REPORT ON MARKET RESEARCH VISIT ON COMMUNITY FARMING TO INDONESIA (29 JULY – 1 AUGUST 2022)

A Collaborative Partnership of









Collaborative Participation by



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Malaysian Timber Council (MTC) together with the Malaysian Panel-Products Manufacturers' Association (MPMA) conducted a Market Research Visit on Community Farming to Indonesia on 29 July - 1 August 2022. The market research visit led by MTC chairman, Madam Hajah Norrida Yusoff aims to understand smallholder activities in Indonesia conducting their tree plantings for wood-based industries and agro practices for food production. This visit has also been participated by MPIC, FRIM, MTIB, MTCC and a few members of timber associations (TEAM, MWIA, MWMJC, and PEKA). The visit focused on three main areas, which include Bandungan, Salatiga and Candimulyo districts located in Central Java.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 To understand and learn about Indonesia's success with her Community Farming in terms of government policies and support, as well as modules used within the last decade.
- **2.2** To understand and identify problems encountered by the Indonesian planters within the project duration; and
- **2.3** To explore the possibility of emulating the same modules of Community Farming in Malaysia.

3.0 LOCATIONS OF VISIT

3.1 1st Location (Bandongan, Kabupaten Magelang)

Owner's Name: Damar Handono Land Size: 1,500 m² Tree Species: Batai & Mahogany Tree Age: 5 Years

3.2 2nd Location (Ampel, Kabupaten Boyolali)

Owner's Name: Harwanto Aji Kristanto Land Size: 3,000 m² Tree Species: Batai & Jati Tree Age: 2 Years

3.3 3rd Location (Ampel, Kabupaten Boyolali)

Owner's Name: Reban Narso Wiratmo Land Size: 2,300 m² Tree Species: Batai dan Kelempayan (Jabon) Tree Age: 3.5 Years

3.4 4th Location (Candimulyo, Kabupaten Magelang)

Owner's Name: Reban Narwo Wiratmo Land Size: 2,500 m² Tree Species: Batai Tree Age: 4-5 Years

3.5 5th Location (Candimulyo, Kabupaten Magelang)

Owner's Name: Sugito Land Size: 2,800 m² Tree Species: Batai & Kelempayan (Jabon) Tree Age: 3.5 years



Figure 1: Locations of Market Research Visit

4.0 GENERAL OBSERVATION

The visit aims to gain a better understanding of community farming practiced by the smallholders in Indonesia. The community efforts have the potential to boost the wood supply for the wood-based industry and alleviate the livelihood of the locals from an additional source of income.

The visits have witnessed the efforts of the smallholders in ensuring the sustainability of the forestry plantations and wood-based industries in Central Java namely the Bandungan, Salatiga and Candimulyo districts. The tree species selected for planting were mainly fast and moderately fast growing such as *Falcataria moluccana* (batai), *Swietenia macrophylla* (mahogany), *Neolamarckia cadamba* (Kelempayan) and *Tectona grandis* (Jati). With the intention of money

back guaranteed, and the expectation of early return, timber tree species were planted as long-term investment, with cash crops inter planted within the forest stands. Batai was the most preferred tree species planted by community farmers. Despite having low budget inputs, and little knowledge about silvicultural, the established stands have performed well and within their expectations.

Batai being a light hardwood species is categorized among the fast-growing plantation trees (average 35 m³/ha/year) slightly higher than *Eucalyptus* species. In a normal situation, Batai can be harvested between 7 and 8 years after planting with an average height and diameter at breast height of 20 m and 25 cm respectively. The most successful 4-year-old batai stand was in Candimulyo having an average of 20 to 25 cm diameter at breast height and should be ready for harvesting in 1 or 2 years' time. The Batai stands in Bandungan and Salatiga are still between 2 and 3 years after planting.

The favourable growth performance of the planted trees is mostly due to fertile sites caused by the accumulation of volcanic ash from the series of eruptions around the islands. The last eruption from Mount daMerapi was in 2012, which is a few kilometers from Candimulyo sites. The ash normally known as *Andisols* soil, from the nearby volcanoes, contains high nutrient content including Nitrogen (N), Magnesium (Mg), Potassium (K), Calcium (Ca), and Phosphorus (P) highly needed for good growth. Subsequently, the accumulated ash with an average depth of 35 to 45 cm, the fine texture has provided high porosity, good aeration, and drainage to the soils needed for root growth.

