

Regional Fire Management Resource Center- Southeast Asia and Their Role for Fire Prevention Management in the Region

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ABSTRACT –Landscape fires and excessive use of fire in land use and land-use change have become one of the most important issues in Southeast Asia for about 25 years. The impacts of fires result not only in environmental destruction with adverse effects on public health and security, the transport sector and the overall socio-economic conditions, but also affect the relations between neighbouring countries, as transboundary haze pollution pose negative impacts on the neighbor countries. Fire and smoke episodes occur every year but fluctuating. During the last three years burning activities have slowed down in Indonesia, while in the others parts of the region sometimes the situation is worsening. This is why it was proposed to create an institution that would take the lead in solving the problem at regional level. In 2017 the Regional Fire Management Resource Center – Southeast Asia (RFMRC-SEA) was established at the Faculty of Forestry, Bogor Agricultural University (Indonesia), with the assistance of the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC) (Max Planck Institute for Chemistry and University of Freiburg). The aim of the Center, which is an independent academic entity, is to contribute to informed political decision making and the development of relevant policies for Indonesia and the neighboring countries of the Maritime Continent. The structure of a Regional Center of Competence for Fire Management is a measure of the decentralization of the work of the GFMC and is the fourth Regional Center in line (after the establishment of the first three Centers in Southeast Europe/Caucasus, Eastern Europe and Central Asia). Since 2017 many activities have been conducted by the Center, i.e., monitoring of wildfires and land-use fires in the region, monitoring particle emissions in critical situations, collecting and evaluating imagery of burned areas at different land use, sharing the information to the government agencies and others communities (CSO), conducting training for fire investigators using satellite and for law enforcement personnel, and communication with the public directly and indirectly using social media.

Keywords: RFMRC-SEA; GFMC; landscape fires; regional; independence; monitoring

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