



## Indonesian NGOs: Even with LEI certification, APP paper products are unsustainable

-- Joint Press Release by KKI Warsi, FZS Indonesia Program, PKHS, Jikalahari, Walhi Riau, Walhi Jambi and WWF Riau --

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**JAMBI & PEKANBARU, INDONESIA** – The recent certification of an Asia Pulp & Paper (APP)/Sinar Mas pulp plantation by the Indonesian Ecolabelling Institute (LEI) suggests that the LEI standards need to be strengthened, as APP products are not sustainable, a group of non-governmental organizations in Indonesia warned global paper buyers today.

APP and LEI recently jointly announced that APP will start selling LEI certified paper products near the end of the year. But such paper products do not indicate that APP has improved its practices, seven NGOs said.

KKI Warsi, Frankfurt Zoological Society Indonesia Program, PKHS (Sumatra Tiger Conservation Program), Jikalahari, Walhi Riau, Walhi Jambi and WWF-Indonesia recommend global buyers avoid the risks associated with purchasing APP/Sinar Mas products, even ones certified by LEI. They also call on LEI to dramatically strengthen its plantation certification standard and auditor requirements to ensure this kind of inappropriate certification does not happen again.

According to APP, five of APP's pulp and paper mills achieved a Chain of Custody certificate earlier this year under the LEI certification program, and plantations managed by one of APP's many pulpwood suppliers, PT. Wirakarya Sakti (WKS), achieved certification under LEI's standard for sustainable forest plantation management.

But APP/Sinar Mas has a lengthy history in Indonesia of indiscriminately clearing high conservation value forests; has been linked to human rights violations of local communities; and continues to clear and drain carbon-rich peat forests, causing globally measurable greenhouse gas emissions.

"This certification is not credible and transparent, since inputs by NGOs and affected communities were ignored," said Dicky Kurniawan of KKI Warsi.

With the certification of an APP/Sinar Mas Group plantation, the NGOs warned that the LEI plantation certification standard allows continued destruction and conversion of natural forest and social problems in the same concessions where the certified plantations are located. LEI also does not take into consideration the large-scale environmental and social problems the APP/Sinar Mas group continues to cause in Indonesia.

A farmers group in the area formally protested against the certification as PT. WKS had evicted farmers from their lands to develop the certified concessions. But the LEI auditors refused to meet with them to hear their concerns.

PT. WKS concessions together lost more than 48,000 hectares (59%) of their remaining natural forest between 2007 and 2008, while the audit was underway. And 31% of all concession area of PT. WKS is on peat soil, over 60% of which were still covered by natural forest in 2000. Historical Landsat image analysis shows that close to half of the peatland forest has been replaced by acacia plantation. Even during the audit period of 2007 and 2008, the company cleared close to 70% (20,353 ha) of the last remaining natural peatland forest in these concessions, leaving only small fragments and strips of natural forest between acacia (see the attached Map).

The NGOs predict huge CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the loss of natural forest and decomposition and burning of continuously drained peat. Since peatlands emit globally significant amounts of carbon once cleared, the audit's failure to address this is a serious flaw, the NGOs said.

NGOs also are concerned that the LEI scheme lacks safeguards to ensure forest companies or groups as a whole are not undermining the spirit of LEI certification.

"LEI should not certify any of APP/SMG's wood suppliers as they continue to clear and destroy natural forest and peat soil in Indonesia and cause social problems by operations outside the certified areas," Susanto Kurniawan of Jikalahari. "APP concessions together lost over 450,000 hectares of natural forest since 2000, over half of which was on peatlands." (see the attached Map)

In 2007, Forest Stewardship Council publicly announced their dissociation with APP globally, saying: "The FSC Board of Directors decided that association with APP would threaten the good will and faith invested in the name Forest Stewardship Council and the years of support and participation by companies that are truly committed to the pursuit of responsible forest management globally."

The NGOs call on LEI to follow FSC to make a similar policy and review its relationship with APP/SMG and their associated companies.

The environmental organizations in Sumatra call APP/SMG to solve its real issue: large-scale destruction of natural forest, emissions from natural forest and peat destruction and social problems.

#### Notes to Editor

- On APRIL certification, please see: ***Batalan pelaksanaan proses sertifikasi bertahap pengelolaan hutan tanaman lestari (PHTL) PT RAPP*** [http://jikalahari.or.id/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=59&Itemid=5](http://jikalahari.or.id/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=59&Itemid=5))
- Public summary of the LEI certification of PT. Wirakarya Sakti by TÜV International Indonesia is available at:  
[http://www.tuv.com/web/media\\_get.php?mediaid=23890&fileid=56363&sprachid=2](http://www.tuv.com/web/media_get.php?mediaid=23890&fileid=56363&sprachid=2) or at:  
[http://www.tuv.com/id/en/forest\\_management.html](http://www.tuv.com/id/en/forest_management.html)
- FSC's public statement can be found at:  
[http://www.wwf.or.jp/activities/upfiles/20080116opt\\_fsc.pdf](http://www.wwf.or.jp/activities/upfiles/20080116opt_fsc.pdf)

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**Map of APP/SMG associated concessions and natural forest loss in Riau and Jambi:** Total size of pulpwood plantation (HTI) concessions known to be associated with APP/SMG group in Riau and Jambi Provinces is 1.4 million ha, 20% of which is concessions of PT. Wirakarya Sakti (WKS) (map on the top is zoom-in map of the WKS concessions). APP/SMG also have more concessions in South Sumatra.