Good growth and returns from the cash crops had shown us the daily subsistence and cash revenues for smallholders in Central Java, which highly depended on seasonal harvest including paddy, cassava, corn, tobacco, coconut, vegetables and fruits (papaya, banana). These crops adapt well in areas containing ash with high nutrient contents. By utilizing the community land areas, such initiatives resulted in providing employment and reducing migration to town centres. Group farming with its primary focus on promoting vegetables, flowers evinced a lot of interest among women farmers as a stable economic activity. The forest trees planted were considered as an investment and shall be harvested and marketed as and when needed, and marketed at the nearby sawmill.

On the silvicultural aspects, the species were observed having less forking, with 10-15 m clean bole, the most probable reason that the pruning activities were conducted at an early age, occluded well and led to the formation of sound knots. Unlike batai planted in other parts of the tropical countries, the trees possessed high forking densities demanding intensive singling and pruning activities in the early parts of the rotation.

Back in Malaysia, batai despite being listed under the MTIB forest plantation programme, does not grow well as we have observed in Central Java. Experimental observation in various locations in Malaysia, mainly on a higher elevations and on relatively poor sites have shown that batai grew better under high intensive management and fertilizer regime. However, the positive aspects and fast growth of the species with minimal pests and disease problems had encouraged potential investors to pick up the species as the future round log production within a short rotation period. These can be seen from several reforestation projects in Perak, Pahang and Kelantan started the commercial planting batai for end products including veneer logs, slice timber, and block boards.

Timber species such as jati and mahogany are categorized under moderate to slow growing species but still have the attention of the smallholders especially from the Bandungan sites by planting them as mixed planting together with some cash crops. Being rather slow, these species are of quality timber species and fetched high market values. The timbers were being sold as short logs and intended for the manufacturing of furniture and cabinet making.

Planters of Bandungan, Salatiga and Candimulyo villages in Yogyakarta showed that community planting results in better utilization of common resources, enhancement of the livelihoods by providing employment, and reducing migration. Today, community farming has spread to many surrounding villages. Interestingly, farmers did not depend on foreign workers yet successfully managed the forest plantations.

As observed in Malaysia, in order to reduce pressure on the native forest as a source of raw materials and to ensure its continuous availability for the domestic timber industry, the Government is encouraging the development of large-scale

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commercial forest plantations. In line with this policy, National Budget 2022 allocated a RM 500 million soft loan for the investors to plant the selected tree species. Indeed, it is an important task for the Ministry (MPIC) to pursue an aggressive programme for the development of forest plantations in Malaysia.

The estimated average maturity period for forest plantation development activities is between 7 and 12 years before the product can be harvested. Companies generally will bear the development cost and maintenance activities until harvesting. The project development involved high planting costs (the first year) and followed by maintenance costs activities before harvesting (trees aged 7-12 years) depending on output requirements such as the production of chipboard, plywood, and other products.

5.0 PROGRAMME INPUT

5.1 UPSTREAM

Based on the visit (Bandungan - Salatiga - Candimulyo) and along the journey, there are 3 types of models being practiced by the farmers. The plantings of timber species are considered long-term investments. Harvesting of appropriate tree sizes will be carried out as and when needed. Most of the efforts are carried out by themselves, with hardly any assistance from the government. As such the farmers have the freedom to deal by direct selling to the customers/industry involved in tree processing activities.

Type I: Solitary farmers that plant mixed crop species among the timber tree species. The products from the cash crops will support their daily staple food, while the timbers are considered a depository. There is no specific planting design applied and fully utilize the land whenever possible to plant the crops.

Type II: Planting by a group of farmers. Where several farmers team up actively work on their mixed plantation. The crops were inter-planted along the timber species in plots or rows. The products from the cash crops sustain their livelihood, and some are meant for the local market.

Type III: Planting by a specific group of farmers. Each group will focus to plant timber species in specific small plots. Some farmers planted Napier grass

underneath for their ruminants. While other groups focus on each crop planted in specific/dedicated zone areas. These agri-crop harvests (vegetables/ tobacco/ cassava/ banana) have a direct supply to the buyers.



Figure 2: Type of Plating Regimes Type I – Solitary Planting

Meanwhile, no selection is done prior to the planting of timber tree species. The seedlings were grown or exchanged among the farmers. No technical guidance in planting or silviculture treatment was provided and mainly relied on their ancestor's cultural hands-on farmers. The tree's growth was inconsistence with some minor pest attacks despite the rich *Andisols* type soil that is rich with key nutrients.

5.2 DOWNSTREAM

Freedom of trading

Since the farming efforts are mainly from the community itself, with no government interference and policy restrictions, the community conducted their own will to handle the downstream process. The felling, extraction and marketing of timber logs were carried out as and when they wish, direct to the mill. Meanwhile, those with additional cash, built their own mini sawmill to process the timber themselves, which has an added value to their products as compared with the selling of logs.

