

## **World Water Day 2019, WWF and HSBC offer Natural Solution to Assure Sufficient and Sustainable Water Resources**

**Jakarta, 22 March 2019** -- The six objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals are clear. These objectives aim at sealing the world's commitment to assuring access to clean water for everyone by 2030, with conserving the environment and reducing pollution as one of the objectives. Damaged ecosystems reduce the quantity and quality of fresh water needed for human consumption. Unfortunately, rivers in Indonesia, which are crucial for social, agricultural and industrial activities, are in alarming conditions. Data shows, 82 percent of rivers in the country are damaged and 52 strategic rivers are polluted.

On the World Water Day 2019, WWF and HSBC, along with relevant stakeholders, held a public discussion in Jakarta to discuss the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with water as the topic. The discussion resulted in an agreement that in line with the progress of the sustainable development goal, everyone without exception must obtain access to clean water as water is a human right. And for this goal to be achieved, all stakeholders - be they the government, businesses, civil societies and individuals, need to do their part and cooperate in partnership to achieve the sustainability target.

WWF-Indonesia and PT Bank HSBC invited stakeholders, especially business people, to start meaningful conversations on the importance of the sustainability of water supply and the need to minimize the environmental impact of sectors that relies on water for production, in order to initiate positive change in industrial practices, while promoting sustainable and good water management. Representatives of the public sector (national and local governments, development agencies, embassies of neighbouring countries), private sector (business community, water industry associations), academics and civil society organizations (researchers and activists from non-governmental organizations) joined a discussion forum on water at the Le Meridien Hotel on Friday (22/3).

To ensure sustainable water management, participating partners have agreed to focus on efforts to cope with environmental degradation and reverse the impact of climate change through water conservation programs. Water services should be able to meet people's needs and sustainability must be an integrated part of the decision-making process by regulators and the private sector. A regulatory and legal framework must recognize the right to water for all people and funding from financial services must be effectively targeted at those who recognize the importance of water in their business. The theme of "Keeping Water as a Source of Life", was the core issue of the discussion. It highlighted efforts to forge new partnerships, enhance cooperation, and strengthen the capacity to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

"WWF-Indonesia with its track record in conservation and sustainable development has great attention to the availability and sustainability of freshwater because water has an important role for life. We are committed to carrying out revitalization activities of the catchment area with a main focus in 6 regions, DAS Peusangan Aceh, DAS Kampar-Riau Sumatera Barat, DAS Mahakam Kalimantan Timur, DAS Ciliwung Jawa Barat, DAS Rinjani Lombok, dan DAS Bikuma Papua "Ade DAS Peusangan Aceh, DAS Kampar-Riau West Sumatera, DAS Mahakam East Kalimantan, DAS Ciliwung West Java, DAS Rinjani Lombok, and DAS Bikuma Papua," Ade Swargo Mulyo, The Partnership Director of WWF-Indonesia explained. "Actually, solutions are available in nature, which we call natural based solutions



(locally known, SBA). Therefore, we invite stakeholders to raise awareness about the importance of wise water governance for sustainability with humans and nature, both for present and future generations," He continued.

In 2010, the UN recognized "the right towards freshwater and clean sanitation as a human right." However, some residents cannot access safe freshwater for various reasons, including economic and social status. Other important factors are environmental degradation, climate change, increasing demand and poor management of natural resources. All of this increases the threat to water scarcity which is a major problem in many parts of the world, including Indonesia.

Globally, WWF and HSBC have been working for 17 years to improve the sanitation of freshwater source and to support the people and nature that lean on it. In Indonesia, WWF and HSBC have long committed to preserving water through a collaborative water conservation programme since 2016. WWF-Indonesia and PT Bank HSBC have organized a variety of program to support the revitalization of watersheds in Rimbang Baling, Riau, and Koto Panjang, Sumatra.

"HSBC is aware of the crucial roles that water holds in creating a healthy community and building national economy. Nevertheless, we are too aware of water being a global issue that has an economic impact and needs to be taken care of by involving a wide range of stakeholders. Therefore, HSBC globally initiated the *HSBC Water Programme*," states *John Rosie, Operations & IT Director at PT Bank HSBC Indonesia*.

"Water availability is the problem we have in common. Besides the people, private sector too holds a crucial role in water preservation. For the private sector, water comes with it risks and chances. Today we will talk about the risks, the impact on the industry and its relation with stakeholders, and will as well highlight possible partnership to fix the situation," John goes on.

At present, agriculture contributes 70 percent to global water consumption. Most of it is for irrigation – this increases in regions with dense population and high demand for water. Industry takes up 20 percent of total water consumption, mostly energy companies and manufacturers. The remaining 10 percent is for household need – the proportion for drinking water is less than 1 percent.

Restoring forest and natural wetlands, redirecting rivers to lowlands often flowed with water, creating vegetation buffer alongside the river flow – these are all examples of SBA which helps the management of water quality and quantity. Most SBAs, including in city landscapes, basically involve management of vegetation, land and/or wetlands, including river and lake. However, SBA is not an effective cure to answer challenges related to water crisis caused by growing global population. Yet, It can provide innovative and cheap options to improve lacking water infrastructure or to replace the old one.

"In 2019, around 700 people in 43 countries all over the world still suffer from water scarcity, and many more live without sufficient and safe fresh water supply – in houses, schools, working places, farms, and manufacturers. We need to explore natural-based solutions to curb contemporary water problems. Some of the solutions are planting trees, creating more forest covers, redirecting rivers to lowlands often flowed with water, and restoring wetlands to balance water cycle. This discussion provides room to share information and networks among shareholders who are interested to implement clean water management," says Ade. \*\*\*

**Notes for Editor:**

- The relation between Nature Based Solution (SBA) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). SBA aims to manage water supply and quality, support to achieve the entire 6 goals: to guarantee water supply and management, and sustainable sanitation for all people. SBA is also important in achieving other sustainable development goals, as follows:

- Goal 1: no poverty, Goal 2: Zero hunger, Goal 3: Good health: New job vacancies are often created with SBA, and improving health from better quality water means higher productivity.
- Goal 7: Clean and affordable energy, Goal 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure, Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities, Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production: SBA requires little or no energy so as to reduce dependence on systems that greedy energy consumption. SBA also helps providing more sustainable water resources to serve growing community.
- Goal 14: underwater habitats, Goal 15: life on land: Wetlands can reduce pollution through filtration and increase biodiversity by expanding natural habitats.

- Through HSBC water program, there will be a direct focus on Goal 6 of SDG; Procure water and sanitation access for all people, however SDGs relation and integrated characteristic is important in order to ensure that global sustainability is realized. There is a dynamic and two-way interdependence between Goal 6 and other Goals.

- The HSBC Water Program aims to reduce the impact of climate change on humans, forests, freshwater and cities and to accelerate the implementation of low-carbon policies.

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