



## PRESS RELEASE

### Investigation Team of REDD+ Task Force Report on Findings in Rawa Tripa

Jakarta April 13, 2012 - Towards the end of March 2012, the government of Indonesia was alerted over reports from the province of Nangroe Aceh Darussalam about deliberate and systematic attempts at land clearance through forest fires in a certain area of Rawa Tripa that appeared to be not only in direct violation of the two-year suspension or Moratorium on new forest concessions but also included, more alarmingly, the deep peat land area of Leuser Ecosystem (KEL) close to the Leuser National Park.

“The incident also resulted in national and international public outrage and concern at the wanton destruction caused to the ecosystem. This is based on the awareness on the importance of peatland conservation in prevention of disasters due to climate change that has negative impacts to mankind,” said the Head of Presidential Work Unit for Supervision and Development Monitoring (UKP 4) and Chairman of Task Force for the Preparation of REDD+ Agency, Kuntoro Mangkusubroto. The Head of Task Force for the Preparation of REDD+ Agency explained that Rawa Tripa is an important habitat for the protected and nearly extinct animal species which included the orangutan. In a short period of time, an online petition successfully collected almost 10,000 supporters who demanded that the government of Indonesia, in particular President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the Minister of Forestry, the Head of Police Department of Indonesia as well as the Head of Task Force for the Preparation of REDD+ Agency Kuntoro Mangkusubroto, to take serious action in law reinforcement and peatland protection in Kuala Tripa as well as protection of the orangutan within. Additionally, this petition was also addressed to the Ambassador of Norway and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia

The Head of Task Force for the Preparation of REDD+ Agency has immediately instructed a holistic investigation to decide whether the land allocation has been made in accordance with the prevalent laws and governance systems, and also to find whether the activities carried out by the plantation company is in line with the relevant national laws of the land. The finding of the investigation includes:

1. There is a forest fire in the area of PT. Kalista Alam (PT. KA) and PT. Surya Panen Subur) located in the area that is adjacent with the concession area of PT. KA. From a naked eye observation, it appears that the forest fire has been ignited in a systematic and well-planned manner causing direct negative effect to the ecosystem. In our opinion, this activity violates Law number 18/2004 concerning plantation as well as Regulation of Ministry of Agriculture number 26/Permentan/OT140/2/2007 concerning Guidance of Plantation Business Licensing, and Law number 32/2009 concerning Living Environment Protection and Management.
2. We also found that the plantation area of PT. Kalista (PT KA) of 1.605 hectares is located in the Area of Leuser Ecosystem (KEL). Some parts of the area have already been planted with Palm Oil and some are ready to be planted while some other parts are forested area. Hence, potentially, it will violate Law number 26/2007 concerning Spatial Planning as well as Government Regulation number 26/2008 concerning National Spatial Planning.

3. According to UKL/UPL (Environment Monitoring Actions/Environment Management Actions), the activity of PT. KA is located above thick peatland (from the 6 sampling points, the thickness of 2 sampling points are less than 3 meters, one point has 3 meters thickness and three other points have more than 3 meters thickness). We will need to scrutinize carefully whether 70% of the licensed area mentioned above contains peat deposit. If that is confirmed, then the activity violates Law number 26/2007 concerning Spatial Planning as well as Presidential Decree number 32/1990 concerning Protected Area Management and Regulation of Ministry of Agriculture number 14/2009 concerning Guidance of Utilizing Peatland for Palm Oil Cultivation.
4. There is a report that indicates PT KA had initiated activities in the area prior to the issuance of Permit for Plantation (IUP) and Cultivation Rights Title (HGU) by the authorized agency. In this regard, the images from satellite taken on June 11, 2009 show the clearance in the area of PT KA had already taken place, and on the images from satellite taken on October 20, 2010 the land clearance is getting wider. This potentially violates Law number 18/2004 concerning Plantation and Law number 32/2009 concerning Living Environment Protection and Management, as well as Presidential Instruction Number 10/ 2011 concerning Moratorium on New License on Primary Natural Forest and Peatland and the attachment Indicative Map on Moratorium on New License (PIPIB)
5. From the facts mentioned in the four points above, a Technical Team of PIPIB has been established as part of the Presidential Instruction Number 10/2011 which will include the area of PT. KA in the area of PIPIB in its second revision which will be published on May 20, 2012.

From the findings, the Head of Task Force for the Preparation of REDD+ Agency believes that there are indications of violation of laws as follow:

1. Law number 18/2004 concerning Plantation
2. Law number 32/2009 concerning Living Environment Protection and Management
3. Law number 26/2007 concerning Spatial Planning as well as Presidential Decree number 32/1990 concerning Protected Area Management.

The Head of the Task Force for the preparation of REDD+ Agency demands that the Ministry of Environment and the Head of the Indonesian Police conduct further investigations. Once legal evidences are found, he expects that the Ministry of Environment and the Police Department of Republic of Indonesia will take appropriate actions to bring a halt to these activities and to penalize and recover the loss caused by the ecosystem degradation in the Area of Leuser Ecosystem (KEL).

For further information please contact:

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