



The Forests Dialogue's

Field Dialogue on Ecosystem Restoration

22-26 April 2024 | East Kalimantan, Indonesia

Concept Note

Engaging the private sector to support ecosystem conservation and restoration to increase biodiversity in Kalimantan

Hosted by Mulawarman University (UnMul) in East Kalimantan, in collaboration with The Forests Dialogue (TFD) and the Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-based Industries (ACSFI) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), with funding provided by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

ABOUT THE ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION INITIATIVE

Responding to calls to scale-up Ecosystem Restoration in degraded landscapes in line with the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (UNDER), The Forests Dialogue (TFD) Ecosystem Restoration Initiative seeks to understand the opportunities for the forest sector to contribute and drive restoration efforts worldwide. Ecosystem restoration is the process of assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed.

In collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-based Industries (ACSFI), TFD convened a [Restoration Roundtable](#) in October 2022 to enhance the forest sector's engagement in ecosystem restoration. Discussions then progressed to identify key strategies to guide private sector actions and to identify the need to form coalitions with other stakeholder groups.

From 31 January 31-1 February, 2023, TFD convened a [Scoping Dialogue](#) to explore a range of stakeholder perspectives and understand potential paths forward for the Initiative. Participants determined that the initiative should focus on the role of the forest sector in ecosystem restoration, in particular the private forest sector, in collaboration with other stakeholders and in the context of actors' roles, rights, and contributions to ecosystem restoration.

The following fracture lines emerged as key themes in need of further dialogue:

- The role and contribution of economically driven reforestation and related restoration activities in meeting restoration goals and expectations.
- The challenges and opportunities of climate/carbon/biodiversity focused financing.
- The pitfalls of incentivizing restoration at the expense of conservation / halting deforestation and conversion.
- Uncertainty around top-down vs. bottom-up approaches to scaling restoration.
- Meeting restoration targets while also meeting the needs of people.
- Credible verification of performance.

A summary of the Ecosystem Restoration Scoping Dialogue can be found here:

https://theforestdialogue.org/sites/default/files/tpls_scoping_dialogue_cochairsummaryfinal.pdf

ABOUT THE DIALOGUE

In partnership with FAO and UnMul, TFD will convene Indonesian and international experts, stakeholders, and rights holders for a multi-stakeholder field dialogue. The field dialogue phase of the initiative has the following goals:

- Clarify ecosystem restoration needs and identify relevant stakeholders in Kalimantan, define priorities for forest sector engagement in ecosystem restoration, and co-create paths forward to achieve positive ecosystem restoration outcomes in the region.
- Bridge understanding and foster coordination between global goals, national commitments, and restoration actions on the ground.
- Build understanding of successful ecosystem restoration approaches, coalitions, and private forest sector engagement.
- Advance thinking and develop a cohesive strategy for how the forest sector can collectively contribute to restoration discussions, policies, and investments at global, regional, and national levels.

The dialogue will include both plenary and small working group formats as well as field visits to hear directly from local participants about existing ecosystem restoration needs, opportunities, and challenges. Outputs of the dialogue include a Background Paper synthesizing key science and knowledge related to ecosystem restoration in Indonesia, a Co-Chairs' Summary highlighting key learnings and recommendations emerging from dialogue, and a co-developed action plan of identified strategies and recommended next steps.

ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION IN KALIMANTAN

Deforestation, forest degradation, and biodiversity continue to be the driving forces behind the need for ecosystem restoration in Kalimantan. Between 2001 and 2022, Indonesia lost 29.4 million hectares of tree cover, equivalent to an 18% decrease in tree cover. East Kalimantan specifically showed a decrease by 20% in tree cover over that same period, with 69% of that loss occurring within natural forest (1). Leading causes of forest degradation and land conversion in Kalimantan include the expansion of oil palm and pulpwood plantations; natural conditions, such as high rainfall leading to erosion; logging and illegal logging; and forest fires linked to human activity (2). Of particular concern are Indonesia's mangrove and peatland forests; Indonesia has the largest extent of mangroves in the world with the mangroves in East and North Kalimantan showing the highest potential for mangrove restoration in the country, while peatland restoration presents the potential for carbon storage and fire risk mitigation (3). Peat-swamp forests furthermore are critical for biodiversity as they provide habitat for the endangered Bornean orangutan population (4).

