



SAWIT WATCH



Press Release - Sawit Watch and Kaoem Telapak

The Accomplishment of Indonesia's Climate Commitment Requires an Effective Moratorium On Palm Oil Plantations.

[Jakarta, 31 Oktober 2021], The Conference of Parties (COP) is the highest decision-making forum that discusses world climate change. At the 26th event this year the COP will be held in Glasgow on 31 October – 12 November 2021. Human activity is without a doubt the primary cause of the current climate problem (The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, which was released on August 7, 2021). Without a genuine commitment and responsibility on the part of any country, the global climate catastrophe will only intensify. Increases in global average sea levels, extreme events such as rising prevalence of heat waves and droughts on a global scale, fires, and floods will all be felt.

Land use change is one type of human activity that exacerbates climate change around the planet. The expansion of oil palm plantations in Indonesia contributes to land use change. Indonesia's plan to replace fossil fuels with palm-based biofuel is a false solution that will likely worsen the problem, especially by accelerating up the conversion of land and forests to oil palm plantations. To accommodate the transition from fossil fuel to biofuel, the current plantation area will almost have to double with at least 15 million hectares of new oil palm plantations are required.⁴

In reality, due to the indirect land use change that happens, emissions from changes in the usage of peatlands and forests to produce palm oil or Crude Palm Oil are nearly equal to or even exceed fossil fuel emissions. In reality, the palm oil industry's operations contribute to and are responsible for current climate circumstances. Land expansion activities from decades ago, such as converting biodiversity-rich forests and peatlands into oil palm plantations, were also to blame.

Considering this, the palm oil moratorium is one of the currently available instruments for addressing the problems of palm oil governance. The palm oil moratorium policy, Presidential Instruction No. 8 of 2018 on Moratorium on and Evaluation of the Licensing of Palm Oil Plantations

⁴ Anisatul Umah. (2020, November 23). Butuh 15 Juta Hektar Sawit Buat Gantikan Minyak, Yes or No? Retrieved October 29, 2021, from CNBC Indonesia website: <https://www.cnbcindonesia.com/news/20201123192446-4-204061/butuh-15-juta-hektar-sawit-buat-gantikan-minyak-yes-or-no>

and Productivity Increases for Palm Oil Plantations,⁵ is one of the constructive initiatives implemented by the Indonesian government. The policy's most essential feature is the temporary suspension of new oil palm plantation permits. Nevertheless, this moratorium ended in September 2021. The policy is conceptually strategic, but not yet optimally implemented and therefore the policy needs to be extended to resolve and accelerate Indonesia's palm oil governance reform for the future.⁶

The Indonesian government is still yet to make an official statement regarding the extension of the moratorium. The civil society coalition has been waiting for Indonesia's commitment to fulfill the NDC commitment to set a target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Indonesia, namely 29 percent unconditionally with their own efforts and 41 percent conditionally with adequate international support by 2030. The greatest ambition of this emission reduction comes from the forestry sector with a 17.2% to 38% emission reduction target by 2030. To respond to these challenges, the palm oil moratorium contributes to achieving this ambition.⁷

The public is demanding an extension of moratorium on palm oil plantations. 7,195 people signed a petition on change.org titled "Pak Jokowi Please Extend Palm Oil Moratorium, So Indonesia's Forests Stay Sustainable," urging the Indonesian government to extend the moratorium on palm oil. On September 17, 2021, civil society organizations, academics, and a number of parties from various backgrounds sent President Joko Widodo an open letter urging him to extend and strengthen the palm oil moratorium policy for the sake of Indonesia's forests.

As a proof of Indonesia's determination to meet the NDC and play a proactive role in the global climate crisis, President Joko Widodo needs to announce the extension of the Indonesian palm oil moratorium at the COP 26 conference in Glasgow on November 1 and 2, 2021.

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⁵ Support for the Extension of the Indonesian Palm Oil Moratorium – Sawit Watch. (2021). Retrieved October 31, 2021, from Sawitwatch.or.id website: <https://sawitwatch.or.id/2021/09/07/support-for-the-extension-of-the-indonesian-palm-oil-moratorium/>

⁶ Kertas Kebijakan : Urgensi Perpanjangan Moratorium Sawit Untuk Memperkuat Tata Kelola Sawit Indonesia – Sawit Watch. (2021). Retrieved October 29, 2021, from Sawitwatch.or.id website: <https://sawitwatch.or.id/2021/07/07/kertas-kebijakan-urgensi-perpanjangan-moratorium-sawit-untuk-memperkuat-tata-kelola-sawit-indonesia>

⁷ Kertas Kebijakan : Urgensi Perpanjangan Moratorium Sawit Untuk Memperkuat Tata Kelola Sawit Indonesia – Sawit Watch. (2021). Retrieved October 29, 2021, from Sawitwatch.or.id website: <https://sawitwatch.or.id/2021/07/07/kertas-kebijakan-urgensi-perpanjangan-moratorium-sawit-untuk-memperkuat-tata-kelola-sawit-indonesia>