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## MESSAGE FROM THE PROJECT LEADER

### Why does LPF need a newsletter?

Dear readers,



We hope this newsletter will increase communication among LPF participants. And we hope it meets your approval. We used to have an annual meeting to share experiences, but we feel it really wasn't enough. After two years, all the project sites have been launched, baseline studies have been completed, intervention stages reached and some sites are already generating useful and interesting results. Because of this level of activity and success we felt it was vital to increase the flow of information between LPF participants and to share ideas and experience, more regularly.

**To help our Newsletter fulfill the project and your needs, we really need your feedback. Please help us to help you by answering the three short reader survey questions at the end of the newsletter.**

The Newsletter first begins with a brief overview of the LPF project. It will then look at one of the more recently research sites: MHP.

At the MHP site in South Sumatra, LPF aims to develop a model forest plantation in close cooperation with local communities and a large plantation company.

This and future Newsletters will continue to highlight LPF's various sites. Most of you already know about LPF Palawan from our Regional Annual Meeting there last year. Accordingly, in this edition, the Palawan team tell us about some of their recent achievements.

The Newsletter will also provide practical information, such as upcoming events. For example, the coordination meeting will be held in May 2006 and will include a field trip in Java and meeting of the steering committee. Also below is some information about the next IASCP meeting in June 2006, which will feature a number of presentations from LPF team members.

So, please enjoy the newsletter. And please, take two minutes to answer the three questions at the end. Thanks.

What is leveling the playing field project about?

LPF project address the question of how to manage forests and related landscapes over the long term in a context where multiple stakeholders sometimes have short term interests. LPF aims to facilitate change in stakeholders' behaviors in order to increase their capacity for coordination, learning, collective actions and conflict management. The expected impacts are: improved forest management and improved local livelihoods.

The long term objective is to improve forests management in South East Asia by developing models for better collaboration or and better managing conflicts. LPF operates in six locations. Each of the sites is subject to the same context of having multiple stakeholders with different views, power and conflicting interests.

The project is managed by Cirad and CIFOR in partnership with three Asian Universities: UGM in Indonesia, UPM in Malaysia, and UPLB in Philippines.

**Philippe Guizol**  
LPF Project Leader  
Cirad

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## HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights on MHP LPF: Developing a model forest plantation in South Sumatra

Musi Hutan Persada (MHP) has 300,000 ha of acacia pulp plantation in a joint venture with Marubeni Corporation and Inhutani II. It supplies 2.5 million m<sup>3</sup> of pulp wood to Tanjung Enim Lestari (TEL) mill every year. Nine villages, located inside and near the plantation, are not receiving sufficient benefits from the plantation to compensate for their traditional claims over the plantation land. The LPF project aims to enable and improve partnerships among these stakeholders. It will also produce model approaches for conflict reduction in plantation forests in South East Asia.

### Challenges

Forest plantations are located on state land, and some of these areas were previously used by local communities to grow rubber trees as their primary source of income. Musi Hutan Persada, which has been in operation since 1990, developed two partnerships in 1998 with local communities to resolve land issue and secure their concession 1) MHBM (Mengelola Hutan Bersama Masyarakat) regarding the concession land and, 2) MHR (Mengelola Hutan Rakyat,) the program on the community's land.

These partnerships, however, rarely seem fair to local communities due to the power imbalance when they were drafted. Conflicting interests among community members weaken local institutions and threaten to cause livelihood problems. This could lead to local communities fighting for the right to grow rubber or oil palm on their traditional land. MHP is an example of a well-planned forest plantation in

Indonesia; its failure or its success might influence the future development of wood industries in Indonesia. The transfer of MHP's majority share from Barito Pacific to Marubeni Corporation might provide opportunities to build a new, more positive and cooperative corporate culture which will benefit both the corporation and local communities.

### Project Activities

In year 2005, The LPF South Sumatra team started with a baseline study of community livelihoods, plantation stock, actors' interests and their power relations. The LPF project then initiated a multi-stakeholder forum of forest plantation as a platform to negotiate actors' interests namely Forum "Sebahu Sejalan". In the beginning of 2006, the team established a local secretariat for the forum in Muara Enim. MHP new management, after listening and discussing with LPF team, agree to support the work of secretariat operation with 9,000 USD.

Forum "Sebahu Sejalan" supported by LPF team facilitates five focus group discussions (FGDs). In last March, FGD was conducted with four villages inside MHP plantation to find solutions on improving agreements between community and MHP on benefit sharing and among community members on role, relation, responsibility and return. The similar FGDs will be conducted with the other villages as well as with MHP staff in April. From these FGDs drafts of the future agreements between community-company partnership and among community members are written in participatory ways.

