



Jakarta, Friday 9th, 2024

Joint Statement AAL – EcoNusantara : Action Plan and Rio Mukti Case

Astra Agro is pleased to announce that it has re-appointed EcoNusantara (ENS) to assist it in developing an Action Plan to put into effect the recommendations of ENS's independent verification of allegations raised by Friends of the Earth in 2022. ENS was appointed based on its depth of knowledge of the issues, communities and engagement in the field and therefore does not face a steep learning curve in order to deliver the hoped for resolution of all the issues.

Stakeholders will recall the full report was published on November 27th 2023, after a three-week period of consultation with key interested parties. Stakeholder input was published shortly afterwards in the form of a Q&A.

AAL will publish the finalised action plan, and subsequently will keep stakeholders up to date with a monthly progress report.

EcoNusantara said of the appointment: "We are grateful and proud to have been appointed again by Astra Agro to assist in the development of the action plan. We worked in the field for eight months independently collecting facts about each issue and engaging with the relevant community and parties. We are confident that our experience in this field will contribute greatly to the development of the action plan.

ENS works independently in the process of finding mutual solution to each problem which will be outlined in the action plan. The process will build an action plan referring to the values of participation, accountability and transparency. We hope to get support from all parties involved so that problem solving can be achieved together. In particular, and as before, we urge civil society to engage closely with us to work together for a mutual solution.



Rio Mukti – claim of intimidation:

Following the publication of EcoNusantara’s original report, Walhi published a video in which residents of Rio Mukti referred to land claims followed by the allegation against PT AAL as in the media report "Friends of the Earth groups denounce recent case of intimidation by Astra Agro Lestari, call for immediate de-escalation", 8 December 2023, Friends of the Earth.

First, we want to make it absolutely clear that AAL has neither the wish nor the authority to arrest anyone. Secondly, the land claim part of this grievance will be dealt with in the upcoming action plan, and details will be available on that issue since it formed part of the original investigation.

Separately, one of the individuals concerned has met with members of the company’s CSR team to discuss support measures that would support her appropriately, with a focus on economic improvement. The CSR team will be responsible for delivering this support.

Please note that we took the allegation of intimidation to women of Rio Mukti raised by Friends of the Earth very seriously. Our preliminary investigation on the field found that prior to the visit by the CSR team, there was a rumour in the community from unknown sources that the Company would arrest the people involved in the video uploaded by civil society. The visit was intended to discuss individual support measures that would support them appropriately, with a focus on economic improvement and to straighten out of the rumour. It was also carried out at the specific invitation of the village head.

We deeply regret that this was misconstrued as an act of intimidation. It had entirely the opposite purpose and action is now in hand to provide both women with an appropriate level of support.

This is a good example of where direct cooperation and dialogue with civil society could have been of considerable help in avoiding misinterpretation of intent and facilitating community meetings. We reiterate that our door is always open for this and for new evidence, and we encourage those who have land claims or other issues to come forward for discussion and resolution.