

Local administrations can manage REDD+ funds autonomously: Govt

The central government says that local administrations can autonomously manage funds for carbon emission mitigation programs. Forestry Ministry secretary-general Hadi Daryanto told The Jakarta Post on Wednesday that the government would not be directly involved in managing Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) programs.

“We support REDD-related initiatives and fund arrangements through policies that endorse low carbon development and no burning of forests,” he said, adding that local REDD+ initiatives should accord with the nation’s REDD+ plan. However, donors and parties involved in managing REDD+ funds would be accountable to the Forestry Ministry before reporting to the House of Representatives, Hadi said.

Around 99 percent of the funds available for REDD+ initiatives in Indonesia were project-oriented and thus self-managed, according to Hadi. “This is intended to avoid accusations that the Indonesian government might embezzle funds.”

A government task force is currently developing a financing mechanism for REDD projects and plans to establish a national REDD oversight agency. Several donors have financed REDD+ initiatives in Indonesia, including Germany-based Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), previously known as GTZ; the German government’s development bank, KfW; the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

According to the ministry, GIZ has allocated US\$6 million for programs in Malinau, East Kalimantan, and Kapuas Hulu, West Kalimantan, between 2010 to 2017. Additional allocations include 20 million euros from the German government’s development bank for programs in Kutai Barat and Kutai Timur, East Kalimantan, and US\$5 million for programs in West Nusa Tenggara provided by the KOICA.

In addition to organization-based funds, government-provided money is also available for REDD+ projects, including money from the Governor’s Climate and Forest Task Force (GCF) fund. The GCF is a collaboration of 15 states and provinces from the United States, Brazil, Indonesia, Nigeria and Mexico that strives to combine REDD+ and other forest carbon and greenhouse gas mitigation programs.

GCF is holding its three-day annual meeting in Central Kalimantan to promote an initial funding of \$1.5 million for REDD+ programs in member states and provinces. The task force said in a statement that it would seek an additional \$4.5 million to support the programs. Hadi said that the government expected the task force would develop as a “trust fund” that involved multiple stakeholders, including representatives of NGOs and local residents.

“It is important for the GCF to involve various stakeholders on its board of trustees so to embrace different interests. In this way, the funds can effectively be matched to the needs of the people,” he said. (msa)