Community Alert & Patrol for Land and Forest Fire Prevention
(Siskamling Dalkarhutla)

Launching to establish a fire prevention methodology in cooperation between Ministry of Forestry, Regency Administration and JICA

July 1st, 2013

To prepare for the dry season, from July 2013, the Nature Conservation Office of the Riau Province (BBKSDA Riau) - as a technical unit of the Ministry of Forestry (MoF) of the Republic of Indonesia - will start a pilot trial community alert and patrol activity for forest and land fire prevention, called the “Siskamling Dalkarhutla” (environment security system for forest and land fire control), in cooperation with the Siak Regency administration at two (2) villages (Sungai Rawa and Mengkapan) located in the buffer zones of the Wildlife Conservation Forest that is planned to be designated as the Zamrud National Park.

In Indonesia, as a countermeasure against land and forest fire, MoF has been conducting fire-control activities through a Forest Fire Brigade called the “Manggala Agni (MA),” which is under the direct control of MoF, and has organized Fire Care Community Groups called the “Masyarakat Peduli Api (MPA).” However, the capacity of the Forest Fire Brigade has been insufficient against the vast fire-prone area, while the limited know-how on fire prevention has caused the Fire Care Community Groups to be inactive.

Therefore, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), which is implementing a technical cooperation (project) on the “Program of Community Development of Fires Control in Peat Land Area (FCP)” in the Province through the cooperation with MoF, has decided to work together with BBKSDA Riau, which have been conducting their own patrol activity in the fire-prone area since 2010. The basic consideration is that the BBKSDA has the know-how to conduct patrols and instruct the Fire Care Community Groups, while the JICA project (FCP) has the know-how on village-based fire prevention activities. Therefore, the cooperation aims to develop a more effective and sustainable methodology for land and forest fire prevention through an integration of both-side’s know-how on Conservation Forest and its Buffer Zones (including agricultural land area).

On the other hand, until now, the Government of Indonesia has been promoting the neighborhood-watch activities (or so-called the “Siskamling”) from the security aspect within each community with the guidance of the National Police. In relations to that, the Siskamling Dalkarhutla has just been regarded as a part of the neighborhood-watch activities, in which the Forest Fire Brigade – as facilitators – together with the Fire Care Community Groups provide support for the villagers in forest-fire risk areas in terms of capacity building for initial responses against fire
outbreaks as well as establishing their own fire-prevention action plan. Through these efforts, in addition to enhance the local fire prevention capacity, it is hoped to also increase the activeness and sustainability of the Fire Care Community Groups.

Meanwhile, the JICA project (FCP) has been conducting facilitator trainings (basic course) targeting the Forest Fire Brigade of the Riau Province (Siak Regency) and West Kalimantan Province (Bengkayang and Kubu Raya Regencies) since 2011 for the purpose of disseminating the know-how on fire prevention. In relations to that, FCP conducted a special training for team building on June 14 – 15, 2013 targeting Forest Fire Brigade members who have completed the facilitator training and the Fire Care Community Groups.

In addition to that, in order to improve the organizational capability of the Forest Fire Brigade in the local level, FCP has expanded the target of the training (basic course) in the West Kalimantan Province starting from this month. The project also plans to develop another facilitator training (Advanced Course) for the Forest Fire Brigade by early 2014 based on the actual experience of Siskamling Dalkarhutla’s activities in the Siak Regency of Riau Province.

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