

Govt told to act on climate change

The Indonesian Eastern Region Forum (FKTI) says it is urgent that all relevant parties work together in integrating regional development to ensure vulnerable areas are able to adapt to climate change.

Speaking on the sidelines of a two-day discussion forum in West Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara (NTB), on Tuesday, Alex Retraubun of the Bhakti Foundation, FKTI secretariat, said that climate change and global warming were real and had to be dealt with.

Coastal regions and small islands, he said, are prone to and will suffer the worst impacts of climate change, which included high tides, higher sea levels and prolonged droughts.

“The discussion forum is aimed at improving the understanding and awareness of the people living on small islands about climate change and its impacts on their livelihood as well as how to adapt to it,” Alex said.

Some 200 participants comprising government officials, academicians, NGOs and representatives of residents from small islands joined the forum organized jointly by the Bhakti Foundation, the Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Ministry and the Disadvantaged Regions Ministry.

Alex said such understanding and awareness were important as adapting to climate change required tremendous motivation, the will to learn new skills, time and funds. “People in coastal regions and small islands must be able to adapt to the ongoing climate change,” he said.

Separately, director general for marine, coastal areas and small islands (KP3K) Sudirman Saad said that economic empowerment of small islands must be continued to improve their ability to adapt to climate change.