### Current Findings in MHP

- The Acacia mangium forest plantation provides communities with 25% of their income in the form of wages and salaries from labouring, office jobs, and field work contracts such as planting, weeding and harvesting, and from renting out houses and cars. Only rubber, which brings about 50 % of household incomes, provides a larger percentage; but by contrast, rubber also benefits the poorest households.
- Money flowing from the company will trigger changes inside local institutions, which are currently weak. On the one hand, this flow of money provide opportunities. On the other, it may create tension among community members.
- Conflicting perceptions and behaviours among company staff regarding the partnership makes it difficult for the partnership to work for the poor.
- While the majority of the communities want cooperation with the company, they believe the current schemes fail to achieve this.
- The MHBM scheme provides opportunities for the local elite to pursue rent seeking behaviors, which does not benefit those at the grass roots level.
- The MHR scheme helps the richer members of the communities buy more land from the poor, making them land-lords and causing the poor to loose their land and livelihoods.
- Significant change in the structure of the partnerships is needed to prevent the communities' livelihoods from deteriorating and the plantation from closing.

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## RESULTS

### Musi Hutan Persada (MHP), South Sumatra, Indonesia

Stakeholders of the forest plantation fully support the work of the multi-stakeholder forum "Sebahu Sejalan" which provides a space where negotiation can take place. Stakeholders are aware that



16 May, Tue	Coordination meeting - Day 1
17 May, Wed	Coordination meeting - Day 2
18 May, Thu	Coordination meeting - Day 3, half-day (leave for Semarang)
19 May, Fri	Field trip
20 May, Sat	Field trip (back to Jogjakarta)
21 May, Sun	LPF members return to their countries of residence.

The schedule of the steering committee is as follows:

21 May, Sun	SC members arrive in Jogjakarta
22 May, Mon	3rd SC meeting in Jogjakarta
23 May, Tue	SC members return to their countries of residence

SC members, who wish to join the field trip or the coordination meeting, are welcome to do it.

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## OTHER EVENTS

### LPF Project on IASCP Conference

The 11th biennial conference of the International Association for the Study of Common Property (IASCP), will be held in Bali, 19 - 23 June 2006. The conference will highlight new approaches to combating poverty and global challenges, through "common property" management of resources.

LPF is presenting six papers (see below). The next real test after submitting the abstracts is to submit the finished papers! We congratulate the authors and remind you all (and ourselves) that the full papers should be delivered by 15 April 2006. LPF hope you will all make it. Below are the titles of the six papers accepted.

#### Java case study:

1. Collective action on state forest company in Java, Indonesia - by San Afri Awang, Wahyu Tri Widayanti, Bariatul Himmah, Ambar Astuti, Wahyu Wardhana
2. Revitalizing Collaborative Forest Management: opportunities for empowerment and rural people income diversification toward sustainable teak forest management - by Levania Santoso, Wahyu Tri Widayanti, Ambar Astuti, Bariatul Himmah

#### South Sumatra case study:

3. Collaboration and tenure problems in plantation forest, South Sumatra, Indonesia - by Wahyu Wardhana, San Afri Awang, Herry Purnomo, Philippe Guizol
4. State land management after deforestation - by Herry Purnomo and Philippe Guizol

#### Jepara case study:

5. Geographic Indications for Javanese teak plantations: an early exploration - by Dwi, Muhtaman, Philippe Guizol, Jean Marc Roda, Herry Purnomo

Palawan case study:

6. Multi-Agent Systems (MAS) Modelling to Improve the Management of Common Renewable Resources in Palawan, Philippines. Paolo Campo; Teodoro Villanueva; Herlina Hartanto

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## READER SURVEY

Survey questions:

Your name and location: \_\_\_\_\_

1 - Is this edition of the LPF Newsletter

1. too short
2. too long
3. about right?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

2 - How frequently should the Newsletter be produced:

1. every 2 months
2. every 4 months
3. every six months?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

3 - Current and future Newsletter topics include:

1. highlights on specific sites
2. LPF results
3. LPF upcoming events
4. News about new LPF reports or publication

Which of these topics are relevant to you?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

Not relevant: \_\_\_\_\_

What topics would you like to see included?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

Please to answer these questions past and glue them directly into an email, answer and send it to [pquizol@cgiar.org](mailto:pquizol@cgiar.org) or send it by fax (see fax number below).

**Philippe Guizol**

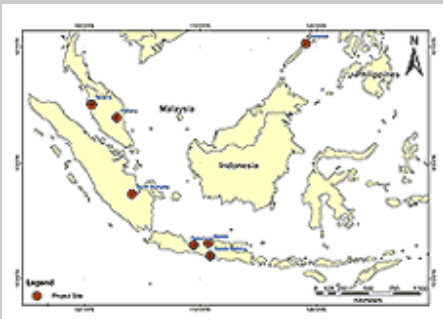
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