



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FSC and LEI announce collaboration to advance responsible forest management in Indonesia

BONN, Germany (31 May 2010) - The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Lembaga Ekolabel Indonesia (LEI) have announced the launch of an 18-month collaboration to explore potential areas of cooperation regarding responsible forest management and forest certification in Indonesia. The agreement marks an important measure in the global efforts to facilitate responsible forest management in the tropics, and builds upon previous collaborative initiatives to advance forest certification in Indonesia.

As biodiversity hotspots of the world, tropical forests are vital to the existence of millions of indigenous people, and possess a unique set of social and environmental attributes. The rainforests of Indonesia rank among the most extensive and biologically significant in the world. However, these forests are under tremendous pressure. Deforestation from illegal logging and forest conversion continues to threaten vital habitat and critically endangered species such as the Sumatran orang-utan.

Forest management certification can offer financially competitive alternatives to poor forest management practices, illegal logging and land conversion. FSC and LEI use certification to address crucial social and environmental forestry issues - FSC internationally and LEI specific to Indonesia. The cooperation between the two certification schemes has the potential to benefit from the locally relevant standards and processes led by LEI in Indonesia with the internationally recognized FSC standards.

“LEI has a balanced multi-stakeholder governance structure similar to that of FSC and LEI has been instrumental in establishing an applicable system for improving forest management in Indonesia,” said FSC Director General Andre de Freitas. “With the shared goal to improve forest management in the tropics, we can further this work by identifying the synergies between the FSC and LEI certification schemes and building on our respective strengths.

“This is a new phase of FSC and LEI collaboration in Indonesia which shows significant advancement since the Joint Certification Program that concluded in 2005. Through many constructive discussions and meetings, FSC and LEI have agreed to sign a Memorandum of Understanding which intends to set up a new collaboration expressing shared vision of both parties which demonstrate mutual respect on each other’s certification scheme and achievements,” said LEI Executive Director F. Agung Prasetyo. “The FSC and LEI are both certification schemes that

promote responsible forest management. There would be so much we could achieve by working together and thus hopefully bring significant benefit to those who use the FSC and LEI certification schemes.”

FSC and LEI have identified six specific areas for collaboration which will be explored in the coming months. These will include several analysis of compatibility between forest management standards and other central components of the respective schemes, and a particular focus on information exchange on certification of community based forest operations.

About FSC: FSC is an independent, non-governmental, not for profit organization established to promote the responsible management of the world’s forests. It provides standard setting, trademark assurance and accreditation services to companies and organizations interested in responsible forestry. Products carrying the FSC label are independently certified to assure consumers that they come from forests that are managed to meet the social, economic and ecological needs of present and future generations. FSC rules and procedures are developed through strong multi-stakeholder processes. They are supported and endorsed by social, environmental and economic constituents in the Global South and Global North alike. Find more information at www.fsc.org.

About LEI: The Indonesian Ecolabelling Institute (LEI-Lembaga Ekolabel Indonesia) is a non-profit balanced membership based organization that develops forest certification systems that promote mission of just and sustainable forest resource management in Indonesia. LEI has a very broad support in Indonesia among the forest industry, indigenous peoples’ groups, the forest science community as well as social and environmental non-governmental organizations. As a balanced membership based organization LEI retains independence and transparency, both necessary for the credibility of forest certification. Find more information at <http://www.lei.or.id>.

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