



Response to announcements by Rainforest Action Network (RAN) and The Walt Disney Company regarding its Paper Sourcing Policy and the Forestry Industry in Indonesia

19 October 2012

The Rainforest Action Network (RAN) issued a media release on 11 October, 2012, claiming that The Walt Disney Company had “*cut ties*” to APRIL following changes to its Paper Sourcing and Use Policy. Disney’s own announcement on its paper sourcing policy did not mention APRIL and to our knowledge, APRIL does not directly sell paper to Disney and has never done so.

Both the RAN announcement and the Disney announcement mentioned that Disney’s new sourcing policy was designed to have particular impact on Indonesia.

We are disappointed that Disney’s consultation process, which it said had “... *sought input from stakeholders throughout the supply chain...*” did not include any approach to or request for information from APRIL, one of the largest pulp and paper producers in the world and a company that has been at the forefront of introducing and implementing internationally recognized sustainable forest management practices in Indonesia.

Disney’s policy strives to eliminate paper fiber from five “*unwanted sources*.” Four of these “*unwanted sources*” do not apply to APRIL and would not prohibit Disney from sourcing paper products from our company:

- APRIL does not source illegally harvested wood. APRIL has comprehensive, third-party certified chain-of-custody processes to ensure no illegal wood enters APRIL’s supply chain.
- APRIL does not source wood from high conservation value areas. In fact, APRIL commits itself to a voluntary conservation policy in place since 2005 whereby its concessions are assessed for conservation values by third-party experts and substantial areas of APRIL’s concessions are set aside and protected within conservation zones.
- APRIL complies with all Indonesian laws and treaties regarding the rights of forest-dependent peoples and also utilizes a transparent, inclusive, and multi-stakeholder approach to community engagement.
- APRIL has never sourced wood from genetically modified trees.

In fact, APRIL is a pioneer of sustainable forestry in Indonesia, a signatory to the UN Global Compact, a member of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, and a founding member of the Fire Management Actions Alliance of the United Nations' Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO). It also holds a number of international and Indonesian certifications for its operations in the area of legality, chain of custody and sustainable forest management.

While we share Disney's concern for the environment and welcome steps that promote international best practice and rainforest conservation, we are concerned that a fifth element of its criteria – striving to have its businesses, vendors and licensees eliminate the use of paper from *“areas that have been converted from natural forest to plantations... after November 1994...”* - may unfairly discriminate against responsible companies in the Indonesian forestry industry.

This provision could unfairly favor developed world suppliers and operate as a blanket restriction on sourcing paper from companies – regardless of a strong commitment to sustainability and conservation - in several developing countries including Indonesia, where sources of renewable and sustainable resources are more recent, but now well established.

While we laud Disney's *“... commitment to creating a lasting, positive impact on ecosystems and communities...”* we are concerned that an exclusion of this nature will have the opposite effect in Indonesia, where access to international markets has been a key driver of rapid transformation by many in the forestry industry, including APRIL, to sustainable forest management practices over the past decade.

In addition, tens of thousands of people in Indonesia depend on our business and others like it for their livelihoods. The paper industry in Indonesia has created jobs, helped to eradicate poverty, developed infrastructure and supported significant improvements in healthcare and education in the areas where it operates. Companies including APRIL are also now key drivers of conserving important areas of natural forest in parallel with developing renewable and sustainable sources of fiber.

Following the announcements by Disney and RAN, APRIL has shared its views with Disney and invited its representatives to meet with us and review first-hand our sustainable forest management practices, which we hope will be a learning opportunity for both organizations in our support of growing a responsible paper industry in Indonesia.

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Additional Resources

[APRIL Sustainability Overview factsheet](#)

[APRIL's most recent Sustainability Report](#)