

Training the assessors

An ITTO project has assisted the Indonesian Ecolabelling Institute to prepare the ground for forest certification

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ESTABLISHED in 1998 after a four-year development period as a national working group on ecolabelling, the Indonesian Ecolabelling Institute (*Lembaga Ekolabel Indonesia*—LEI) is a national accreditation body for forest certification and timber ecolabelling in Indonesia. Its aim is to promote sustainable natural resource management in Indonesia through credible certification and ecolabelling.

In 1998 LEI completed its development of a national certification system for natural production forest. The system includes a national set of criteria and indicators (C&I) for sustainable forest management, which has a near-100% compatibility with those of ITTO and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). In developing its certification system, LEI adopted three key principles: a multi-stakeholder approach, independent third-party assessment, and voluntary certification.

A major obstacle facing LEI in implementing its system in 1998 was a general lack of qualified and experienced assessors to conduct field-level assessments. A number of certified environmental assessors and field surveyors were available at that time, but they were specialised in environmental impact assessment (EIA). Ecolabelling certification significantly differs from EIA because it is a performance-based, rather than process-based, form of assessment and involves not only environmental (or ecological) but also production and socio-cultural C&I. Moreover, the LEI certification system called for an independent, ad hoc panel of experts to adjudicate on certification applications, but the expertise for such a panel was largely lacking.

To rectify the problem, LEI carried out ITTO PROJECT PD 1/95 REV. 4 (M) between February 1998 and December 2000. The project, which was supported by financial

contributions from the governments of Japan and the Netherlands, developed training curricula and materials, manuals for expert panel members, and information kits (see box). Training programs for trainers, assessors and expert panels, and promotional programs to enhance public and stakeholder awareness of ecolabelling and sustainable forest management-related topics, were undertaken. Over the project's duration, LEI's certification system was significantly improved by feedback received from training participants and its C&I were revised accordingly. The project also contributed to:

- the establishment of LEI's homepage and a library of relevant publications;
- a significant improvement in the ecolabelling network through the establishment of a Regional/Provincial Consultation Forum (*Forum Komunikasi Daerah*—FKD) in eight provinces: those of East Kalimantan, South Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan, North Sumatra, Riau, South East Sulawesi, North Sulawesi and Papua/Maluku;
- the accreditation of an independent training institution;
- the development of an accreditation process for an independent personnel registration body (PRB). (However, since PRB candidates have, to date, failed to meet LEI's accreditation guidelines, LEI continues to act as a temporary PRB); and
- LEI's involvement in international forums and conferences.

As a result of the project, Indonesia now has about 150 registered sustainable forest management assessors including 16 lead assessors, 81 expert panel members, 40 chain-of-custody assessors and 16 sustainable forest management certification trainers. These pools of well-trained and more-experienced personnel have developed to the point where the activation of sound ecolabelling certification in Indonesia has become possible. On 28 August 2000 LEI issued accreditation to four certification bodies: SGS Indonesia, TÜV International (an Indonesia-Germany joint venture), Sucofindo and Mutu Agung Lestari. By September 2001, ten forest management units with a total area of 2.1 million hectares had applied for certification. On 3 April 2001 LEI granted its first certificate under the LEI-FSC Joint Certification program to PT Diamond Raya Timber in Riau, covering an area of 90 957 hectares.

Notwithstanding these encouraging developments, LEI still faces many major challenges in its attempts to implement credible certification. For this reason, the Institute will continue to work closely with ITTO and other organisations to realise its mission of promoting sustainable forest management in Indonesia.

Publications from the project

Training for trainers on forest auditing techniques (2000). 354 pp. English and Bahasa Indonesia.

Modul Pelatihan Penilaian Lapangan PHAPL : Modul Umum (2000) 314 p. Bahasa Indonesia.

Modul Pelatihan Penilaian Lapangan PHAPL : Modul Produksi (2000) 115 p. Bahasa Indonesia.

Modul Pelatihan Penilaian Lapangan PHAPL : Modul Ekologi (2000) 217 p. Bahasa Indonesia.

Modul Pelatihan Penilaian Lapangan PHAPL : Modul Sosial (2000) 557 p. Bahasa Indonesia.

Timber tracking certification system (2000). 81 pp. Bahasa Indonesian edition also available.

Requirement guidelines and training procedure of SPFM certification program (2000). 55 pp.

Resolution guideline to appeal against the certification decision (2000). xxiv + 14 pp. Bahasa Indonesia edition also available.

Sustainable production forest management (SPFM) certification system (2000). xxii + 196 pp. Bahasa Indonesia edition also available.

Framework for sustainable production forest management system (2000). xxii + 55 pp.

Technical document 1 & 2: Verifier and verification toolbox for assessment criteria and indicators of sustainable natural production forest management certification system and Intensity scale of indicators for the sustainable management of natural production forest (2000). xxii + 117 pp. Bahasa Indonesian edition also available.

Ecolabel news: a quarterly newsletter available in English and Bahasa Indonesia.

For more information about any of these publications, please contact the authors.