**Indonesia Cuts Back on Fire Protection**

**印度尼西亚削减消防预算**

Budget cuts caused by the coronavirus crisis have forced Indonesia to reduce fire patrols and protection for some of the world’s most important forests, the environment ministry said recently.

最近印尼环境部表示，冠状病毒危机导致的预算削减迫使印尼减少了对一些全球重量级的森林进行防火巡逻及防火保护。

Indonesia’s forests are some of the biggest in the world. They are home to more than a tenth of the world’s mammal species and nearly a fifth of its birds. And the cuts come ahead of the worst season for fires.

印度尼西亚地区的森林是世界上最大的森林之一。它们是世界上超过十分之一的哺乳动物物种和近五分之一鸟类的家园。而此次预算削减又在火灾最严重的季节到来之际。

Indonesia is also the world’s top producer of palm oil. Fires, often set to clear land for palm oil plantations, were very damaging in 2019.

印尼也是世界上最大的棕榈油生产国。2019年为开垦棕榈油种植园而放火清理土地的行为给森林带来了巨大破坏。

It is still too early in the dry season, when most land is cleared, to get a clear picture of what will happen this year. But a careful study of satellite information shows about 400,000 hectares were cleared in the first 24 weeks of 2020. In the same time period last year, 300,000 hectares were cleared.

在大部分土地都被清理过的旱季，目前定论今年将遭遇何种情形还为时过早。但一份基于卫星信息的详细研究显示，2020年的前24周大约有40万公顷土地被清理。去年同期，则有30万公顷土地被清理。

Environmental officials said that the coronavirus outbreak is affecting the country’s economy. Nearly $50 billion is being sent to health emergency programs. This led to a 50 percent budget cut for the team that finds and puts out fires. At the same time, people who lost their jobs during the health crisis are clearing land for crops using fires. And in some areas, social distancing rules are making it harder to fight fires.

环境部门表示，冠状病毒的爆发正在影响该国的经济。近500亿美元资金被用于卫生应急项目。这导致防火巡逻及消防组的预算削减了50%。与此同时，在健康危机中失业的人们也在通过放火开垦的方法清理土地种植农作物。而在一些地区，保持社会安全距离的规定使得灭火更加困难。

President Joko Widodo called for the tough enforcement of laws in order to stop illegal fires. And the environment and forest minister told parliament recently that an extra $35 million was needed to fight forest fires this year.

佐科·维多多总统呼吁严厉执法，以制止非法放火的行为。最近环境和森林部长对议会宣称，今年需要3500万美元的额外资金来防范治理森林火灾。

Environmentalists agreed the budget cuts could have bad results.

环保人士一致认为削减预算可能会带来不良后果。

“There is a real risk of another ecological and health disaster in 2020,” said Kiki Taufik, head of Greenpeace Southeast Asia Forest campaign.

东南亚森林绿色和平运动的负责人琪琪·陶菲克说：“2020年另一场生态健康灾难极有可能发生。”

I'm John Russell.

约翰·拉塞尔报道。

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