



ASEAN Peatland Forests Project (APFP)

Rehabilitation and Sustainable Use of Peatland Forests in Southeast Asia



Workshop on “Options for Carbon Financing to Support Peatland Management” 4-6 October 2010, Pangeran Hotel Pekanbaru, Riau

Welcoming remarks by Faizal Parish, RPEA, APFP 4th October 2010

Your excellency Bpk Henry Bastaman, Deputy Minister of the Environment Indonesia,

Your excellency Bpk H.R Mambang Mit, Vice Governor Riau Province,

Representatives from ASEAN governments, research institutes and private sector,
international experts , Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen

I am very happy to make these brief welcoming remarks on behalf of the ASEAN Peatland Forest Project - led by the ASEAN Secretariat and facilitated by The Global Environment Centre (GEC) which has been appointed as the Regional Project Executing Agency (RPEA).

We are all gathered here for a three day workshop on options for carbon financing to support peatland management. Sustainable Peatland management is a top priority in the ASEAN Region but enhanced levels of human and financial resources are needed to ensure that targets are met.

There are more than 25 million ha of peatlands in the ASEAN Region and this is the most important terrestrial ecosystem in the region for carbon storage and climate regulation. Peatlands in the region store more than 50 billion tonnes of carbon – or more than double the estimate 22 billion tonnes carbon stock in the biomass of all the region’s forests. One ha of peatland stores up to 10 times more carbon than one ha of dryland forest. Therefore it makes sense that effort to reduce emissions and maintain and enhance carbon stores in the region should focus on peatlands.

Unfortunately as many are aware, the abundant carbon in the region’s peatlands is being rapidly released as a result of extensive fires and over drainage of peatland areas. With good site selection and adequate investment, it is possible to develop peat for agricultural and other production – but this needs high expertise and sufficient capital. However poor management or overdrainage may result in degradation and fires.

Transboundary smoke haze arising from peatland fires has now been classified as the most significant regional environmental problem in ASEAN. For more than 10 years the ASEAN Member States have been working together to enhance regional cooperation to address this issue. Every year, the Environment Ministers from all countries in the region under the framework of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution or ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the environment. In southern ASEAN, a Ministerial Steering Committee meets every six months to review progress in fire prevention and peatland management. As a result of this effort an ASEAN peatland management Strategy was adopted in November 2006 and the ASEAN Peatland Forest project was initiated at the end of 2009.



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At the global level – there is also growing recognition of the importance of peatlands in regulating the global climate – with peatlands being the most important terrestrial carbon sink in the world - storing twice as much carbon as the biomass of all the world's forests combined.

As a result of the global and regional concerns to address climate change and to minimize emissions of Greenhouse gases – it has been recognized that more international support is needed to assist Developing countries to reduce their GHG emissions. Indonesia has set a high target of a 26% reduction in GHG emissions – but with international support hopes to reduce emissions by more than 40%. Malaysia has also indicated a target to reduce emissions by 40% with international support.

The purpose of this workshop is to bring together a broad range of stakeholders including: government agencies, international donors, carbon finance and peatland experts, private sector research institutions and NGOs

Review the status of carbon finance in the region and to identify options and modality for carbon finance support for peatland management in the future. There will be three main focuses – reviewing policies and opportunities; examining case studies and experiences and finally discussing methodologies assessment and monitoring of emission reductions.

We are happy that the workshop will be attended by nearly 100 participants from 15 countries from ASEAN, Europe, North America and Australia.

This workshop is jointly organised by the ASEAN Peatland Forest Project in conjunction with the Ministry of Environment of the Government of Indonesia and the Riau Provincial Government and with funding from The Global Environment Facility (GEF) through the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and contributions from the both Indonesian government and local private sector - who will be hosting the field visits.

On behalf of the organizers – I would like to welcome you all here and hope that this will be an important and successful meeting. I would like to apologize in advance if there is any aspect of the arrangements which is not satisfactory. Please inform us if there is anything that we can do to make your stay here as pleasant and productive as possible.

Thank you very much