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## **Riau Forest Fire Triggers Worst Indonesia Haze Pollution**

[<http://globalvoicesonline.org/2014/03/18/riau-forest-fire-triggers-worst-indonesia-haze-pollution/>]

*Posted 18 March 2014 2:53 GMT*

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## Categories



[<http://www.demotix.com/node/2195268>]

*A burning forest in Riau, Indonesia. Photo by Virna Puspa Setyorini, Copyright @Demotix (6/20/2013)*

Forest fires in western Indonesia have intensified this month affecting the residents of Riau, West Sumatra and North Sumatra. The forest burning is also blamed for producing a thick haze to descend on neighboring Singapore and Malaysia.

Fire hotspots have increased [<http://www.republika.co.id/berita/en/national-politics/14/03/13/n2czoc-walhi-sees-forest-fires-as-seriuos-crime>] to more than 2,000 early this month. To contain the fire, the government released six tons of salt [<http://www.republika.co.id/berita/en/national-politics/14/03/11/n29o8x-riau-province-extends-emergency-response-timeline-amid-ongoing-forest-fires>] above Riau to trigger rain in the 13,000 hectares of affected area.

Air pollution has worsened most especially in Riau, regarded as the 'ground zero' [<https://globalvoicesonline.org/2013/07/15/riau-indonesia-ground-zero-of-southeast-asia-haze/>] of the haze disaster. More than 33,300 residents of Riau have already suffered [<http://en.tempo.co/read/news/2014/03/10/206560974/Riaus-Air-Quality-Worsens->] acute respiratory tract infection because of the haze. A bigger number of residents, including children, has been diagnosed with asthma and cough.

The fire is caused by the deliberate burning of forests mainly by corporate agricultural plantations. Big farmers are also accused of causing the 'perpetual' [<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/03/17/sby-concerned-calls-legal-action-against-forest-arsonists.html>] burning of forests because of their pollutive tilling methods.

Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) explained that the forest fire is both a natural and man-made disaster:



**S. B. Yudhoyono** ✓

@SBYudhoyono

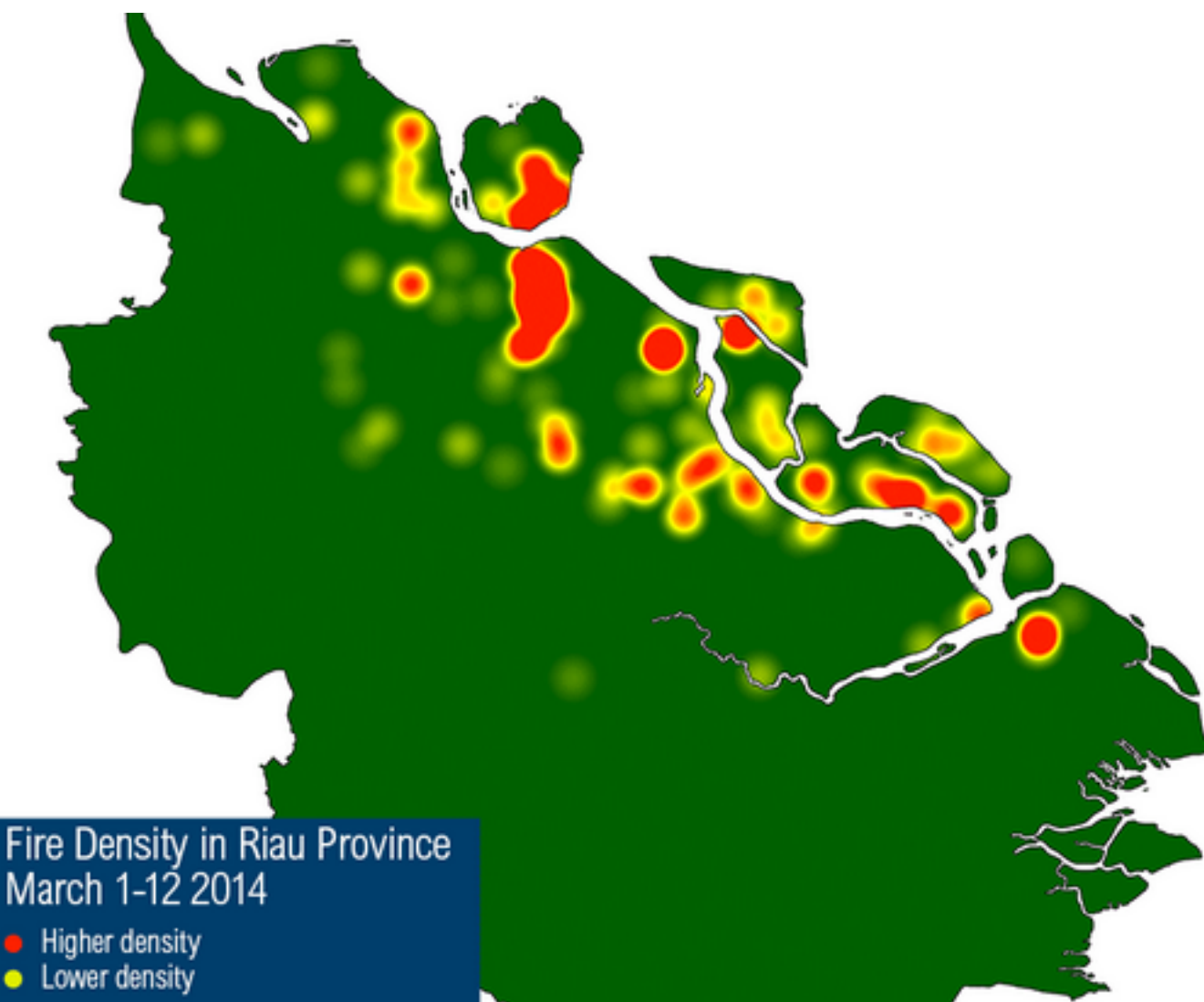
Follow

Kebakaran ladang & asap ini di samping disebabkan oleh cuaca yg ekstrim, juga karena ada penduduk & perusahaan yg membakar ladang. \*SBY\*

