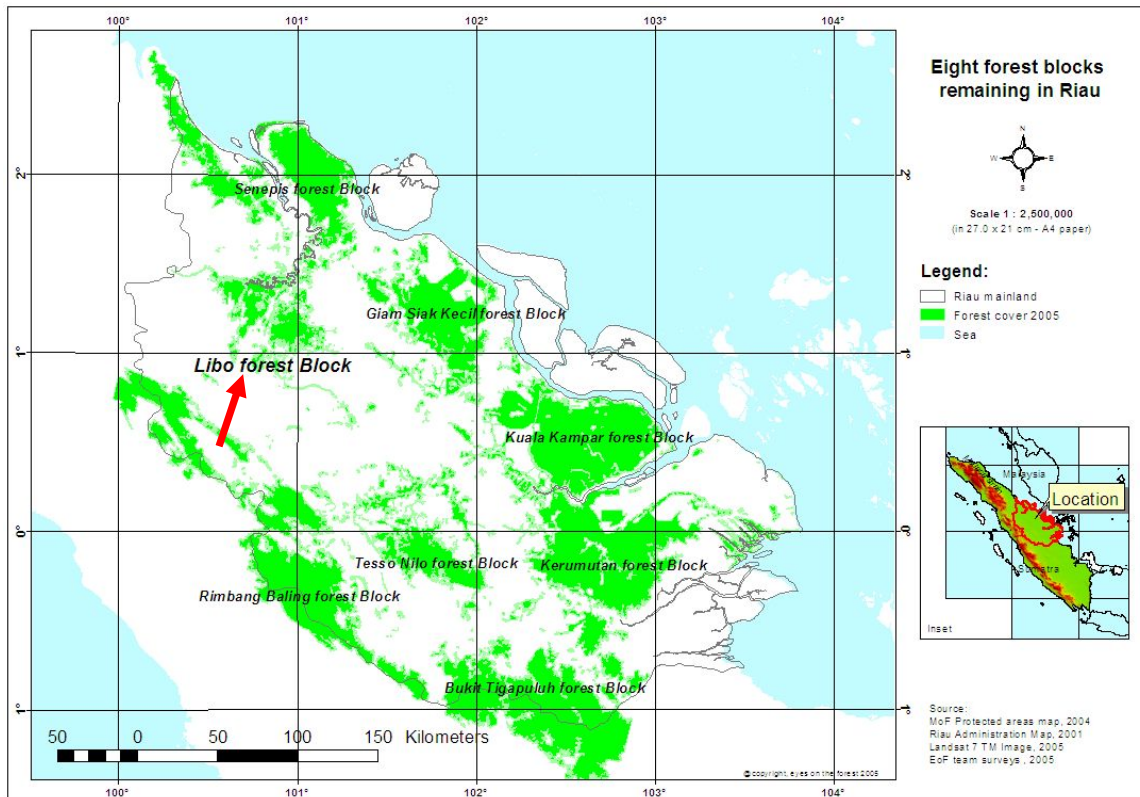


Forest to Paper, Forest to Palm Oil and No Place to Live for Riau's Elephants

Pekanbaru, Indonesia, April 18, 2006



Libo Forest Block in Riau, Sumatra, Indonesia

In February and March 2006, two major incidents of conflict between humans and elephants were connected to the Libo Forest Block in Riau, Sumatra, Indonesia:

- On 28 February, six elephants were found dead in an illegal oil palm plantation in Mahato village, on the border between Riau and North Sumatra Province. Mahato village is about one kilometer from the Mahato Protection Forest, all of which has been converted into settlements and plantations since being declared a protected area in 1994. The elephants are thought to have been poisoned, apparently in retaliation for raiding crops (see photos at: [WWF 03 March 2006 News Highlight](#)).
- Since 22 February, possibly up to 50 elephants have repeatedly raided Balai Raja village. The Balai Raja Duri Wildlife Sanctuary near this village, declared in 1986 (SK Menhut Number: 173/Kpts-II/1986), has seen most of its 16,000 hectares of forests converted into fields and settlements. Only 260 hectares remain today. On 20 March, ten elephants from this herd were found by WWF chained to trees without enough food, water and medical care (see photos at: [WWF 24 March 2006 News Highlight](#)). [One of them died on 14 April](#).

