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**PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF THE REGIONAL DISASTER
MANAGEMENT AGENCY IN PREVENTING FOREST AND LAND FIRES IN THE
MERANTI ISLANDS REGENCY**

Syaprianto¹, Data Wardana², Erfina³

^{1,2,3}Government Science Study Program, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences,
Universitas Islam Riau, Indonesia.

Correspondence Author: syaprianto@soc.uir.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The government must prevent forest and land fires so that they do not continue to occur. Forest and land fires in the Meranti Islands Regency continue to occur. This study uses the evaluation theory according to Willian N Dunn to determine the Performance of the Regional Disaster Management Agency in Preventing Forest and Land Fires in the Meranti Islands Regency. The research method used in this research is qualitative, by interviewing direct and in-depth informants who know the problems being studied best. The study results show that the Regional Disaster Management Agency in Preventing Forest and Land Fires in the Meranti Islands Regency has worked according to its duties and functions. However, its performance has yet to be maximized. The occurrence of forest and land fires in the Meranti Islands Regency evidences this.

Keywords: *Evaluation, Performance, Prevention, Forest and Land*

INTRODUCTION

Forest fires can ecologically reduce the quantity and quality of biological resources. Forest fires are dangerous forest destruction factors because they cause damage to biotic and abiotic components. Biotic damage includes loss of natural vegetation structure, destruction of wildlife habitat, death of soil flora and fauna, and soil microorganisms (Wasis 2003). In addition, there is a decline in the economic value of forests, soil productivity, and micro and global climate change (Irwandi 2016).

Forest fires also impact human activities, namely from the community's health, social, and economic aspects (Budiningasih 2017; Silvia Fransiska, Cepriadi 2022). The real impact of forest and land fires immediately felt is air pollution from the smoke, which causes respiratory problems and disrupts daily activities (Rasyid 2014). Even to neighboring countries such as Singapore and Malaysia (Aditea et al. 2015; Yulia Andriani, Rosnita 2018). Singapore expressed disappointment over Indonesia's lack of optimization in overcoming forest and land fires because it received smoke haze from Indonesia that disrupted activities while damaging air quality in the country (Sri Suryani 2012).

Fires are a potential threat to sustainable development due to their direct effects on ecosystems (Angraini and Agustian 2021; Utami and Primawardani 2021). Forest fires have many negative impacts and must be of particular concern to the government and law enforcement officials to overcome any impacts they may cause (Amelia Monica Yurah 2016).

According to (Djaenudin and Ginoga 2009), the development of the plantation and industrial world has threatened land in Riau Province with land degradation. This is a severe problem that is primarily related to agricultural activities. The leading causes include land clearing, such as clear-cutting and deforestation. Land degradation is the process by which biophysical environmental conditions

change due to human activities on land. Such changes in environmental conditions tend to be destructive and undesirable. Prevention efforts are an absolute must for the government to prevent forest and land fires from continuing to occur.

One of the agencies responsible for preventing forest and land fires in the Meranti Islands Regency is the Regional Disaster Management Agency of the Mearanti Islands Regency. The duties and functions of the Regional Disaster Management Agency are regulated in Meranti Islands Regency Regional Regulation Number 11 of 2015. One of its duties is compiling and establishing fixed disaster management procedures.

Humans cause forest and land fires (Karhutla) in the country, and only 1 percent are caused by natural factors. This action will harm humans because if nature is damaged, humans cannot utilize nature. This shows a reciprocal relationship between humans and nature or the environment. (Anhar, Mardiana, and Sita 2022).

Several work programs have been carried out by the Meranti Islands Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency, such as socialization and prevention of forest and land fires, which can reduce forest and land fires. The activities carried out by the Meranti Islands Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency to prevent forest and land fires are socialization and patrols. Socialization is planting or transferring habits, values, and rules from one generation to another in a group or community. Patrol is the process of policing efforts in an area carried out by the authority's tactical groups, which are often small in number and sent to carry out particular tasks. Socialization and patrols are carried out.

However, based on the data, the area of fires in the Meranti Islands Regency at the beginning of 2021 was 35.5 hectares (Antara), with 104 hotspots that occurred in 2021 and spread across six sub-districts. Although the forest and land fire prevention program has been carried out, forest and land fires still occur in the Meranti Islands Regency.

Based on the description above, several phenomena of this research can be stated, including: 1) Lack of adequate socialization of forest and land fire prevention; 2) People are still found clearing forests and land by burning. This research aims to determine the Performance of the Regional Disaster Management Agency in preventing forest and land fires in the Meranti Islands Regency.

