

BEYOND INDONESIA FOREST WILDFIRES 2019

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Dear Editors,

Again, Indonesia greatly contributes to the global warming today by bringing repeated forest wildfires to our lovely earth. Although there are many speculations related to this issue, both from a political perspective in regards to the movement of the capital city of Indonesia from Jakarta to East Kalimantan, and from a business perspective related to the palm oil industry, however, this indicates that the Government of Indonesia is still not able to anticipate nor to prevent the case of fire.

As a consequence, the forest fires not only have destroyed the natural habitat of orangutans in Kalimantan, but also have threaten the life of people in the area with hazardous air quality index (with Particulate Matter 10 = 593.08) on 23 September 2019 ([Prima, 2019](#)). In addition, the haze has also reached Asean countries, especially Malaysia, Singapore, and Philippines, which may affect the international cooperation between Indonesia and those countries ([Abbugao, 2019](#); [Macasero, 2019](#)).

Sadly, more than 6,000 people suffered from an upper respiratory infection specifically in children at Central Kalimantan, followed by 1

people died at North Kalimantan on 21 September 2019, and 2 babies also died at Banyuasin on 16 September and at Riau on 18 September 2019 ([Arif, 2019](#); [Berita Satu, 2019](#)). With the killer hazard of the haze, the risks of early deaths will be increased, ranged from 26,300 to 174,300 deaths ([BBC News, 2019](#)).

Additionally, on 23 September 2019, the [Meteorology climatology geophysical agency \(2019\)](#) has also alarmed 12 provinces in Indonesia, which will potentially have additional forest fires and haze. Although the government has been trying to deal with this problem, and the communities in the affected area have also been praying for rain to reduce the haze. However, the impact may not be so fast as expected.

This environmental problem certainly remains the biggest challenge for public health professionals in Indonesia today. This letter aims to invite all public health scholars in both Indonesia and around the world to do the best efforts to help the affected community and pray for Indonesia.

Declaration of Conflicting Interest

There is no conflicting of interest.

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