

## **Temperature rises, hotspots reappear in Riau**

The heat wave projected for Riau is now taking place, with temperatures climbing to 36 degrees Celsius and the number of hotspots further increasing under the conditions. Based on observations by the Pekanbaru Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics Agency (BMKG), the maximum temperature in the daytime in some parts of Riau has been categorized as "extreme".

"The temperature in Pekanbaru is still within tolerable levels, with a maximum level of 35 degrees Celsius. But in other regions, the temperature is already extreme," said Pekanbaru BMKG analysis staff member Ardhitama on Tuesday. The temperature in various regencies and cities across the province has tended to rise over the past few days. In Pekanbaru, for instance, the temperature ranged between 33.2 and 34.6 degrees Celsius on June 15.

It rose the following day to 35 degrees Celsius. In Pelalawan regency, the temperature ranged between 33.6 and 35 degrees Celsius. "The hottest was recorded in Dumai city with 36 degrees Celsius," said Ardhitama. The rise in temperature has caused the reappearance of forest and land fires across the region. Based on observations by the Terra and Aqua satellites on June 16, the number of hotspots amounted to 21, more than half of which were detected in Rokan Hilir regency.

On Tuesday morning, the satellites detected 37 hotspots in Riau. Rokan Hilir still dominated with 16 hotspots, followed by Pelalawan (8), Bengkalis (4), Dumai (3), Siak (2), as well as Meranti Islands, Indragiri Hilir, Kuantan Sengingi and Rokan Hulu with one hotspot each. The growing number of hotspots has contributed to the recurrence of mild haze in a number of regions. In Pelalawan and Dumai, visibility has dropped to around 4 kilometers and 5 km, respectively.

"The weather will be cloudy and sunny for the next few days. The chance of rain is quite low, but it may occur in the western and southern parts of Riau," said Ardhitama. To anticipate a surge in the number of hotspots, Riau Governor Annas Maamun on Tuesday gathered Regional Leadership Communication Forum (Forkopimda) members to discuss haze supervision and prevention.

After the meeting, Riau Police chief Brig. Gen. Condro Kirono said Forkopimda had agreed to 13 comprehensive measures that would be applied in the short, medium and long term to anticipate forest and peatland fires in Riau. One of the crucial points was to issue a provincial ordinance that will regulate the protection and management of the ecosystem, to ensure that peatlands are constantly wet throughout the year.

"The ordinance is aimed at being immediately implemented in the fourth week of July this year," said Condro.

Other important points are the planned mapping of areas prone to forest and peatland fires in Riau to enhance the capacity of regional and municipal administrations in forest and peatland fire prevention efforts, as well as accelerating the formation of the Concerned about Fire Community in every region. "The obedience of companies operating in concession areas that are prone to hotspots will also be assessed, including their readiness for firefighting efforts [demonstrated] by forming firefighting teams," Condro went on.

"A situation room will be set up and will function as a monitoring, prevention and fire response center, as well as enhancing communications between relevant agencies at the provincial and regency and municipal levels."