

**Ninth Executive Forest Policy Course:  
Sustainable Development Goals, Climate Change and the Future of Forest  
in Asia and the Pacific**

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**Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

First, allow me, on behalf of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, to congratulate and express our highest appreciation to the organizer of this Ninth Executive Forest Policy Course. It is indeed an honor and pleasure for me to be part of this important event. The theme of this course, “**Sustainable Development Goals, Climate Change and the Future of Forest in Asia and the Pacific**” is very relevant and timely. For Indonesia, like many other countries blessed with tropical forests, are facing the challenges to sustainably manage the scarce forests resources.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

At this policy course, allow me to remind every one of us that renewing our commitment to make sustainable development work for the people is not a matter of choice. It is imperative to prepare a resilient community by adapting to the new challenges we are facing. New and innovative ways to cope with these challenges are needed to be explored.

Indonesia is of the view that the Sustainable Development Goals agenda promises an opportunity to shift from development in siloes to a more integrated approach; a view reinforced by the Rio+20 outcome, “The future we want”. We should also build the future we want from our investments in the MDGs previously.

I am of the view that future of “sustainability” is not only necessary – an absolute must - it is also possible. Nowadays, sustainability has become much more pressing on our agenda. Population growth, the rapid rise of the middle class worldwide, the spread of mega cities, ambitious development needs – all this are adding pressures for finite resources. More people want more in a world

where less is available. If we do not succeed in ensuring a sustainable future, we will inevitably live in a world of utter chaos and desperation.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Along with economic achievements, the environmental agenda has made significant advances. Environmental regimes have grown, for example, on biodiversity, on climate change, on forestry. More and more nations are adopting green growth strategies. Indeed, environmental concerns today are as much bottom up as well as top down, with civil society, families, individuals taking part to protect the environment.

In this context, economic growth should go hand in hand with social development and environmental protection. We need to find ways to simplify the way we live; and the way we manufacture goods and raise crops as well as livestock. These efforts will mean moving to greener, more resilient, and lower-emission options. The corporate world too has increasingly embraced green business strategy and doing more CSR in social and environmental fields.

**Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,**

Indonesia is a country having more than 120 million hectares of forests, and depending significantly to forest resources for her national development. Our basic constitution stipulates that all natural resources, including forest, must be utilized for the best interest and the welfare of the people. Accordingly, Indonesia is persistently improving her effort toward achieving sustainable forest management, hence ensuring that the very strategic natural resource could provide the highest possible contribution to the country and the people perpetually. We have done many things for that purpose and have attained notable progresses. On the other hand, there are also obstacles and problems of various nature and dimensions we are facing along our endeavor.

In this era of globalization, nearly all forestry issues have their international dimensions. Likewise, virtually none forestry issues or problems can be effectively solved by an individual country. In the case of Indonesia, one example is the hailing of tropical rain forests as the lung of the earth. While we are grateful to be the owner of part of the earth's lung, this puts our forests and everything happen or done on them, no longer a merely national issue. Being an independent country, Indonesia is fully aware of her sovereignty to manage her

forests, in the best considered manner and for the best interest of Indonesian people. Yet by the same token, being a member of the global community, Indonesia is also cognizant of the need to always take into account the international facet of forestry issues.

**Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,**

I believe that ensuring the sustainability for the needs of today's and the future generations is about maintaining the natural capital and hence productivity and capacity of our planet to meet human needs and sustain economic activities. Promoting responsible consumption patterns and changing lifestyles can influence jobs, markets, the incentives for technological innovation, the allocation of financial savings to alternative activities, and overall human health, including malnutrition and obesity.

To ensure successful of implementation of SDGs and to reach its target, Indonesia is developing National Plan and Strategy, including targets and indicators. We do hope that by internalizing and mainstreaming SDGs into National Development Plan and Agenda, we will be able to walk the SDGs and achieve its target by reaching out various policy-making and implementation of development programme sustainably. In order to influence policy-making process as well as raising awareness on sustainable development agenda, role and participation of various stakeholders is crucial.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

In closing, let me reiterate that the job before us today, namely, to help us craft a sustainable future for our forests and meet our development objectives, is far from easy. But we can agree that the cost of surrendering is far worse. Together we must guarantee the future of our forests. For our children and grand children.

Furthermore, I would like also to take this opportunity once again to wish you all an enjoyable stay in Yogyakarta and a very successful course.

With that, I now declare this course officially open. Thank you.

Dr. Agus Justianto

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