

# APRIL RESPONSES TO SAC'S RECOMMENDATIONS

October 17, 2014

The independent Stakeholder Advisory Committee created to oversee APRIL's Sustainable Forest Management Policy met for three days in August with executives of the company. It announced the appointment of an independent auditor to assess the Policy's implementation and following the meeting, the Committee published nine recommendations on ways to improve APRIL's policy implementation.

All nine recommendations were accepted by APRIL. The recommendations are outlined below and accompanied by detail of the progress towards implementation as follows:

- 1. Committee recommendation: Clarify and strengthen the use of HCV processes, including use of the HCV (High Conservation Value) Resource Network for peer-review of new suppliers.**

APRIL has made it clear in its Policy and has reiterated to employees and suppliers that any Mixed Hardwood (MHW) must come from non HCV Forest (HCVF) areas that have been identified through independent HCV assessments, based on the Indonesian HCV toolkit and peer-reviewed by the Technical Panel members from HCV Resource Network (HCVRN). APRIL took note of this recommendation and will encourage all new suppliers to have their HCV reports peer-reviewed directly by HCVRN.

- 2. Committee recommendation: Ensure that programs are effective to prevent development of HCV areas undergoing peer-review until peer-review is completed and HCV report is issued.**

Since January 2014, APRIL has imposed a moratorium on forest development in all areas undergoing HCV assessment or the peer-review process. APRIL will continue this process based on the Committee's recommendation. Complementing this, APRIL has strengthened the depth and frequency of its interaction with suppliers to enforce compliance with this policy.

- 3. Committee recommendation: Engage with stakeholders to improve the current HCV process in Indonesia.**

APRIL has met and engaged closely with the HCV Resource Network (HCVRN) and HCV Network Indonesia (HCV-NI). Discussion is ongoing to explore how it can strengthen the HCV process in Indonesia.

**4. Committee recommendation: Develop a long term plan for a broader landscape perspective to identify and protect conservation zones.**

APRIL is convening a diverse group of stakeholders to determine how it builds on its current HCVF process to include a wider landscape approach. In addition, APRIL has implemented satellite technology to inspect plantations and to ensure that conservation zones are well managed. This is a focus area and APRIL will update with more details at the next SAC meeting.

**5. Committee recommendation: Enhance monitoring and management of conservation zones for biodiversity.**

APRIL is sponsoring and managing a restoration project on Kampar Peninsula in Riau Province in collaboration with Fauna Flora International (FFI). The project includes a biodiversity audit incorporating field inspection augmented by hundreds of video camera traps. Work is currently in progress and the results should reveal important facts about the state of fauna and flora in this conservation zone.

**6. Committee recommendation: Continue its successful buffer strategy (“ring-concept”) and proceed with ecosystem restoration activities, particularly in Kampar Peninsula**

For the past 10 years, Riau Province has experienced massive economic development and a growing population, which increase the pressure on land and threaten the existing conservation areas. APRIL continues to operate plantations wherever possible based on the “ring-concept” and landscape-management approach, which means APRIL develops plantations around conservation zones to buffer protected land from encroachment and fire. APRIL has already completed the first year of its Restorasi Ekosistem Riau restoration project. This is a 10-year, US\$17 million effort to restore 20,265 hectares of degraded land. APRIL has also acquired another eco-restoration license to rehabilitate 20,000 hectares in Pulau Padang. And additional restoration programs at Kampar Peninsula are in the final planning stages and will feature ‘ring-concept’ strategies.

**7. Committee recommendation: Take a leadership role in fire management by:**

- **Improving collaboration within the industry around fire prevention and control;**
- **Scaling-up engagement with community and government for fire prevention and control;**
- **Continuing to collaborate with the World Resources Institute to improve its Global Forest Watch Fires tracking program.**

APRIL has launched two recent major leadership efforts:

1) It published a Memorandum of Understanding with the government in Riau Province to share firefighting resources and expertise with Indonesian emergency response agencies;

2) We have developed an incentive program for villages to encourage them not to burn the land. Early evidence suggests the programme has been successful, with a more formal review to follow at the end of the fire season where successes and learning will be evaluated and shared. As well and in the immediate term, APRIL is making its firefighters, helicopters and equipment available to help local government to suppress forest fires;

APRIL is also seeking collaboration with other institutions (i.e. KPHP TBS) in the landscape to scale up the program.

**8. Committee recommendation: Improve capacity building in communication with suppliers in regards to policy compliance, including monitoring implementation of its HCVF program.**

APRIL has strengthened its interaction with suppliers to enforce compliance with this policy. Work is currently on progress and APRIL is using spatial mapping and field verification technology to enforce its Standard Operating Procedures for supplier compliance.

**9. Committee recommendation: Work at the landscape scale to prevent damage on peat domes by other land users.**

APRIL is actively managing forest plantations in peat land areas that surround peat domes. Our continued presence discourages encroachment, burning and illegal logging – the biggest threats to peat land sustainability. Work is currently on progress and APRIL is working with NGOs, peat land experts, and international stakeholders to study peatland conservation in the Kampar Peninsula.