Some of the challenges that would be faced by the planters are:

- transportation
- price of their goods
- the involvement of middlemen
- financial assistance
- secured fair prices and buyers

6.0 CONCLUSION

Three major key factors that drive the establishment of Community Farming are Attitude, Policy and Livelihood. With a high population density, everyone must strive to live. Those with land and supported by government policy can team up under a community farming programme to toil the land into profitable and sustainable income. In Malaysians, especially the B40 groups are yet to arrive at this juncture. Thus, this is the main reason for MTC-MPMA efforts to boost and establish Forestry Community Farming. The programme provides the need for timber-based industries and sustains the livelihood of the poor emulating the hard-working and positive attitude of those Indonesian farmers. Thus, the availability of unproductive lands will potentially turn into a long-term profitable venture while maximizing local livelihoods sustainably.

The knowledge and experience gathered during the market research visit is an eye opener to the representatives/delegates for each of the wood-based industries on the potential and prospect of the planted species for the sustainability of wood supply in Malaysia. It is timely now for the companies/government organization such as MTIB, FRIM, and Forestry Department to intensively promote and advertise the planting of the species not only to smallholders but to the large-scale plantation investors.

Concurrently the practices adopted by the smallholders in Central Java by planting cash crops or commonly known as agroforestry is another option back in Malaysia for intermediate returns while waiting for the planted trees to reach the harvestable size.

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The Ministry should look at three main aspects through this visit namely, dependency on foreign workers, heavily subsidized/fund concept tax, and other related matters within different government agencies. Looking at the success of community farming in Indonesia, where it brought an improvement in the livelihoods of people in the three districts. The community utilizes land and plants fast-growing species and other agricultural products to increase their crop yield and start and sustain life in tough situations.

In Malaysia, the declining supply of round logs from natural forests, rubber wood and imported species like *Pinus* have replaced the traditional timber in furniture and panel making. This market research visit is again an eye opener as the plantations in Indonesia are on very small scales, fragmented and unorganized by comparing with the Malaysia farmers who are eligible for soft loans, subsidies, and full support from the government. The farmers in Indonesia work independently on their own land without or little support from the government both financially and technical know-how. They are using the traditional way and based on experience.

The favorable growth of the trees with little or no fertilizers is probably due to the volcanic origin of the soils, usually fertile with high content of macronutrients from the volcanic ash of the nearby volcanoes. Timber plantations require a minimum of 5 years to reach harvestable size, depending on timber species despite many uncontrollable factors. Besides that, the farmers practice mixed crops farming to survive their daily life while waiting for the planted trees to reach their optimum size. There are no regulations and licenses needed to cut and extract trees and process timbers to enable

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them to operate freely from upstream to downstream. They usually owned a small mini sawmill with timber processing facilities.

The concept of community farming has great potential as a source of raw material for downstream operations. However, it does require assistance in horticulture skills and advisory services. With proper plantation management, the potential to increase the yield is tremendous. Assistance in pest and disease control, the proper schedule fertilization programme will most likely boost the yield. There is sufficient evidence that the trees can reach their full potential and it is sustainable.

7.0 WAY FORWARD

- The existing Forestry Policies must be supportive towards the Community Farming programme.
- 2. The young generation of B40 must be involved in the programme from the beginning.
- 3. As the programme is still in its infancy, a plot size of 50 ha could be established quickly as a model for the community to learn and replicate.
- 4. Involve several NGOs as they can source the crowdfunding for this programme.
- 5. Government can match with a private partnership programme.
- A team of experts from government sectors can be appointed to provide guidance to the communities.
- The forest ownership is individual and in form of backyard industries for timber processing.
- 8. Generally, no tax imposes by the government on the villagers, nonetheless, there is also no assistance given by the government.
- Technical advice and assistance should be given to the farmers, particularly on species selection, planting materials, silvicultural treatments, and pest/disease control.
- 10. Possibly to train the villagers/planters to also use scientific names. This is to be used for international buyers/visitors if any.
- 11. The planting sites has the potential for agrotourism/ecotourism activities.

