

## **The Signing of MoU Between IPB and LPMK on Sago in Mimika, Papua**

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Lembaga Pengembangan Masyarakat Amungme Kamoro (LPMK- Amungme Kamoro Community Development Organization), Papua and Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB- Bogor Agricultural University) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the development of sago industry in Mimika, Papua. The signing of the MoU was held on Thursday, 25 April 2013, at IPB International Convention Center (IICC).

Vice-Rector for Research and Cooperation of IPB, Prof. Dr. Ir. Anas Miftah Fauzi stated in his remarks that the potential of Indonesian sago is so enormous. "But the potential of our sago is the legacy of our ancestors, therefore we do not understand well the seedling technology and its cultivation to maintain good quality of sago. Papua has the potential of sago which is very unusual, but has not been widely explored. Sago development is a challenge for experts as how to process sago easily, as if we want to steam rice," explains Prof. Anas.

According to Prof. Anas, in 1997-1999, IPB established emergency food stations in Papua. Unfortunately the program had terminated. Further, Prof. Anas stated that the present MoU is expected to be the comprehensive collaboration for the sustainability management of sago. "If Sago Vocational School (SMK) to learn sago and the technology for sago industry is needed, IPB will be there to provide experienced expertise to set up vocational school, particularly the agricultural vocational schools," he said.

Chairman of the Sago Team of IPB, Prof. Dr. Hasim Bintoro stated. "The potential of sago has not optimally been managed by indigenous tribes in Papua, they need only need two or three sago palms for the consumption of the family. Moreover, they prefer to cut down sago palm trees at the edge of the main road down the road. While the other 6 million tonnes of sago in the forests are intact due to the difficult terrain. When we utilize sago as raw material for sugar, ethanol, and so forth, can certainly improve the lives of people in there," explained Prof. Bintoro.

LPMK Executive Secretary, Mr. Emanuel Kemong, in his remarks stated that staple food of almost the entire people of Papua is sago, except for several tribes their staple food is sweet potatoes. "Indigenous lands in West Papua have been targeted by Jakarta for further oil palm development in, such situation has endangered the existence of sago plantations. The largest development is a vast thousand hectares hamlet of sago in Mimika, Papua," said Emanuel.

According to Emanuel, it is unfortunate that the community decided to convert their lands into the oil palm cultivation without considering the future of their staple food. "We then exploring the most appropriate institutions to maintain the sustainability of sago for the people of Papua. We considered that IPB will be the most appropriate institution for such project. I can not imagine what will happen in the next ten years for Papua without sago. We expect that the cooperation will enable us to develop the sago processing, as well as how we cultivate the sago plantations," Statement of the Executive Secretary LPMK in his concluding remarks. (Wied).