In recognition of the need for ecosystem restoration, the Indonesian government set a goal of restoring two million hectares of peatland and rehabilitating twelve million hectares of degraded land by 2030 (5). The Indonesian Peatlands and Mangrove Restoration Agency (BRGM), created in 2021, is responsible for implementing restoration targets, though challenges have been identified calling for more coordinated involvement from subnational and local restoration approaches. Despite the recognized need, mangrove restoration and rehabilitation worldwide has had low success (6). A 2023 study in *Nature Ecology and*

1. *Indonesia, Kalimantan Timur*. (n.d.). Global Forest Watch. Retrieved October 10, 2023, from

<https://www.globalforestwatch.org/dashboards/country/IDN/15/?map=eyJjYW5Cb3VuZCI6dHJ1ZX0%3D>

2. Appanah, S., Lamb, D., Durst, P., Thuang, T.L., Sabogal, C., Gritten, D., Mohns, B., Atkinson, J., Shono, K. (2016). *Forest landscape restoration for Asia-Pacific forests: A synthesis* (Vol. 1). FAO and RECOFTC.; Nawir, A.A.; Rumboko, L. (2007). *Forest rehabilitation in Indonesia: Where to after more than three decades?* Center for International Forestry Research.

3. Sasmito, Sigit D., Basyuni M., Kridalaksana, A., Saragi-Sasmito, M., Lovelock, C., and Murdiyarso, D. (2023). "Challenges and opportunities for achieving Sustainable Development Goals through restoration of Indonesia's mangroves." *Nature Ecology and Evolution* 7, 62-70.; Kiely L., Spracklen D.V., Arnold S.R., Papargyropoulou E., Conibear L., Wiedinmyer C., Knotte C., Adrianto H.A. (2021). "Assessing costs of Indonesian fires and the benefits of restoring peatland." *Nature Communications* 12(1), 7044.

4. Harrison, M., Ottay, J., D'Arcy, L., Cheyne, S., Anggodo, et al. (2020). "Tropical forest and peatland conservation in Indonesia: Challenges and directions." *People and Nature* 2(1), 4-28.

5. MoEF, 2021

6. Sasmito, Sigit D., Basyuni M., Kridalaksana, A., Saragi-Sasmito, M., Lovelock, C., and Murdiyarso, D. (2023). "Challenges and opportunities for achieving Sustainable Development Goals through restoration of Indonesia's mangroves." *Nature Ecology and Evolution* 7, 62-70.

Evolution evaluating challenges and opportunities of restoration in Indonesia finds challenges related to identifying appropriate targets and interventions, which have been exacerbated due to gaps in research and in monitoring and evaluation of existing projects and their impacts particularly at the landscape level. In summary, many projects are set up to fail if they do not consider the local situation and garner support from the local community and government (7).

The private sector is currently engaged in ecosystem restoration in a number of ways. The private sector often plays a crucial role in providing funding for restoration projects in Indonesia, alongside international donors (8). The government provides a specific license to private companies for restoration, the Ecosystem Restoration Concession. One such example is the Restorasi Habitat Orangutan Indonesia, a company developed by Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation, which operates under an Ecosystem Restoration Concession in East Kalimantan and Central Kalimantan (9). Additionally, the Forest Stewardship Council, the Borneo Initiative, and Precious Forests Foundation are collaborating on an initiative to restore over 7000 hectares of degraded forests in the Mahakam Ulu Landscape in East Kalimantan (10).

PARTNERS

Mulawarman University

UnMul is a state university which was founded on September 27, 1962. Currently it has 13 faculties and one postgraduate which covers 99 study programs at various levels of education such as diploma, bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees. The number of students is around 38,271 people with 1,048 active lecturers, most of whom have doctoral degrees (404 people) who are experts in their fields.

Carrying the main scientific pattern of tropical rainforests and their environment, UnMul is building a vision "to become an international standard university capable of playing a role in nation building through education, research and community service that relies on natural resources," especially tropical rainforest and their environment. The main theme of UnMul's research development is Integrated Sustainable Tropical Rainforest Ecosystem-based Development. Fields of study that are innovative creative areas include five leading areas, namely: food (local food biodiversity and its benefits); environment and natural resources (protection and management of the environment and tropical natural resources); culture and information (equality and harmonization of life in a tropical environment); energy (protection and management of natural resources and tropical climate as energy sources and renewable energy); and health (tropical diseases and use of biodiversity). UnMul will continue to grow even more rapidly considering that East Kalimantan has been designated as the location for the National Capital (IKN) of the Nusantara.

