



Indonesian Civil Society Calls On Government For Transparency And Accountability to Protect and Restore Peatlands and Forests

We support the Government of Indonesia taking strong steps to protect and restore Indonesia's peatlands, including policies to stop the conversion of peatlands into industrial timber plantations (Hutan Tanaman Industri, HTI). These plantation areas account for 2.1 million hectares, or 16% of the total 12.9 million hectares of priority peatlands that the Government targets to restore.

However, the undersigned civil society organizations (CSOs) are concerned with the Government's "land swap" policy, which allocates new HTI concessions on mineral soils as compensation to forestry companies whose lands will be affected by the initiative to protect and restore priority peatlands. This policy endangers Indonesia's remaining natural forests (see accompanying spatial analysis) and may cause even more conflicts with customary/local communities than already exist.

The land swap policy is defined in the Minister of Environment and Forestry's Decree Number 40 of 2017, issued in July of last year, and the Ministry is now preparing to approve a total of 921,230 hectares for land swaps. However, the determination of these areas has been carried out without transparency or public input.

We fear that vast areas of natural forest, especially in Kalimantan, Sumatra, and Papua will be designated for land swaps and converted into pulpwood plantations in the name of peatland restoration. Though no longer intact, often these forests are still functioning ecosystems that are important to global climate change and as habitat for biodiversity. The policy will also threaten the livelihoods and cultures of indigenous peoples who for many generations have depended on forests in their local areas.

The Government policy does not provide a specific timeframe or plan to restore the degraded peatlands. The policy should make a condition for land swaps that companies are required to first restore the peatlands and have the results approved by the Government. Without this provision, abandoned areas may be vulnerable to catastrophic fires.

Considering the above, the CSOs recommend that areas allocated for land swaps are drawn from existing HTI concessions only and do not involve an expansion of licensed areas. The CSO community calls on the government to adopt the following simple guidelines:

1. Prioritize mineral soils under existing licenses that are currently inactive;
2. Avoid areas that have remaining natural forest, even if it is degraded;
3. Do not issue licenses for lands that are claimed or managed by customary /local communities;

The CSO community further recommends that the Government of Indonesia:

1. Publish the results of revisions to the RKU (general workplans) and RKT (annual workplans) of HTI companies subject to liability, especially those whose lands burned during 2015-2018, including the names of companies that have submitted revisions to their RKU and RKT and those who are unwilling to revise their RKU and RKT.
2. Publish the plans for restoration of peatland ecosystems which have been proposed by IUPHHK license-holders and approved by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry;
3. Identify the areas available for new allocations, in accordance with the above criteria, and invite stakeholder input to select “clean and clear” lands based on the above guidelines.
4. Hold a public auction for companies to select concessions within the designated areas, rather than allowing the companies to select the land swap areas in secrecy;
5. Improve the land swap policy by ensuring that companies which acquire new areas remain responsible for the restoration of the peatlands they leave behind.

Spatial analysis of potential HTI land swap areas indicates deforestation risk

The Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) issued Directive SK 4732 on September 14, 2017 that indicated 921,230 hectares (over 9,200 square kilometers, or 3,500 square miles) will be made available for HTI land swaps.¹ The Ministerial Directive indicates that the land swap areas would come from unproductive HTI concessions (after revoking or canceling the existing licenses) or areas already reserved for future HTI concessions. But the map attached to SK4732 does not include the locations of the swaps.

One month ago KLHK refused a written request by Yayasan Auriga to identify the land swap areas, explaining that it was still “in process” and could not yet be shared. Civil society is concerned about the fast pace with which the policy is being carried out, given that there has been little transparency about the land that will be involved nor safeguards to prevent deforestation and social conflict. In the absence of data provided by KLHK, civil society has gone ahead to try and identify the potential land swap areas and estimate the amount of forest within those areas.

