

Greenomics criticizes ministry for new decree

Greenomics Indonesia, a leading NGO on forestry issues, lambasted Forestry Minister Zulkifli Hasan for issuing a new decree on Dec. 31, which would pave the way for 44 companies to get new forestry licenses.

The decree was issued just a day before the government planned to impose a moratorium on new permits both in natural forests and peatlands as stipulated under the climate deal between Indonesia and Norway.

“It is reasonable to assume the decree was intended to save 44 companies from having to comply with the moratorium regulations,” Greenomics’ executive director Elfian Effendi said in a statement made available to The Jakarta Post on Thursday.

He said that with the new decree, the licenses for the 44 plantation firms could be processed although the moratorium would be applied this year.

The 44 companies applied for permits for a total area of 2.9 million hectares, most of them were in secondary forests.

Data from Greenomics said that six out of the 44 firms applied for 1.2 million hectares in natural forests in Papua while 21 companies would operate on 1.03 million hectares in Kalimantan.

The remaining had plans for forests in Maluku, East Nusa Tenggara, West Nusa Tenggara and South Sumatra. — JP