

## How to Ensure EUDR Inclusive for Independent Smallholders



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The **EU Deforestation Regulation** (EUDR), which was officially legalized in April 2023, will become immediately active.

This is a policy regarding Deforestation Free Due Diligence for agricultural

products entering the European Union (EU) including palm oil. Of course, this is very positive policy, especially when forest cover in Indonesia is decreasing. The benefit is not only for consumers, but also for producing countries including Indonesia which has significant forest cover.

However, what is going to happen if the policy will be implemented in the near future without paying attention to the independent smallholders condition who are lacking knowledge, minimum access to information and technology, minimum support and minimum capacity?

Meanwhile, this EUDR regulation, the traceability and legality are the defining factors, whether these products can enter the EU market or not.

If so, there are concerns from many parties that this regulation will not only ignoring and excluding independent smallholders in the EU market supply chain, but will also not addressing the main problem of deforestation.

While European consumers may be successfully consuming products that are clean and not derived from deforestation practices, it cannot be mentioned that this consumption can make a significant contribution to zero deforestation.

Independent smallholders are the closest to the forest, and they are also the quickest to access the forest. For this reason, it is necessary to consider that independent smallholders can become a part of the deforestation-free movement by:

1. The EU market should provide additional conditions, companies that will receive priority to enter the EU market are those that produce palm oil **products by independent smallholders**, at least 20-25%. In this case, large companies will have the responsibility to ensure that independent smallholder products are including into export to the EU market. Indeed, independent smallholders are farmers who have a high risk, so if this policy will be implemented, many companies are considering not to include independent smallholders products to be exported, and more likely to be sold to conventional markets;
2. **Due diligence** requirements for smallholders' products should be implemented in **stepwise approach** (time and requirements), so that it providing room for independent smallholders to make improvements and be monitored.

A gradual approach with a measurable time plan is a strategy to ensure independent smallholders have time to prepare and make improvements to meet the requirements to the regulation. A number of requirements that take time are the readiness of independent smallholder product traceability and land legality.

If these 2 items are being considered, there is no room for independent smallholders to be excluded from the trade scheme for palm oil products in the EU. This is of course not only good for the sustainability of the forest, but will also have a positive impact to the welfare of independent smallholders.

Article in Indonesian are available [here](#)

## RSPO Credit Support Rural Students' Education



RSPO credit paving the way for sustainable independent palm oil smallholders to spread more benefits to others.

By utilizing incentive funds from the sale of RSPO Credits, **KUD Mekarsari**, located in

Musi Rawas, South Sumatra, gives appreciation to a number of outstanding students at Early Childhood Education Programs (PAUD), Kindergarten, and Elementary School, and provides social assistance to underprivileged children.

The handover of appreciation and assistance was carried out by KUD Mekarsari Group Manager, Mr. Ratiman. He hopes that the provision of these benefits can be a source of encouragement for students, "hopefully this appreciation can increase the students enthusiasm to study more actively".

Check out the complete information [here](#).

## Maintaining Nature Sustainability through Organic Fertilizers



Old age does not dampen Mr. Bejo Sampurno's enthusiasm, an independent smallholder from **Forum Petani Swadaya Merlung Renah Mendaluh** (FPS-MRM) in using organic fertilizer from solid goat manure or commonly called 'KOHE', to be applied around his palm trees. In our exciting conversation, Mr. Bejo explained his reason for

switching chemical fertilizers to organic, because he assessed that the leaves using chemical fertilizer had started to turn yellow.

The man who lives in Sungai Rotan Village, Jambi, believes that intention and effort without expecting anything in return will be an infinite kindness, "by using organic fertilizer we can maintain the quality of the soil and it can be used by our children and grandchildren in the future. This can also be a legacy for them later".

Read the full article [here](#) or watch our interview [here](#).