



*INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM  
AND WORKSHOP,  
PALANGKA RAYA, CENTRAL  
KALIMANTAN, INDONESIA,  
22-25 SEPTEMBER 2005*



**“Restoration and Wise Use of Tropical Peatland: Problems of Biodiversity, Fire, Poverty and Water Management”**

**BACKGROUND:**

Tropical peatland covers approximately 45 million hectares, or 12%, of the global peatland resource by area. Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam contain nearly 70%. Indonesia, with 22 Mha has about one half of the total area of peat in the tropical zone. Natural peat swamps in SE Asia are recognized as important reservoirs of biodiversity and scientific information and they exhibit a range of important ecological and natural resource functions. Peat swamp forests are the last refuges for several rare and endangered animals, especially orang-utan, while streams and rivers draining from peatlands are important fish habitats. In their natural state tropical peatlands are carbon sinks and stores, but drainage and forest clearance rapidly converts them to carbon sources. Rapid population growth, deterioration of existing land, especially owing to erosion and increasing competition from industry and urbanization, are exerting continuous pressure for peatland development. However, local communities that depend on this ecosystem for cash income are experiencing poverty. In the last 30-40 years, tropical peatlands in Southeast Asia have been subjected to increasing pressure from systematic logging as dry land forest has become depleted and, more destructively, land conversion for human settlement and agriculture. The latter involves clear felling of the forest followed by land drainage and crop planting. The legacy of the ill-fated Mega Rice Project (MRP) is a treeless, non-productive, degraded, peat-covered landscape. The network of over 4600 km of malfunctioning drainage and irrigation channels has resulted in rapidly oxidising peat, an impoverished biodiversity, a terrain susceptible to subsidence and outbreaks of large-scale fires in the dry season and flooding in the rainy season. The adjacent large, forested peatland catchment, centred on the Sebangau River, has been subjected to intensive illegal logging since 1998 with disastrous effects upon this newly designated National Park. Hundreds, perhaps thousands of kilometres of timber extraction canals have been excavated across the surface of this landscape destroying its hydrological integrity by causing excessive and rapid drainage. The only way of reversing these impacts is to maintain a high water level, by retarding the rate of water flow using dams and other forms of obstruction, which must be carried out as part of a holistic restoration implementation strategy that addresses the problems of biodiversity, fire, poverty and water management.

**OBJECTIVES:**

This international symposium and workshop forms an important part of the EU funded RESTORPEAT Project and it will address problems of restoration of large expanses of tropical peatland by focusing on field techniques for fire control and water management. These will be linked to sustainable livelihoods of local people in order to alleviate poverty and reduce natural resources and environmental degradation. It will provide an important forum where experts in peatland restoration from the Boreal and Temperate zones can relate their experiences and methods to those involved in tackling the enormous problems of restoration of tropical peatland. The workshop will assess the situation and incorporate the views of specialists in biodiversity maintenance, water management, fire control and poverty reduction into a holistic approach to tackle these critical issues.

**TARGET AUDIENCE:**

Scientists, technologists, agronomists, foresters, socio-economists, land managers, planners, politicians, community leaders, funding organisations, NGOs and others.

**POTENTIAL FUNDING SPONSORS:**

1. Embassy of Finland, Jakarta
2. The Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (KNIP Small-Scale Nature Initiatives)
3. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Department, Great Apes Conservation Fund
4. EU RESTORPEAT Project (Vapo, Finland, UNPAR, and BPPT, Indonesia)

**PARTNERS:**

EU INCO RESTORPEAT Partnership  
Kalimantan Tropical Peat Swamp Forest Research Project (KALTROP)  
Centre for International Cooperation in Sustainable Management of Tropical Peatland (CIMTROP)  
Indonesian Agency for the Assessment and Implementation of Technology (BPPT)  
Centre for Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SUSTAIN), University of Leicester, UK  
Centre for Environmental Management (CEM), University of Nottingham, UK  
Alterra Research Centre, University of Wageningen, The Netherlands  
International Peat Society  
Indonesian Peat Association  
Provincial Government of Central Kalimantan  
Regency Governments of Kapuas, Pulang Pisau, Kasongan and Palangka Raya, Indonesia

**ORGANISERS:**

CIMTROP, University of Palangka Raya (Organising Committee Chairman: Ir. Suwido Limin, MS)  
Indonesian Peat Association (International Peat Society)

**NUMBER OF EXPECTED PARTICIPANTS:**

Approximately 250

**OUTLINE PROGRAMME:**

Thursday 22 September      International Symposium  
    Opening ceremony  
    Keynote International and National speakers  
    Welcome reception

Friday 23 September      Workshop Session 1: Problem Assessment and Research Gaps  
    Breakout sessions for the key topics of fire, water and poverty  
    Action Planning  
    Plenary

Saturday 24 September      Workshop Session 2: Field excursion – Problem Inspection  
    Site visits to Kalampangan (Block C, former Mega Rice Project) and Natural  
    Laboratory (Sebangau catchment)  
    Focus groups on key topics of fire, water and poverty  
    Symposium/workshop dinner

Sunday 25 September      Workshop Session 3: Problem review and recommendations  
    Assessment of the problems confronting restoration of tropical peatland  
    Action plans for dealing with fire, water management and poverty; Goals and timelines

**PRESENTATION TOPICS:**

Impacts of the Mega Rice Project, locally and globally  
Biodiversity of peat swamp forest  
Natural resource functions of tropical peatland  
Problems of fire control on tropical peatland  
Problems of water management on tropical peatland  
Problems of illegal logging and other resource exploitation on tropical peatland  
Problems for sustainable livelihoods on and around tropical peatland  
Lessons on peatland restoration from Boreal and Temperate zones  
Proposals for future land use in the Mega Rice Project area  
Wise use principles for sustainable management of tropical peatland  
Problems of rehabilitating the Mega Rice Project area: options, constraints and dangers  
Problems facing the new Sebangau National Park  
Other relevant topics

**PRESENTATIONS:**

Presentations at the international symposium are by invitation only but short papers within the scope of the four workshop breakout sessions are welcomed.

**PAPER SUBMISSION INFORMATION:**

Titles of short papers (max 15 minutes presentation time) and abstracts of no more than 100 words should be sent to Professor Jack Rieley, University of Nottingham, UK by Email to [jack.rieley@btinternet.com](mailto:jack.rieley@btinternet.com) to arrive no later than 31<sup>st</sup> July 2005. These should include the Email address of the communicating author.

**PUBLICATION OF THE SYMPOSIUM AND WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS AND WORKSHOP CONCLUSIONS:**

It is intended these will be published as soon as possible after the event. Symposium and workshop presenters should provide a copy of their presentations (maximum 1500 words), in electronic format (Microsoft Word) before the start of the meetings.

**CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

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**REGISTRATION:**

Please return the attached registration form by 31<sup>st</sup> August 2005 to the following contact person:

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**Preliminary Registration Form:**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Sex:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Male</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Female</b>
<b>Organization</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Position:</b>	<b>Title:</b>
<b>Phone:</b>	<b>Mobile</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>E-mail:</b>	
<b>Fax:</b>	
<b>Title of paper to be presented at the workshop:</b>	
<b>Workshop session at which you wish to present the paper:</b>	
<b>BIODIVERSITY      FIRE      POVERTY      WATER</b>	
<b>Abstract of Paper (maximum 100 words):</b>	
<b>Do you want to participate in the workshop excursion on 24 September 2005</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>no</b>	