

Yuli Tri Suwarni, *The Jakarta Post*, Bandung | Sat, 07/30/2011 8:00 AM

Incomplete and inaccurate geospatial information can lead to delays in enforcing laws, subsequently triggering conflicts, a lawmaker says.

“We have laws that require government regulations on geospatial mapping,” Daryatmo Mardiyanto from the House of Representatives’ Commission VII said Thursday in Bandung at a seminar and workshop on revitalizing geospatial information management at the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB).

“The government regulations on geospatial mapping are expected to determine national boundaries, borders between provinces and boundaries of newly autonomous regions that often spark issues as they are also related to boundaries for natural resources, land, infrastructure and irrigation,” he said.

Daryatmo said 170 laws were at risk of not being approved due to the absence of 93 types of information and basic spatial data, which have not been updated since 2000.

He said inaccurate geospatial information could lead to the loss or lack of inventory data on natural resources.

Daryatmo cited the example of the confusion over the number of islands in Indonesia: either 13,644, 17,504 or 17,508. Inaccurate data on the size of forests has also sparked conflicts, he said.

“In Gorontalo, data on the size of forests issued by the agricultural, forestry and plantation agencies, the regional planning board, the Central Commission on the Formation of Gorontalo Province and the Forestry Ministry are all different. We don’t know which data is correct,” he said.

At an international level, the lack of current and accurate geospatial information has led to illegal fishing and logging in border areas with other countries.

For example, 150 fishing vessels were reported to have crossed the border in 1987 between Indonesia and Malaysia without official documents.

“We lose an estimated Rp 30 trillion [US\$3.53 billion] a year from illegal fishing and logging due to unclear border mapping,” Daryatmo said.

National Mapping and Survey Coordination Agency (Bakorsutanal) head Asep Karsidi said Indonesia's geospatial map had not been updated for more than 10 years.

Updating the data, he said, would first require government regulations on geospatial data.

However, the basic geospatial information can still serve as a template for particular agencies to create thematic maps of forests, plantations and other land areas.

Asep said Bakorsutanal currently had a 1:250,000 scale map for only 300,000 square kilometers of the country's 8-million-square-kilometer territory.

Detailed maps only exist for Java, Bali and West Nusa Tenggara to facilitate those provincial administrations to formulate territorial spatial planning (RTRW).

"Logically, the absence of spatial planning would have negative impacts on development, including on the commercial sector," Asep said.