Two categories of areas are considered in the analysis: 1) concessions that scored the lowest rating “*Layak Evaluasi*” on KLHK’s performance assessment of concessions for not having annual work plans and other indications of a working concession.² 2) “Calon Areal IUPHHK-HT” areas, reserved for future allocations of HTI concessions.³ The forest cover layer for primary and secondary forests is from KLHK’s land cover data.⁴

¹ Keputusan Menteri Lingkungan Hidup dan Kehutanan Republik Indonesia Nomor: SK. 4732/MenLHK-PHPL/KPHP/HPL.0/9/2017 tentang Peta Indikatif Arah Pemanfaatan Hutan Produksi Yang Tidak Dibebani Izin Untuk Usaha Pemanfaatan Hutan.

² Peraturan Direktur Jendral Pengelolaan Hutan Produksi Lestari P.14/PHPL/SET/4/2016 tentang Standar dan Pedoman Pelaksanaan Penilaian Kinerja Pengelolaan Hutan Produksi Lestari (PHPL) dan Verifikasi Legalitas Kayu (VLK).

³ Attachment to Keputusan Menteri Lingkungan Hidup dan Kehutanan Republik Indonesia Nomor: SK. 4732/MenLHK-PHPL/KPHP/HPL.0/9/2017 tentang Peta Indikatif Arah Pemanfaatan Hutan Produksi Yang Tidak Dibebani Izin Untuk Usaha Pemanfaatan Hutan.

⁴ Direktorat Inventarisasi dan Pemantauan Sumber Daya Hutan, Direktorat Jenderal Planologi Kehutanan dan Tata Lingkungan, Kementerian Lingkungan Hidup dan Kehutanan - Peta Penutupan Lahan Indonesia Tahun 2015. Additional data to update thru 2016 from University of Maryland.

We invite KLHK to share the maps of the 921,230 ha indicated in the SK 4732 so that we can update this analysis.

Table 1: Estimated forest cover in potential land swap areas (in hectares)

	Total Land Area	Forest Area		Total Forest Area
		Primary Forest Area	Secondary Forest Area	
Unproductive concessions	1,153,949	131,927	405,465	537,392
Reserved Areas	769,380	45,468	389,039	434,507
Both categories	1,923,329	177,395	794,504	971,900

Note: "Primary forest" includes KLHK land-cover classes of primary dry forest, primary mangrove forest, and primary swamp forest. "Secondary Forest" includes KLHK landcover classes of secondary dry forest, secondary swamp forest, and secondary mangrove forest.

Source:

1. Attachment to Keputusan Menteri Lingkungan Hidup dan Kehutanan Republik Indonesia Nomor: SK. 4732/ MenLHK-PHPL/KPHP/HPL.0/9/2017 tentang Peta Indikatif Arah Pemanfaatan Hutan Produksi Yang Tidak Dibebani Izin Untuk Usaha Pemanfaatan Hutan.
2. Peta Penutupan Lahan Indonesia Tahun 2015 (Direktorat Inventarisasi dan Pemantauan Sumber Daya Hutan, Direktorat Jenderal Planologi Kehutanan dan Tata Lingkungan, Kementerian Lingkungan Hidup dan Kehutanan). Diunduh dari <http://www.greenpeace.org/seasia/id/Global/seasia/Indonesia/Code/Forest-Map/data.html>, cited: March 3, 2018.
3. Global Land Analysis & Discovery (GLAD) Alerts 2016 (University of Maryland, 2016 <http://glad.geog.umd.edu/alerts>, cited: March 3, 2018.

The spatial analysis results indicate that 1,923,329 ha of potential land swap area contains 971,900 ha of primary and secondary forest cover. The islands with the most forest cover are Papua with 472,975 ha and Kalimantan with 259,048 ha. The total area of primary forest in all provinces is 177,395 ha. For detailed maps, please visit the Pasopati Project: <http://pasopatiproject.id/> and or <http://pasopatiproject.id/land-swap-HTI-monitoring/>