

# Recommendations for the pulpwood sector



**Wetlands International advocates for a road map for the development of a sustainable pulp wood plantation sector in Indonesia, involving:**

## **In the short term:**

Stringent implementation of the existing 2 year Moratorium on conversion of peatlands in Indonesia, and a permanent extension of this temporary Moratorium for the pulp wood sector;

Immediate revocation of existing but as yet non-operational concession licenses in high-carbon and High Conservation Area (HCV) areas like peatlands and peat swamp forests and conserve and rehabilitate these areas;

Minimise emissions and subsidence using best management practices: increase the water table, stop application of fertilizer, protect the peat soil from direct sunlight, and fire prevention measures, as an intermediate option which should be implemented immediately;

Implementation of a monitoring system in all concessions on peatlands and bordering areas (for off-site impacts), involving development of maps depicting peat extent, peat depth and drainage limit, monitoring of GHG emissions, land subsidence, flooding, fire and biodiversity, and issuing annual public reports on these, verified by independent experts;

Restore priority peat areas for carbon retention, flooding or fire prevention or biodiversity purposes and in buffer zones to peat swamp forest areas.

## **In the medium to long term:**

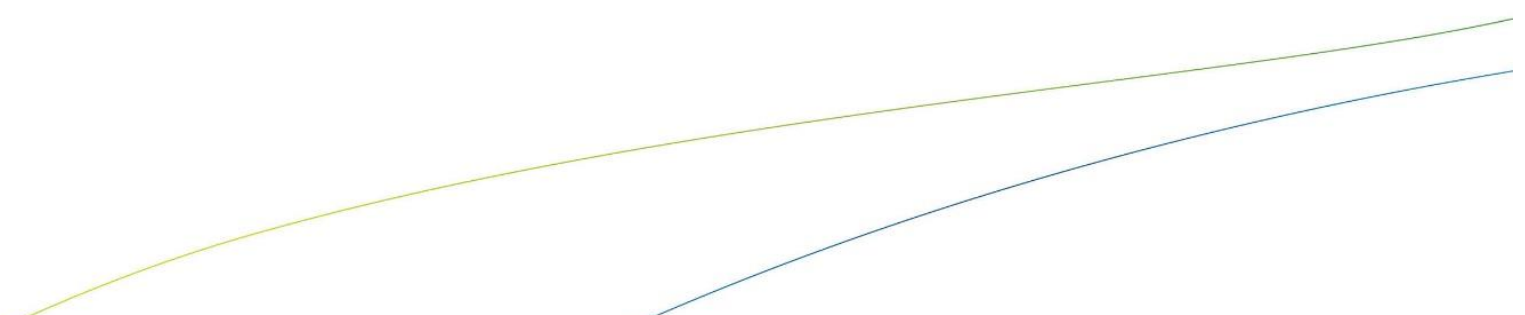
Gradual removal of all drainage-based pulp wood plantations on peatlands and rehabilitation of these areas well before the drainage base is reached (e.g. 4-5 crop cycles), to reduce emissions and prevent flooding and land-loss;

Promotion and facilitation of sustainable climate smart land-use development in these wet peatlands involving different forms of paludiculture (like fiber producing species native to peatlands or productive land-uses which can provide livelihood opportunities for local communities) and/or carbon concessions/ecosystem restoration concessions.

**Conservation of all remaining natural peat swamp forests** for biodiversity, carbon storage and other ecosystem services and provisional functions;

**Promotion and incentivizing the development of REDD+ initiatives** in peatlands improving regulations (curbing bureaucracy, allowing foreign investment) and involving appropriate safeguards, including benefit sharing with local communities;

**Improved sustainable forestry certification**, ensuring that the impacts of peatland and peat swamp forest conversion are duly taken into account.



**Governance:** Strengthening of the national policy framework, legislation, monitoring, planning and enforcement capacity of Indonesian government, industry and civil society organisations to enable sustainable management of peat landscapes.

**Pressure from pulp wood industry chain:** Investors and paper buyers to demand above measures to increase sustainability, which will reduce the riskiness of their long-term investments and agreements and will secure their profitability. Risk will be reduced if raw material supplies are not dependent on finite natural forests and when plantations are not susceptible to loss of productivity by subsidence.

## Monitoring and verification commitments of industry

Despite the major impact of the pulp wood industry, the sector hasn't had the same attention as the palm oil industry in terms of more sustainable operations. Major pulp wood producing companies such as APP and APRIL are now starting to respond to demands for change from civil society, paper buyers and investors to adhere to sustainability standards.

Unfortunately both companies have a reputation for missing sustainability goals and standards. It is vital that their commitments to no deforestation are carefully monitored and verified. Transparency about existing and new concessions and peat management improvements is an absolute necessity to avoid green wash.

## Well informed decisions, based on sound science

It is also crucial that the pulpwood sector is informed with the most recent and accurate science regarding the GHG emissions, biodiversity and subsidence in peatlands. The bottom line is that pulp production using *A. crassiparva* requires drainage which causes emissions and subsidence.

Major misconceptions appear to prevail with regard to the pulp sector. It is claimed that using hydrological management drainage can be controlled and GHG emissions and subsidence avoided, whilst this can only be reduced with a maximum of 20%. Wetlands International aims to broker sound peat science produced by its partners towards industry, government and NGOs.

## Contact

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