

Progress Update on PT Sandabi Indah Lestari (SIL).

Wilmar conducted three field visits to the alleged affected areas in 2015:

1. 11 - 13 May 2015

Wilmar met with PT SIL's management and the community in Seluma, reviewed the company's documents and interviewed the community leaders, the community members, village authorities and their Mosque Leader. PT SIL and the communities acknowledged there were conflicts prior to 2013, but there wasn't any subsequent new cases between 2013 and 2015, as a result of some agreements between the two parties.

2. 2 – 3 July 2015

A second visit was conducted without the presence of any PT SIL representative. The visit was originally arranged by WALHI Bengkulu (FoE's representative in Indonesia) with the objective of obtaining a more detailed understanding of the relationship between PT SIL and the surrounding communities. However, WALHI Bengkulu cancelled the meeting at the last minute and Wilmar could only conduct a few door-to-door interviews with the communities. It was found from those interviews that the communities' main issue was the forced compensation that occurred in 2011, where the communities would be evicted if they refused to accept the compensation.

3. 22 – 23 December 2015

This third field visit was arranged at a meeting between Wilmar, local NGO, Transformasi untuk Keadilan (TUK) Indonesia and local farmer organization Forum Petani Bersatu (FPB) who represented the communities with land conflicts with PT SIL in Kuala Lumpur on 19 November 2015.

At the field visit, we met with WALHI Bengkulu, TUK Indonesia, Head of FPB and about 50 of its members. Wilmar understands that FPB was not getting support from the local authorities and police department in addressing the land conflicts, and therefore they hope Wilmar could exert commercial pressure on PT SIL by ceasing business with PT SIL. In the same meeting, they also informed Wilmar that, in November 2015, PT SIL planted 25 palm trees in a community member's land, the land owner was afraid to take any action for fear of being evicted by PT SIL. However, the land owner was not present at the meeting to confirm this.

As a result of the above engagements with the various concerned stakeholders, Wilmar has agreed to actively facilitate the conflict resolution process between PT SIL and the communities. Wilmar has also conveyed to PT SIL that their approach of persuading the communities to surrender their land in return for compensation had caused some uneasiness amongst the communities, as they felt threatened by PT SIL, even though the company did not force their requests upon them.

In order to move forward with this case, TUK has agreed to share with Wilmar two crucial documents immediately after the third field visit in December 2015; the documents are:

1. Detailed information of the 529 households, eg: land owner's name, coordinates, land area, etc.
2. A letter from the Governor of Bengkulu in 2004 which stated that the communities have rights to the contested land.

Once the documents are received, Wilmar will assist to map out the details and invite the concerned stakeholders for discussion. Several reminders have been sent to the related party for the above documents, but so far to no avail. Nevertheless, the company is following up on this case closely with them.