- 12. Intensive R&D on the Community Farming, encouraging and promoting community farming in Malaysia needs to be intensified, particularly on documentation and taxes by the authorities.
- 13. Establishment of a governing committee for the project.
- 14. Promotion of the importance of community farming by the government and agencies.
- 15. The task force should be formed to discuss a new way of community farming and how to support raw material shortage in the timber industry.
- 16. To engage with enthusiastic mills /industries to lead in the community farming around their vicinity
- 17. To establish a buyback default agreement.
- 18. To set up a nursery for selected seedlings, which depends on industry needs.
- 19. To use technologies to monitor growth and progress.
- 20. FRIM and other local institutions to provide expert advice (knowledge & skills) on the most effective and efficient way to cultivate their lands.
- 21. To conduct analysis on community requirement vis-à-vis land availability and suitability of trees to be planted need to be conducted.
- 22. To create involvement of industry and other relevant agencies in providing technical support, incentive and assurance on the return on investment.
- 23. To establish collaboration and engagement with Forestry Department of Peninsula Malaysia (FDPM) is important to ensure that the regulatory process can be simplified while maintaining the system for legality and traceability.

8.0 MTC CHAIRMAN'S NOTE

8.1 Downstream industry needs

The current situation with the acute deficit of raw materials faced by the local wood manufacturers demands us, the policymakers, timber organizations and government agencies to come out with any feasible solutions. The solutions either of a short-term or long-term basis should be geared toward solving the problems faced by the manufacturers and other players from any wood-based industries nationwide. The exposure and experience gathered from the recent trip in Central Java set an example of a fast-track solution to producing fast-growing hardwood timber in a rather short-term period.

8.2 Encouragement of nursery plots by the states or districts as another source of earnings

The initial community farming programme will start in Jempol Districts, Negeri Sembilan with an approximate area of 200 acres. Prior to the establishment, planning of the central nursery is of prime importance and should be located at nearby planting sites with the participation of local communities. The setting up of a nursery of large-scale capacity with continuous manpower requirements will be another source of earnings for the communities in and around the areas.

8.3 Raw material supply with community farming

The need to enhance the acute shortage of current raw materials supply for the wood based industries demand immediate fast track actions to be taken by the association of wood based manufacturers. By examining the current trend of log production, as illustrated, the production is on the downward trend from 4.12 million m³ 2011 down to 2.22 million m³ in 2020. The chart without any figures of production from previous years, which was at 17 million m³ as of 1990s, only remains 2 million m³ in 2020 to cater for same amount of sawmills and plywood mills in Peninsular Malaysia.





8.4 Improving the green lungs

The remaining 450 trees in an acre in year 6, has the potential to produce 118 kg of oxygen annually, which is equivalent to 53,100 kg/acres/year.

8.5 Community Farming Estimation of Cost

Summary of costs and returns from 1-acre planting (RM) for 6 years of rotation:

No	Descriptions	Quantity	Price	Cost
COSTS			Unit/Tonne	
1	Planting materials	500	4.00	2,000.00
2	Site preparation	1	500.00	500.00
3	Establishment/planting	500	4.00	2,000.00
4	Maintenance fertilizers (year 1-	8	150.00/bag	1,200.00
	year 4) 4x2 intervals			
5	Maintenance (tending	450	0.50/tree	2,700.00
	treatments) (year 1-year 4) 4x3			
	intervals			
6	Maintenance (tree quality	450	0.50/tree	225.00
	improvement)			
	SUB TOTAL			8,625.00
RET	URNS			
7	Harvesting (50 trees dead) of 0.2	450	0.2 X 400	36,000.00
	tonne / tree @RM400/tonne			
8	Gross income			27,375.00
9	Gross income / month			380.20

NB. Harvesting costs, tax and transportation are not included

8.6 Cross-economy collaboration

The community farming programme aims to provide an alternative source of wood supply for the timber-based industries by involving the participation of local communities. The proposed collaboration will assist in sustaining the livelihood through additional income besides the existing traditional farming practices. The availability of unproductive lands will potentially be turned into a long-term profitable venture while maximizing local livelihoods sustainably.

8.7 Higher level attention

Despite the presence of technical know-how from various agencies, the implementation of any community farming will only be possible with the involvement of high-level authority at the ministerial level. The direct involvement of the higher authority guarantees inter-government relationship and cooperation between regions/countries, especially in the production of common goals, and exchange of agricultural inputs and expertise.

8.8 Future Programme

The case study presented is based on the current scenario of the forest tree planting programme and anticipated timber prices in Malaysia. Importance of further training and field exposure on the techniques, costing and feedback in other organization is recommended. The places of interest include the community farming practices in Thailand, Mindanao or even India.

