

Watch mining activities around forests: Walhi

JAKARTA: Mining activities in the vicinity of protected forest areas should be watched carefully as industries frequently neglected environmental conservation, an NGO warns.

Hartono, the Executive Director for the Indonesian Forum of Environment (Walhi), said on Wednesday that there was convincing data showing that industries caused substantial environmental damage in several districts and cities in Southeast Sulawesi.

Among the industries neglecting environmental responsibilities in the province was nickel mining at a forest conservation area at Lamusango, Buton district.

"The mentality of investors who conduct mining activities in Southeast Sulawesi are really bad," Hartono said as quoted by Antara news agency.

So far, the local Buton government has issued a warrant to temporarily halt any mining activities of PT Bumi Buton Delta Megah, as they allegedly neglected their responsibilities in their mining practices.

PT Bumi Buton Delta Megah possessed the right to conduct mining activities in 675 hectares area of production forest, which bordered with the 27,700-hectare Lambusango protection area. The Lambusango river, which is a water source for residents, is located in the company's area of mining activities.