Furthermore, many previous researchers have researched the prevention of forest and land fires. However, research on the performance evaluation of the Regional Disaster Management Agency of the Meranti Islands Regency has never been carried out, so this research is still original. The focus of this research is to evaluate the performance of the Regional Disaster Management Agency in preventing forest and land fires in the Meranti Islands Regency. Evaluation is an effort to document and assess what happened and why. The most straightforward evaluation is to collect information about the situation before and after implementing a program/plan. (Masambe, Tulus, and Plangiten 2021).

According to Daniel L Stufflebeam, evaluation is a structured assessment process with standardized procedures established to review a plan or policy that policymakers have implemented. Then, through evaluation, it will produce outcomes of activities and policies that the government can use to intervene in policies to be implemented. Furthermore, Anderson states that evaluation is an activity that involves estimating or assessing policies that include the substance, implementation, and impact of the policy implementation. Policy evaluation is a matter of fact in the form of measurement

and assessment of both the policy implementation stage and the outcome or impact of a particular policy or program to determine the steps that can be taken in the future. (Syaprianto 2018).

Policy evaluation is carried out to find the causes of policy failure and whether the policy has the intended impact. (Iman Amanda Permatasari 2020). By conducting an evaluation, we can assess whether a policy/program benefits the intended community. Normatively, the evaluation function is needed as a form of public accountability, especially in the eyes of a society that is increasingly critical of government performance. (Mustari 2015).

The indicators used in this study are indicators described by William Dunn, which are divided into six indicators (Dunn, 2013), namely: 1) Effectiveness means the success of the goals that have been set. Effectiveness is also consistently associated with the relationship between expected and actual results; 2) Efficiency, the amount of effort made to achieve a certain level of effectiveness, is generally measured in terms of cost; 3) Adequacy is measured by how far the level of effectiveness can meet the needs of value or opportunity in a problem; 4) Equity is assessed by the justice provided or obtained from public policy. The implementation of public policies must have a fair nature in all sectors and layers of society, which can feel the results of the policy, both directly and indirectly; 5) Responsiveness, defined as the community's response to an activity, relates to how far the policy can meet the reference needs or values of the community group; 6) Accuracy refers to the value or price of the program objectives and the assumptions underlying these objectives. This indicator is linked to substantive rationality because it concerns the goals, not the means or instruments used to achieve them.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses qualitative methods. Moleong (Moleong, 2010) states that qualitative research methods are research that understands phenomena about what is experienced by research subjects such as attitudes, assumptions, motivations, actions, and others holistically and with a description method to assess the performance of the Regional Disaster Management Agency in preventing forest and land fires in Meranti Regency. The data collection techniques that researchers use are observation, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis techniques used are data reduction, presentation, and verification.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Effectiveness

Effectiveness is the achievement of goals appropriately or choosing the right goals from a series of alternatives or choices of ways and making choices from several other choices. Effectiveness can also be interpreted as measuring success in achieving predetermined goals. For example, if a task can be completed by selecting predetermined methods, that method is correct or effective. According to effectiveness measures the success or failure of achieving an organization's goals. If an organization achieves its goals, it has run effectively (Wardhani and Novyanti 2022).

In preventing forest and land fires in Meranti Islands Regency, the Regional Disaster Management Agency has made a work program to prevent forest and land fires in the Regency by conducting patrols and socialization activities so that people can understand and know how to prevent and avoid forest and

land fires. However, even though the work program has been implemented, forest and land fires in the Meranti Islands Regency still occur. So that forest and land fires do not occur, it takes the commitment of all parties because it cannot only be borne by one agency.

Efficiency

Efficiency is the minimum use of resources to achieve optimum results. Efficiency is a measure of the success of an activity that is assessed based on the amount of costs or resources used to achieve the desired results. Efficiency also relates to the effort required to produce a certain level of effectiveness. Efficiency assumes that the right objectives have been determined and seeks to find the best ways to achieve these objectives. According to (Dunn 2003), policies that achieve the highest effectiveness at the least cost are called efficient. Relative assessments can only evaluate efficiency by comparing inputs and outputs received.

In preventing forest and land fires, the Meranti Islands Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency has made several efforts to minimize the occurrence of forest and land fires. Among them are making work programs such as socialization and patrols. Besides, the government has provided facilities and infrastructure to prevent fires. The prevention program is considered right on target, and the community can understand the program the government has implemented. However, although the program has been implemented, it has yet to reach the word efficiency. This is because forest and land fires still occur in the Meranti Islands Regency, and the Regional Disaster Management Agency still has difficulty reaching the location of the fire.