This report is prepared by

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- 5) Dr Hj Ahmad Zuhaidi Bin Yahya
- 6) Dato Dr Marzalina Binti Mansor

9.0 PARTICIPANTS LIST

No	Name	Designation	Organization
1	Hajah Norrida Binti Yusoff	Chairman	МТС
2	Ts. Hj. Muhtar Bin Suhaili	CEO	MTC
3	Mokhtar Bin Yaacob	Director	MTC
4	Adeline Goh Bee Yean	Senior Manager	MTC
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9	Datuk Chua Hock Gee	Deputy Chairman	MPMA
10	Ganasen Moorthi A/L M Suppiah	Honorable Treasurer	MPMA
11	Hoh Cheon Fatt @ Ho Khoy Lim	Exco Member	MPMA
12	Dr Hj Ahmad Zuhaidi Yahya	Advisor	MPMA
13	Mohd Rizuan Bin Yusof	Director	Besgrade Plywood/MPMA
14	Dato Dr Marzalina Binti Mansor	Advisor	MPMA
15	Dr Rosdi Bin Koter	Head of Forest Plantation Programme/Advisor	FRIM/MPMA
16	Jackson Raao A/L Devadas	Principal Assistant Secretary	MPIC (KTK)
17	Pang Suet Kum	Executive Officer	MWIA
18	David Wong Chiung Cheng	Committee Member	TEAM
19	Jerry Tan Kuan Yee	Managing Director	Floor Culture & MWMJC
20	Hj Farosham Bin Naizamohideen	President	PEKA
21	Dr Ismail bin Hj Parlan	Director General	FRIM
22	Surina Binti Aziz	Assistant Director	MTIB
23	Jessie Tang	CEO	EWOG
24	Tan Yao Zu	Director	All Asia Biotechnology
25	Siti Syaliza Binti Mustapha	CEO	MTCC

10.0 PROGRAMME ITINERARY

Date & Time	Programme					
Day 1: Fri, 29 July 2022						
12:10 pm	Group 2					
	Flight: KLIA – Jakarta - Jogja					
	(Malindo Air, OD 0348, 12:10 pm – 01:00 pm)					
	(Interlink Airlines PTY (Batik Air), ID 6372, 4:05 pm – 5:15 pm)					
3:30 pm	Group 1					
	Flight: KLIA 2 – Jogja					
	(Air Asia, AK 0348, 3:30 pm – 5:05 pm)					
5:30 pm	Depart to hotel					
6:30 pm	Dinner – Kota Purworejo					
8:00 pm	Check-in hotel					
	Plataran Heritage Borobudur Hotel					
8:30 pm	End of Day 1					
Day 2: Sat, 30						
7:30 am	Breakfast					
8:30 am	Depart to 1 st location					
09:30 am	Bandongan, Kabupaten Magelang					
11:00 am	Depart to 2 nd ,3 rd & 4 th locations					
12:00 pm	Lunch in Kopeng					
2:00 pm	Ampel, Kabupaten Boyolali					
4:00 pm	Back to hotel					
6:00 pm	Dinner in Magelang					
8:00 pm	End of Day 2					
Day 3: Sun, 31	July 2022					
7:30 am	Breakfast					
8:30 am	Depart to 5 th Location					
9:00 am	Candimulyo, Kabupaten Magelang					
12:00 pm	Lunch & wrap up discussion in Magelang					
2:00 pm	Free and Easy					
5:00 pm	Back to hotel					
7:00 pm	Dinner					
8:00 pm	End of Day 3					
Day 4: Mon, 1						
8:00 am	Breakfast					
9:00 am	Depart to airport					
	Flight: Jogja – Jakarta – KLIA					
1:15 pm	(Batik Air, ID 6373, 1:15 pm - 2:25 pm)					
5:00 pm	(Batik Air ID 6018, 5:00 pm – 8:05 pm)					
08:00 pm	Arrival in KLIA					
08:30 pm	End of Programme					

11.0 PHOTO GALLERY



Delegation of Market research visit on Community Farming to Indonesia



Meeting with the local farmer and plantation owner in the 1st Location, Mr. Damar Handono in Bandongan, Kabupaten Magelang



Meeting with the local farmer and plantation owner in the **2**nd, **3**rd & **4**th ocation, Reban Narso Wiratmo & Harwanto Aji Kristanto in Ampel, Kabupaten Boyolali



Meeting with the local farmer and plantation owner in **5th location**, Pak Sugito in Candimulyo, Kabupaten Magelang

CONTACT DETAILS OF RELATED ASSOCIATIONS / COMPANIES / ORGANIZATIONS

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Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM)

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The Timber Exporters' Association of Malaysia (TEAM)

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Association of Bumiputra Timber and Furniture Entrepreneurs (PEKA)

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Malaysian Timber Industry Board (MTIB)

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Malaysian Timber Certification Council (MTCC)

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