's natural exploitation opposed

The South Lampung administration's plan for sand mining around Mount Anak Krakatau has been met with opposition as green activists have said the activities threaten the environment.

Opponents of the plan also claim that the alleged mask of disaster mitigation is not justifiable.

Regent Ricky Menoza was reported to have made the proposal for the permit with the Forestry Ministry, Lampung Natural Resources Conservation Body (BKSDA) and the Volcanic, Geological Disaster Mitigation Center.

Environmental watchdog Walhi feared the administration's plan to dredge the sand would threaten the environment. The project, however, is expected to augment the administration's income.

"The on site disaster mitigation efforts are only tricks to obtain permits that will allow entry to the Anak Krakatau area to dredge up the sand. On the other hand, the volcano and its surroundings are a designated conservation area that has to be protected," Walhi Lampung chapter chairman Hendrawan said.

Sutono, a government official, denied the accusation.

"We are conducting these activities as part of a far-reaching program. We will build a drainage system to allow for lava flow so that the impact would not be severe in the case of an eruption," Sutono said.

Hendrawan said he would file his complaint with police headquarters and the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) if the permit was issued and the sand mining operations were carried out.

Anak Krakatau surfaced in 1927, 40 years after the massive and deadly 1883 eruption of Mount Krakatau that triggered a catastrophic tsunami.