



MEDIA RELEASE

APRIL GROUP DECLARES FIRE DANGER PERIOD IN RIAU, INDONESIA

- *Fire Danger Period declared by APRIL spanning all of its managed concession areas in Riau Province through to 30 September 2020*
- *The declaration of a Fire Danger Period is an essential part of APRIL's approach to fire prevention during dry seasons*
- *Plans in place to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on fire prevention and suppression activity*

Kerinci, Indonesia - 1 July 2020: APRIL Group has declared a Fire Danger Period across all its managed concession areas in Riau Province, Indonesia, from 1 July through to 30 September 2020. The declaration is a key element of the company's efforts to restrict the use of fire by third parties in at-risk landscapes which also includes community-level fire prevention programs and collaboration with regional authorities. This is supported by an extensive fire suppression capability.

APRIL is engaging closely with local communities during the Fire Danger Period to provide information on the no burning restrictions that will come into force in APRIL-managed forest areas. Notice boards, village meetings and other activities will keep local communities updated. The company will also collaborate with government agencies and other stakeholders during the dry season to share information and provide support.

APRIL is also deploying measures to manage the potential impact of COVID-19 on fire prevention and suppression activity. The company's firefighting teams have been directed to optimise the use of remote sensing technologies, carefully disinfect equipment and to use aggressive suppression tactics to put out fires, limiting the need for large numbers of fire management personnel on hand in one place. Team members are also visiting schools to provide information about adequate handwashing and other health and safety measures.

"Close collaboration among all stakeholders is essential to ensure an effective response to the risks of forest and land fires in Riau," said Craig Tribolet, Sustainability Operations Manager, APRIL Group. "Our experience shows that community level fire prevention initiatives are effective alongside a strong operational capability to detect and respond to fires at a local level."

"Prevention is a critical part of the fire management cycle. It's about stopping the fires before they start by making communities aware of the enormous damage that an uncontrolled fire can cause to themselves and their neighbors," he added. "The announcement of Fire Danger Period helps people to be alert about the serious health and environmental risks of fire and is particularly important in the context of the current pandemic."

APRIL's community-focused Fire Free Village Program (FFVP), which is devised and executed in consultation with the company's senior management, remains the cornerstone of its fire prevention strategy. The FFVP complements APRIL's commitment to fire prevention and the company's no burn policy, working in close collaboration with communities to address the underlying causes of fires through a process of socialization, education and increased awareness of the impacts of unmanaged burning and smoke haze.

Local communities are provided with tools and information to improve their understanding of fire management and provided with access to alternative sustainable farming systems to guide better decisions on land use management providing alternatives to burning.



The FFVP has established partnerships with almost 80 communities spanning 753,604 hectares, an area almost ten times the size of Singapore. The program has helped reduce fire incidents in participating communities by approximately 90% since it was set up in early 2015.

“More than 80% of the fires that we have had to manage over the last year have been related to land preparation by small land holders. This reinforces the need to work closely with our neighboring communities to ensure they understand the risks of burning and to provide alternatives,” said Sailal Arimi, Fire Prevention Manager, APRIL Group.

During the declared Fire Danger Period, APRIL will increase ground and air patrols by fire crews. APRIL has invested over US\$9 million to date in the necessary resources, including one helicopter, two airboats, 39 lookout towers, 521 water pumps, and firefighting training for 724 volunteers across 48 Riau villages as at December 2019. The company also has 1080 Rapid Response Team members, including 260 professional firefighters as well as a Fire Emergency Response Team (FERT) made up of 30 dedicated firefighters on 24/7 standby across the company’s concession areas throughout the dry season.

APRIL also operates a 24-hour Fire Hotline (+62 811 707 2121) to enable people to report fires occurring within or near its concession areas.

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About APRIL Group:

APRIL Group is a leading producer of fibre, pulp and paper with plantations and manufacturing operations in Riau Province, Indonesia. We are committed to sustainability in our business and in the broader landscapes where we operate. Under our production-protection model, we adopted a unique 1-for-1 goal where we aim to conserve one hectare of forest for every hectare of plantation, and currently conserve and restore about 370,000 hectares of forests, including the largest peatland restoration project in Indonesia. For more information, visit www.aprilasia.com and follow Twitter @aprilpulp