UnMul has long experience in rehabilitating damaged and unfavorable land into heterogeneous forests. Since 2004, UnMul received a forest management mandate from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia covering an area of 20,271 hectares as a Forest Area with Special Purposes-Soeharto Hill Research and Education Forest (Kawasan Hutan dengan Tujuan Khusus-Hutan Penelitian dan Pendidikan Bukit Soeharto /KHDTK-HPPBS) in Kutai Kartanegara, East Kalimantan. Apart from that, UnMul also carries out many studies on post-mining land rehabilitation.

7. Harrison, M., Ottay, J., D'Arcy, L., Cheyne, S., Anggodo, et al. (2020). "Tropical forest and peatland conservation in Indonesia: Challenges and directions." *People and Nature* 2.(1). 4-28.; Sasmito, Sigit D., Basyuni M., Kridalaksana, A., Saragi-Sasmito, M., Lovelock, C., and Murdiyarso, D. "Challenges and opportunities for achieving Sustainable Development Goals through restoration of Indonesia's mangroves." *Nature Ecology and Evolution* 7 (January 2023): 62-70.

8. Indrajaya, Y., Yuwati, T. W., Lestari, S., Winarno, B., Narendra, B. H., Nugroho, H. Y. S. H., Rachmanadi, D., Pratiwi, Turjaman, M., Adi, R. N., Savitri, E., Putra, P. B., Santosa, P. B., Nugroho, N. P., Cahyono, S. A., Wahyuningtyas, R. S., Prayudyaningsih, R., Halwany, W., Siarudin, M., ... Mendham, D. (2022). Tropical forest landscape restoration in Indonesia: A review. *Land*, 11(3), 328.

9. *Ecosystem restoration concession (ERC) in Kalimantan, Indonesia for orangutan release: A sustainable and responsible solution.* (2011). http://elti.fesprojects.net/2011RestorationConferencendonesia/jamartin_sihite.pdf

10. *Joint forest landscape restoration initiative starts in East Kalimantan, Indonesia.* (2021, May 4). Forest Stewardship Council. <https://fsc.org/en/newscentre/general-news/joint-forest-landscape-restoration-initiative-starts-in-east-kalimantan>

The Forests Dialogue

TFD brings a reputation for facilitating neutral multi-stakeholder dialogue, built on twenty years of experience successfully convening private sector, government, civil social, Indigenous peoples, and local communities on forest issues. TFD provides a neutral platform for dialogue where diverse stakeholders feel welcome and empowered, leading to outcomes that are made durable by the sense of ownership shared by all participants. TFD's process ensures broad participation that enables strong uptake of dialogue outcomes. Recent initiatives that highlight TFD's work engaging the private sector and restoration include Tree Plantations in the Landscape, Understanding Deforestation Free, and the Land Use Dialogues. The Forests Dialogue is a program of The Forest School at Yale School of the Environment (YSE). Founded in 1900, YSE is a fundamental interdisciplinary institution home to robust forestry and environmental sustainability programs.

Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-based Industries (ACSFIs) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

FAO's ACSFI is the only FAO statutory body composed of senior executives from private forest-based industries worldwide. It meets yearly with the main objective of providing guidance on activities and programmes of work of the FAO related to forestry, and to create a forum for dialogue between FAO and the private sector to enhance the understanding of emerging opportunities, and to identify strategic actions that promote sustainable forest management, as well as sustainable consumption and production patterns related to forest products. Responding to the actions outlined in the [ACSFIs Strategic Framework 2020-2030](#), the Committee has identified Ecosystem Restoration as one of its priority topics of focus. In support of this area of strategic interest, the ACSFI has delivered a range of outcomes available on the [ACSFIs website](#). The ACSFI was also selected as potential partner to be part of a corporate ecosystem restoration leadership network to contribute to initiative 8 of the [Capacity, Knowledge and Learning Action Plan for the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration](#).