

Indonesia will contribute 4.5 percent to the world's total greenhouse emissions in 2030 if no action is taken to curb the rising level of emissions, which is predicted to hit 3.2 Gigatons in 2030 from 2.1 Gigatons in 2005, a DNPI report says.

DNPI executive chairman Rachmat Witoelar said the strategies would not adversely affect economic growth.

"We now have a greater view of how to integrate strong economic growth with reducing emissions," he said, adding that people would reject strategies that threatened economic growth.

"We have found that economic development and greenhouse gas mitigation can be mutually reinforcing," he said. "A more sustainable economic path requires a paradigm shift, but in the long-term it will increase Indonesia's economic growth."

Agus Purnomo, head of the council's secretariat, added that the council had studied 150 reduction strategies pertaining to the forestry, agriculture, power, transportation, construction and cement sectors.

The implementation of some strategies would come at no cost or a low cost offset by higher savings, he said. "For example, energy efficient light bulbs cost more to purchase but will result in lower electricity bills," he added.

However, larger reduction projects, such as building geothermal power plants, preventing forest fires and increasing land use efficiency, would require larger investments, he said.

He said that reducing deforestation, practicing zero burning farming, reducing peat decomposition, managing the sustainability of forests and reforestation were the top five mitigation measures.

Based on a report released by the council, deforestation, forest degradation and forest fires are the second largest sources of greenhouse gases in Indonesia after peatland draining and peat fires.

Didy Wurjanto, the secretary of Jambi province's climate change board, said that besides outlining strategies, the council should also provide the public with credible alternatives to current greenhouse gas producing practices.

"We have to realize that it's easy to set targets on paper but reality is different," he said, adding that pressuring local people to achieve those targets would not be effective.

He said farmers and local people must be given an affordable alternative for clearing forests to the slash-and-burn technique.

The government must also provide local administrations with clear guidelines on ways to deal with the problems connected to emission reduction efforts, he said. (JP/gzl)