



Tropentag, October 7-9, 2008, Hohenheim

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

Advancement of Forest Certification in Malaysia - The MTCC-Hamburg Project

ULRICH BICK¹, THOMAS SCHNEIDER¹, ANDREAS KNOELL²

¹*Johann Heinrich von Thuenen Institute, Institute for World Forestry, Germany*

²*University of Hamburg, Department of Wood Science, Section World Forestry, Germany*

Abstract

The Malaysian Timber Certification Council (MTCC) follows a phased approach in line with guidelines of the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO). MTCC is a non-profit organisation established to operate a voluntary national timber certification scheme in Malaysia. The forest management standard in use, the Malaysian Criteria & Indicators 2002 is based on the principles and criteria of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

Based on former discussions between MTCC and the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg (FHH) and the results of round table stakeholder consultations in Hamburg a two year project was launched in mid 2006. The Institute for World Forestry and the Section World Forestry provided scientific backstopping in terms of technical project management for the implementation in Malaysia. A project coordinator was seconded to MTCC for the period of 18 months. German and Malaysian forestry and certification specialists formed a joint project team that worked independently in cooperation with MTCC and other relevant organisations in Malaysia. Project activities included the determination of the degree of performance between the standard MC&I(2002) and the requirements of FHH with regard to public procurement of wood products in terms of a gap analysis. Assessment of the standard MC&I(2002) in terms of the applicability of the verifier level aimed at identification of potential refinement of the standard.

Next to internal working packages, five external specialists were contracted to support the project activities. Dr. Bernd Hahn-Schilling (GER), Dr. Alexander Hinrichs (GER) and Dr. Melvin Gumal (MAL) worked on specific aspects within the technical requirements of the FHH guidelines. Dr. Andrea Tuttle (USA) assessed the institutional arrangement in line with the requirements for certification schemes. Mrs. Tor Moi See (MAL) conducted a verifier review.

Interim results were presented to the Malaysian stakeholders during a mid-term workshop in June 2007 and final results during regional workshops in February 2008 in Sabah, Sarawak as well as at the Peninsula Malaysia. A final workshop to disseminate the results to German stakeholders was held in Hamburg in April 2008. Publication of results is envisaged for late 2008.

The project was jointly funded by MTCC, FHH, German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and German Timber Trade Federation (GD Holz).

Keywords: National certification initiatives, Malaysian timber certification council, public procurement, sustainable forest management