



Tropentag, October 7-9, 2008, Hohenheim

“Competition for Resources in a Changing World:
New Drive for Rural Development”

Socio-Economic and Ecological Assessment of Forest Products Harvesting in Central Aceh and Bener Meriah District Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam – Indonesia

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Abstract

This study was carried out to assess the socio-economic and ecological impacts of forest products harvesting in Central Aceh, Indonesia. The assessment included: *Pinus merkusii* and other non-timber forest products (NTFP). The study focussed on the utilisation of *P. merkusii*, economic analysis of existing timber harvesting operations and comparison with Indonesian reduced impact logging guidelines. Also the contribution of NTFP to the livelihoods of the local people in the area, their vulnerability to harvesting, and availability trends were studied.

Data were obtained by using semi-structured questionnaires for open interviews with farmers and concessionaires in the study area. Data analysis was done by employing gross margin analyses, and descriptive and differential statistics.

The results showed that reduced impact logging guidelines are not yet implemented in this region. Forest concessionaires in the study area had an average profit of Rp 197 m⁻³ from logging activities. Logging also contributed to the welfare of local people in terms of job opportunities and the implementation of agro-forestry programs. The harvest of NTFPs is an additional activity, contributing about 25 % to the income of the local people in this area. The proportion of NTFP harvesters is low and species are mainly sold to collectors in Central Aceh and Bireun. The intensity of NTFP harvesting is affected by road conditions and market locations.

Keywords: Ecological survey, harvesting, NTFP, *Pinus merkusii*, social-economic assesment, logging