Sufficiency

Sufficiency is a goal that has been achieved and is felt sufficient in many ways. Sufficiency relates to how far a level of effectiveness meets the needs, values, or opportunities that generate problems. Sufficiency is still related to effectiveness by measuring or predicting how far alternatives can satisfy needs, values, or opportunities in solving problems that occur. Adequacy relates to effectiveness by measuring or predicting how far alternatives exist and can carry out tasks as needed.

Public policy efficiency can also be achieved in various ways. Adequacy can be interpreted as public policy that extends even to a remote area. Adequacy also relates to how well the level of effectiveness satisfies growing needs, values, and opportunities.

Facilities and infrastructure are needed to prevent forest and land fires. Facilities and infrastructure are to prevent forest and land fires are sufficient for mobility and monitoring equipment for locations prone to forest and land fires. Such as the availability of official motorbikes to carry out socialization activities and overall patrols so they can easily reach remote locations. Then, the availability of drones, mexiprone, and microuav, whose range can reach 10 km, mexiprone up to 1 km used in preventive patrols or detecting hotspots.

Alignment

Alignment in public policy can be interpreted as justice given and obtained by public policy targets. The criteria of equality or equity are closely related to legal and social rationality and point to the distribution of consequences and efforts between different groups in society. Equity-oriented

policies are policies whose consequences or efforts are fairly distributed. A program may be effective, efficient, and sufficient if the benefit costs are evenly distributed.

Equalization can also be interpreted as leveling with equality according to needs. Facilities and infrastructure can help the Regional Disaster Management Agency and contribute to each other to resolve the fire problem correctly. Facilities and infrastructure are included in the prevention program. This prevention is an indispensable activity to minimize forest and land fires that can become an obstacle and harm the community. Even though the infrastructure is sufficient, infrastructure facilities such as drones can only be appropriately used if the weather is favorable.

Responsiveness

Responsiveness is the ability of the bureaucracy to recognize the needs of the community, develop service agendas and priorities, and develop programs to meet the needs and aspirations of the community. *Responsiveness* in public policy is defined as the response to an existing activity or policy (Lukman et al. 2022).

According to Hormon, responsiveness is the government's (organization) ability to recognize needs, set agendas and priorities, and develop programs based on the needs and aspirations of the community. Responsiveness is critical in implementing public policy; responsiveness determines whether the public policy is successful or not.

The Meranti Regional Disaster Management Agency is responsive when the community provides information regarding the occurrence of fires; this is undoubtedly very useful in reducing and minimizing forest and land fires.

However, the Meranti Islands Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency is constrained by access and distance. So that the Blood Disaster Management Agency cannot directly extinguish fires. Therefore, the Meranti Islands Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency contacted the village government to help extinguish the fire.

Accuracy

Accuracy is a person's ability to direct a motion to an attack by its purpose. Accuracy is a person's ability to control free movements against a target. Accuracy is a factor that a person needs to achieve the desired target.

Accuracy can also refer to the value, benefits, or price of public policies that have been implemented. The criteria used to select several alternatives to be recommended by assessing whether the results of the recommended alternatives are feasible choices. This accuracy relates to the benefits and risks of the program or public policy made.

The prevention program carried out by the Meranti Islands Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency is considered very useful in minimizing the occurrence of fires. However, success in preventing forest and land fires requires many parties and commitment from all parties. If it is charged to one agency alone, minimizing forest and land fires in the Meranti Islands Regency will be difficult. The inhibiting factors that affect the performance of the Regional Disaster Management Agency in preventing forest and land fires in the Meranti Islands Regency include: 1) Lack of water during the dry season makes extinguishing fires that devour forests and land difficult; 2) Large area, so it takes several days to extinguish fires; 3) The location of forest and land fires is far away because the access is from one island to another, so it takes time to reach the destination.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research conducted, the following conclusions can be drawn: 1) The Regional Disaster Management Agency in Preventing Forest and Land Fires in the Meranti Islands Regency has worked on its duties and functions. However, its performance has yet to be maximized. The occurrence of forest and land fires in the Meranti Islands Regency evidences this; 2) In preventing forest and land fires, the Meranti Islands Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency still needs to overcome obstacles, such as the location of forest and land fires that are far away, so the Regional Disaster Management Agency needs help preventing forest and land fires. Regional Disaster Management needs help implementing forest and land prevention and is said to be less maximizing because patrol actions are only carried out in places prone to forest and land fires.

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