



## **APRIL Group Declares Fire Danger Period in Riau Concession Areas**

**Riau, Indonesia - 1 July 2023:** APRIL Group has today declared a Fire Danger Period across its own and managed concession areas in Riau Province, Sumatra, including its concessions under the Restorasi Ekosistem Riau (RER) program, from 1 July to 30 September 2023. The company has ramped up its fire prevention and management systems in line with its standard procedures, but also based on the higher probability of the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) and El Niño climate pattern emerging in the coming months. These can result in drier than average conditions across the Fire Danger Period.

The World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) has indicated an 80% probability of El Niño and all models indicate a positive IOD between July and September 2023, which has historically been associated with increased fire and smoke haze. During the Fire Danger Period, APRIL will increase ground and air patrols to monitor for fire-related incidents, while also continuing to work with local communities to help reduce the risk of fires.

Since 2015, APRIL has declared a Fire Danger Period each year to put the company's fire operations teams on high alert and to monitor and to respond to any hotspots or fire incidents that arise in its concession areas. This declaration is a key element of APRIL's integrated approach to forest fire management and part of its continued commitment to support government agencies and work with other concession holders and communities to mitigate the risk of fire during dry seasons.

Prevention remains a cornerstone of APRIL's approach to fire management. The company has worked continuously with communities since 2014 through its Fire Free Village Program to educate and raise awareness about responsible forestry management practices among local villages. As of June 2023, 42 villages are participating in the program, covering a total area of more than 900,000 ha. Fire incidents within the areas covered by the FFVP have been reduced by more than 90% since the program began.

"We are fully aware of the risks posed by the climate this year and are preparing accordingly. Based on our experience, fire prevention is the primary factor in limiting the risk of fires overall. Through a focus on fire prevention, we can mitigate risks of health issues for our employees and communities, and limit any impact on our operations," said Sihol Aritonang, President Director, PT. Riau Andalan Pulp and Paper (PT. RAPP), the operating arm of APRIL Group.

The company is also working closely with the Pelalawan government and other companies in the regency to implement its cluster-based fire management program to ensure a more coordinated fire prevention and suppression efforts. In addition, we actively support multi-stakeholder initiatives led by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and regional governments to prevent forest and land fires, and to suppress fires if they occur.

Since 1993, APRIL has operated a strict 'No Burn' policy and continues to adhere to the Indonesian Government's legal requirement to address the risks posed by fires. The company has invested heavily in state-of-the-art fire detection and suppression technology, through satellite imaging and CCTV towers located around the forest plantations. Its resources also include one helicopter, two airboats, 260 professional fire fighters, 39 lookout towers and 45 CCTV units, 552 water pumps, and firefighting training for 724 volunteers across 39 Riau villages. In the case of potential hotspots or fire incidents, APRIL has prepared a 24-hour Fire Hotline (+62 811 707 2121) to enable people to report on fires occurring around its concession areas.

**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 360,000 hectares of forests, including the largest peatland restoration project in Indonesia. For more information, visit [www.aprilasia.com](http://www.aprilasia.com) and follow Instagram @discoverAPRIL.*

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