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 HCVMAs
- 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