

TRIALS, TRIBULATIONS AND SUCCESS OF RIL – THE SARAWAK EXPERIENCE

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Abstract

The Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) Guidelines is one of the key components in Sustainable Forest Management (SFM), which requires stringent regulations on forest harvesting operations as well as responsible harvesting practices by the logging operators. *“RIL is defined as a comprehensive set of planning, monitoring and control practices regulating timber harvesting operations that support the goal of SFM, aiming at a reduction of forest damage to an acceptable level, and lowering adverse environmental and social impacts, while promoting operational efficiency and economic viability as well as to ensure health and safety of all forest workers.”* RIL guidelines for Sarawak were formulated way back in 1999, based on two global collaboration projects, namely the Model Forest Management Area (MFMA) under International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) from 1993 to 1996 and Forest Management Information System (FOMISS) under the Malaysian-German Technical Cooperation from 1995 to 2001. Based on the experience gained from these projects and trials conducted in the field, Forest Department Sarawak (FDS) had developed the guidelines for Reduced and Low Impact Harvesting System (1999). Since then, this guideline has been revised several times and thereafter, the current RIL version for Ground-based Harvesting System Part 1 and Part 2 (Guideline 10A and 10B) in The Green Book in 2019. In October 2020, a harmonized RIL Guideline was produced in collaboration between FDS and FAO-European Union Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (EU FLEGT) Programme to comply with the international standards.

Keywords: Sustainable Forest Management, Reduced Impact Logging, Timber Harvesting