Press release

**Work From Home (WFH) policy not capable of clearing Jakarta's air**

Policy makers need to address all major sources of air pollution

**JAKARTA, 25 August 2023** - The air pollution problem that has plagued Jakarta and its surroundings continues to receive public attention, prompting the central and provincial governments to take swift action. However, instead of focusing on addressing the main sources of air pollution in Jakarta, the government has chosen to issue policies that target individuals, such as work from home (WFH).

In response, the Center for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) released a brief analysis on Friday, August 25, 2023, with some key findings, namely:

- The Jakarta region is plagued by persistent high levels of air pollution, with average PM2.5 levels exceeding WHO guidelines by around 7 times.
- Pollution levels are highly correlated with the modeled exhaust emissions of the various coal-fired power plants that reach Jakarta, and clearly show the contribution of the power sector and transboundary sources overall.
- Air pollution in Jakarta is a mix of local emissions occurring within the city, as well as long-range pollutants carried by winds from nearby provinces. A regional action plan is needed to address all major emission-contributing sectors.
- Measures related to addressing the COVID-19 pandemic and other traffic volume reductions have not resulted in a noticeable reduction in PM2.5 levels, suggesting that reducing travel and driving locally will not solve the problem.
- Underestimating the contribution of coal-fired power plants to recent pollution will not help address the current critical issues. Instead of focusing too much on the use of private motorized vehicles, both four-wheelers and two-wheelers in Jakarta, the government should systematically address the main sources of pollution at the local level.

**Quotes:**

"We (CREA) have identified a dozen coal-fired power plants near Jakarta, located in Banten and West Java. Our analysis of recent air pollution episodes in Jakarta shows that pollution levels increase when the wind blows from locations with coal-fired power plants. This suggests that coal power plants are part of the problem and helps validate our modeling results that found that coal power plants are responsible for around 2,000 air pollution deaths annually in Jakarta alone," said Lauri Myllyvirta, Lead Analyst, CREA."
"The root cause of air pollution in Jakarta cannot be reduced to just one source, such as commuting. For example, there was no measurable decrease in pollution during work from home (WFH). Air pollution in Jakarta comes from multiple sources and must be addressed across provinces, starting with enforcement of emission standards for coal-fired power plants, industry and transportation, and ultimately inter-provincial and national coordination to address all major polluters," emphasised Katherine Hasan, Analyst, CREA.

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About CREA

The Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) is an independent research organisation focused on revealing the trends, causes, and health impacts, as well as the solutions, to air pollution. CREA was founded in December 2019 in Helsinki and has staff in several Asian and European countries. The organisation's work is funded through philanthropic grants and revenue from commissioned research.

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