9:23 PM - 13 Mar 2014

*The fire and smoke was not only caused by extreme weather, but also by the local people and companies who tried to burn the land. \*SBY\**

The ongoing fire disaster is also expected to affect Indonesia's oil supply [<http://en.tempo.co/read/news/2014/03/17/056562919/Riau-Haze-Crashes-Indonesias-Oil-Production-perpetual-forest-and-peatland-fires-in-Riau>] since Riau accounts for 30 to 40 percent of the national oil production.



[[http://www.wri.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Fire\\_Density\\_animation\\_fixed.gif](http://www.wri.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Fire_Density_animation_fixed.gif)]

*Fire density in Riau, Indonesia. Image from World Resources Institute*

Twitter hashtags [#PrayForRiau](https://twitter.com/search?q=%23PrayForRiau&src=hash) [<https://twitter.com/search?q=%23PrayForRiau&src=hash>], [#MelawanAsap](https://twitter.com/search?q=%23MelawanAsap&src=hash) [<https://twitter.com/search?q=%23MelawanAsap&src=hash>], and [#RiauHaze](https://twitter.com/search?q=%23RiauHaze&src=hash) [<https://twitter.com/search?q=%23RiauHaze&src=hash>] are used by Indonesian netizens to monitor the haze and fire situation:



@jeanneross

 Follow

before and afternya riau. [#PrayforRiau](#) everyone. Hoping for a heavy rain in Riau. amen.

12:11 AM - 16 Mar 2014

11 RETWEETS



**JuLiana Sitindaon**

@Jueluvidi

 Follow

How we can survive in this city? Please [#PrayForRIAU](#)  
[#MelawanAsap](#) cc: [@delpieroale](#) [@delpieroINA](#) [@juventusfc](#)

8:31 PM - 13 Mar 2014

7 RETWEETS 1 FAVORITE





Riau Province, Sumatera Island of Indonesia is currently covered by hazardous haze with a PM2.5 index of more than 500. It puts the lives of at least 6 million people in Indonesia and Neighbour countries are also affected!

It is a result of illegal land clearing by massive forest burning. It is **NOT** natural disaster. It is a man made disaster! This has happened for 17 years!

We, the people of Riau, is urging the world to put an end to this. Companies must be held accountable. Our Government need to be alerted! We need your help. **Please help Retweet**

Save Riau, Save The World!



**Jerry**  
@iamjrma

Follow

[#MelawanAsap](#) Don't stop now, until those corporations act responsibly. If we stop, next year will be the same.

9:25 AM - 15 Mar 2014

2 RETWEETS 2 FAVORITES



**KYUHYUN'S WIFE** ε~)♥  
@Kyuteukbi

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WE MISSED THIS! THE CLEAN AIR LIKE THIS! NOT LIKE THIS!  
[#PrayForRiau](#)

10:00 PM - 13 Mar 2014

7 RETWEETS



**Dyah Puspa Arum**  
@DyahPuspaArum

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i know how hard it is to live in a place with bad situation and you can't go anywhere because you can't see anything outside [#PrayForRiau](#)

10:42 AM - 15 Mar 2014



**Dedy Ong**

@OngDedy

Follow

we deserve to be awarded as the no 1 city with the worst hazardous haze in the world and the president doesnt give a damn. [#RiauHaze](#)

7:45 AM - 12 Mar 2014



**Lutfi**

@LutfiAfansyah

Follow

5% oxygen only. What a horrible situation it is [#PrayForRiau](#)

4:40 PM - 15 Mar 2014



**Miftahul Jannah**

@miftahulmitaa

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This is not the doom of the Gods. But at the hands of people who are not responsible. [#PrayForRiau](#)

1:37 PM - 13 Mar 2014

1 RETWEET



**satria putra**

@satria\_pku

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RT [@OngDedy](#): let's make this an International Issue! we need unite to STOP this. [#PrayForRiau](#) ...

[m.tmi.me/1dVxwL](https://m.tmi.me/1dVxwL)

11:36 PM - 13 Mar 2014

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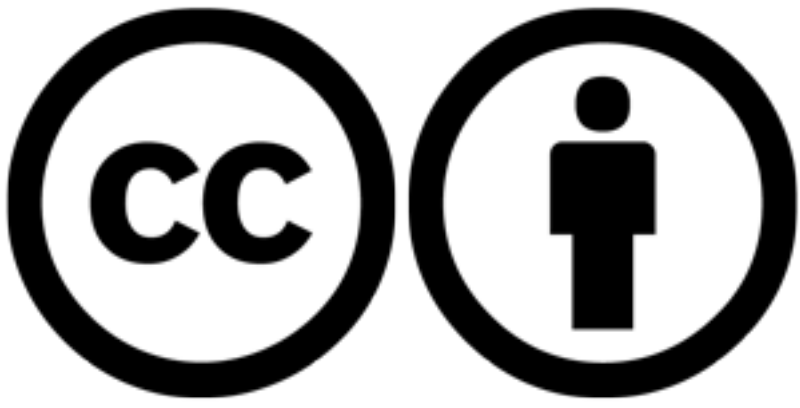


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