



Co Chairs' Summary of Field Trip

Tree Plantations in the Landscape
Report back from Field Visits
13th – 14th June 2023
Pangkalan Kerinci,
Riau, Indonesia

Objectives

- Capture the main themes of presentation (not all the data)
- Show what has changed since the IMPF 2007
- Hopefully catch some of your main lines of enquiry
- Bring out some of the main points of discussion
- This is not meant to be a full report but to spur discussion and encourage your inputs

Where were we in 2007?

- Concern over conversion of natural forest; use of HCVF as tool to mitigate forest conversion
- Human-wildlife conflict and potential wildlife extinction due to loss of habitat
- Social concerns: insecure land tenure and use rights, land/livelihood competition between indigenous and migrant communities
- Social conflicts as result of inadequate governance, CSR as means to address gaps in governance
- High deployment of subcontracted labour
- Mill capacity expansion ahead of sustainable fiber supply resources, contractual agreement with local populations for raw materials to supply mills

Proposed solutions from 2007:

- Private sector as vehicle for sustainable development; distribution of benefits include both job creation and workers welfare improvement through development of best management practices
- Land tenure and use rights
- Strategies to reduce the risk of forest conversion, including landscape-based processes.

What do we see now (2023)

Fibre Supply

- Big change since 2007 when MTH was still being fed into mill
- Policy of Sustainable Intensification
- Growing more from same 1 m ha land base
- Mill produces 2.8 m t/year pulp
- APRIL produces 85% of fibre the mill needs
- Other 15% comes from known suppliers esp. West Kalimantan: audits for zero deforestation, environmental and social standards, legality and full traceability
- New board mill will not require expansion due to removal of 'bottlenecks' so expect existing plantations to furnish additional 600,000 - 900,000 tonnes
- No other mill owned by RGE

Enhanced productivity

- Notable rise in productivity from 2016-2022: 25.6 MAI to 29.4 MAI
- Intensive cultivation of seedlings in 6 huge nurseries
- Selective breeding for higher productivity, pest resistance, wind resistance, better wood density, fibre length
- Tissue culture: Very high tech, higher productivity, pest and disease free, can delay planting, slightly higher costs. 40 m seedlings per year: No GMOs
- Silvicultural improvements
 - Immediate replanting within 1 week of land preparation
 - Precise fertilizer treatments
 - IPM and weeding up to 31 months
 - Improved planning
- Monitoring and use of drones:
 - Measure and assess harvest readiness
 - Aerial spraying pesticides (reduced amounts with greater precision)
 - Fire spotting

More efficient harvesting

- Highly mechanised since 2007
- Very short rotation 4.5 years of *A. crassicarpa*
- Mechanisation of harvesting
 - On peat barges transfer timber to log pond
 - On mineral soils direct to log pond
 - Trucked to mill
- Ground preparation follows immediately
- Not causing retrenchment as labour requirements high
- Upskilling and training of higher tech workers using simulators

HCV management

- Significant changes since 2007
- Mosaic forestry now being implemented
- c. 360,000 ha HCVMAAs
- 5/6 HCVs identified: HCVs 1, 2, 4, 5 & 6
- Seeking to create wildlife corridors (work in progress)
- Management by restricting access and countering identified threats
- Monitoring protocol under development: species surveys to be digitalized
- Community forest management challenging especially on mineral soils where oil palms offer a lucrative alternative to conservation
- **Discuss: what should be done about HCVs cleared since 1994?**

Water Management

- What was just an idea in 2007 is now being realised
- Old logging canals blocked
- Aim to maintain water table depth at 40-60 cm
- Topographic mapping using LIDAR 2015-2017
- Terraced water table managed through weirs
- Centrally managed and monitored 24/7
- Does result in some drying and subsidence
- *Acacia crassicarpa* roots do not go down into acid water layer

Peatland challenges

- HTI permits were granted by KLHK for plantations on peat: led to climate change concerns
- SBY Govt. created Peat Restoration Agency (BRG) and introduced policy to relocate companies onto mineral soils
- Tussle between BRG and Ministry of Environment and Forests
- BRG now only works on peatland community restoration and management
- Since 2017 APRIL reports to KLHK which oversees water management on peat
- Subsidence measured widely. Although peaks at initial clearance does diminish but still regular trend (2cm/year)

GHG discoveries

- Since 2007: effective fire control, zero deforestation policy, increase in bioenergy and solar: GHG emissions reduced a lot
- Research using GHG towers measure nett CO₂e emissions
 - Degraded land on peat: **High Emissions**
 - Plantations on peat: **Medium Emissions (less than IPCC)**
 - Climax forest on peat: **Now become nett emitter**
- Probable reason: Area getting hotter and drier due to climate change and more El Ninyos
- When water table goes down emissions go up
- **What are carbon market and offset implications?**

Labour considerations

- 35,000 workers
- Nurseries and tissue culture: 90% women
 - Get paid basic rate and piece work
- Harvesting: mainly men almost all contract labour paid as piece work
- Planting: mainly men almost all contract labour paid as piece work
- Weeding: almost all contract labour, ditto
- All subcontractors are required to follow laws and encourage freedom of association
- **Needs further discussion**

Certification

- PEFC uses Indonesia Forest Certification C....?
- 80% of APRIL plantations are PEFC certified
- Other 20% is planted in areas converted after 2000 (ie after PEFC cut off date)
- FSC certification now being sought as from 1st July, in line with new Policy to Address Conversion and Remedy Framework
- Will start with independent assessments
- Then plan and implement Environmental and Social Remedy
- **Needs more discussion**

Community conservation and fire control

- Selected villages near remnant forests outside HTI
- Dayun village: APRIL working with Earthworm
- Trust building and participatory land use planning
- Sign MoU with community after village meeting: village passed new regulations
- Reward with US\$10k pa for community fund
- Control of illegal logging and hunting
- Forest patrols also paid for by company
- US\$ 10k reward for keeping area fire free
- Assisted land clearance with machinery
- Awareness-raising through children and mothers

Suku Anak Rawa people of Penyengat and Akit of Pulau Padang

- Long established customary community of Suku Anak Rawa recognised by Siak Sultanate
- Have their own customary organisation, territory and traditions and customary law: recognised by govt as a customary village
- APRIL and Triomas plantations within their area
- Recognise some benefits but also negative impacts; impact on fishing, lost sago groves and personal grievances aired
- Have demonstrated the extent of their traditional territory since participatory mapping in 2010
- While government is required to legally recognise rights to their territory and customary forest but communities don't want to wait for that
- Would like to resolve land dispute through a responsible process

Malay village of Kampung Tengah

- Long history of association with Siak Sultanate
- Office holders in sultanate lived in the village
- Still maintain their customs and governance
- Uphold their custom alongside their religion (Islam), the one informs the other
- Customary law still exercised with goal of restorative justice
- Recognised as a customary village by the govt with its own administrative territory