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Papua achieves its first international forest management certificate

Amid global concerns over the spread of forest fires in Indonesia, mostly on land cleared for cultivation, the forest sector itself is making progress with the implementation of best management practices in forest protection and conservation.

Sustainable forest management in Indonesia reached a new milestone in August when PT Bintuni Utama Murni Wood Industries (PT BUMWI) achieved its Forest Stewardship Council certificate (FSC®), the first forest concession in Papua to do so. FSC® certified forest management is based on a set of principles and associated criteria that ensure that forests are managed to meet the social, economic, ecological, cultural and spiritual needs of present and future generations.

PT BUMWI's concession of 82,120 ha in Teluk Bintuni District, West-Papua, is the largest mangrove concession in the world. PT BUMWI holds the concession already since 27 years and its certified management ensures that habitat is sustained for such protected species as the Gray cuscus (*Phalanger orientalis*) and Dusky wallaby (*Thylogale brunii*).

PT BUMWI processes the mangrove wood on-site into wood chips for pulp & paper markets in Asia.

In FSC certification, PT BUMWI received technical and financial support from WWF 's Global Forest Trade Network (GFTN) and The Borneo Initiative.

Elsewhere in Papua, another four forest concessions are preparing for FSC® certification with a total area of 706,000 ha, ensuring as of year 2016 a certified supply of merbau (*Intsia bijuga*), a much sought-after tropical hardwood for outdoor applications.

Indonesia now counts 31 forest concessions with full FSC® certification (2,028,655 ha) and another 6 with Controlled Wood certificates (2,695,840 ha). Of this total, 1,821,517 ha is natural forest.

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Editorial note:

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The Borneo Initiative

The Borneo Initiative is a non-profit organisation that promotes sustainable forest management in Indonesia. It operates in close coordination with the Indonesian Association of Forest Concessionaires (APHI). The Borneo Initiative provides financial support to forest concessions, to enhance their management capacity in social aspects, ecology and reduced impact logging. The forest concessions are certified according to the domestic, mandatory certification system (SVLK) as well as the international voluntary certification system (FSC®). Assistance to the forest concessions is provided by a platform of partner organisations such as TFF, GFTN, TFT, TNC, and Wana Aksara. The Borneo Initiative receives funding from several donors, including The Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH; www.idhsustainabletrade.com).

To date, The Borneo Initiative supports a total of 40 forest concessions with 3,692,190 ha under their management – or 25% of all active logging concessions in Indonesia. Of these, 17 forest concessions achieved FSC®-certification (1,512,720 ha of natural forest).

For more information: www.theborneoinitiative.org

Indonesian Association of Forest Concessionaires (APHI)

APHI is the business association for forest concessionaires in Indonesia. <http://www.rimbawan.com>

Global Forest and Trade Network (GFTN)

The GFTN — a WWF-led partnership — links more than 300 companies, communities, NGOs, and entrepreneurs in more than 30 countries around the world. The goal is to create a new market for environmentally responsible forest products. http://gftn.panda.org/about_gftn/

Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®)

FSC® is an independent, non-governmental, non-profit organisation established to promote the responsible management of the world's forests. Established in 1993 as a response to concerns over global deforestation, FSC is a pioneer forum of responsible forest management.

FSC® has defined 10 principles and associated criteria that describe how forests must be managed to meet the social, economic, ecological, cultural and spiritual needs of present and future generations.

FSC® certification provides a credible link between responsible production and consumption of forest products, enabling consumers and businesses to make purchasing decisions that benefit people and the environment as well as providing ongoing business value. FSC is nationally represented in more than 50 countries around the world.