These cases have been reported by many local, national and international media (see [Media Collection](#)). Many related documents and photos are available at [Riau's Elephants: The 2006 Tragedy](#) on WWF Indonesia Tesso Nilo Programme's website.

Elephants have been driven out of the Libo Forest Block by questionable logging operations many times over the past few years:

- 17 elephants were poisoned in June 2002, in the same general area where 6 elephants were poisoned in February this year.
- Over 90 elephants raided paddy fields south of the forest in the same year.
- 16 people have been killed in and around Libo Block since 2000.
- 201 elephants have been captured and often died in the process throughout the province and especially in and around Libo Block since 2000.

(For more data on human elephant conflicts, see “Elephants” map at [EoF Interactive Maps](#))

These cases of human-elephant conflict and killings appear to be connected to highly questionable, uncontrolled forest clearing in Riau's Libo Forest, one of the few remaining retreats of the Sumatran elephant in central Sumatra (see Elephant Range 2003 in Map 1).

The Libo Forest Block includes Sumatran lowland moist and peat forest, both of which are threatened in Sumatra. Yet Libo's forests are being converted every day.

Up to half of Libo Forest has peat soil with depth of 2-4 meter or more (Wetlands International & CIDA 2003). Map 2 shows 2005 forest cover related to soil depth. According to the Presidential Decree No. 32/1990 and the Ministry of Forestry Decree No. SK. 101/Menhut-II/2004, natural forest areas located in peat moss forest areas upstream of rivers and swamps with a depth of more than 3 meters should be maintained. Yet Libo's forests over such peat lands are being converted every day.

Part of Libo Forest Block was declared Protection Forest (*Hutan Lindung*) in the currently active Riau Land Use Plan (RTRWP 1994, see Map 1) and thus should not be converted. Yet Libo's Protection Forest is being converted every day.

The Libo Forest Block has been shrinking fast. Until 1988, it used to be a part of a large extent of forest, connected to Giam Siak Kecil and Senepis Forest Blocks and forests in North Sumatra. There was enough room for elephants and other wildlife to roam freely. However, by 2005 Libo had been reduced to a small forest block of barely 190,000 ha. Still conversion continues and it's natural forests are being replaced by oil palm and pulpwood plantations. Between 2003 and 2005, on average 15,000 ha of forest were lost per year. All the wood goes to local pulp and saw mills. The companies who have recently been driving the conversion of Libo Block are listed in the Table 1. (also see Map 1).

It is apparent that many conversion licenses were only applied for to get access to the natural wood on the land, applicants knew only too well that it would be impossible to successfully grow oil palms on the peat land soil.

Since 2005, *Eyes on the Forest* has observed many cases of conversions for pulpwood and oil palm plantations in Libo Forest Block and confirmed the final buyer for the wood (Map 2).

In its latest [March 2006 Investigative Report](#), *Eyes on the Forest* confirms that natural forest inside a concession (PT. Bina Daya Bintara) under management by **Asia Pacific Resources International Holdings, Ltd. (APRIL)** has been logged by contractors since August 2005 and the wood has been supplied to **Asia Pulp & Paper's (APP) PT. Indah Kiat Pulp & Paper mill.**

Eyes on the Forest News (18 April 2006) Forest to Paper, Forest to Palm Oil and No Place to Live for Riau's Elephants.

Throughout 2005 *Eyes on the Forest* Investigations in 2005 have found APP to source natural forest wood from logging operations in the Libo Forest three times (Map 2, also see [Human Elephant Conflict and Forest Clearing in Libo Block, Riau Province](#)):

- [March 2005 Investigative Report](#): APP purchased natural forest wood from a supplier who was logging inside the Libo Block without any proper logging permit from the government, in violation of Forestry Law No. 41 Tahun 1999.
- [July 2005 Investigative Report](#): APP purchased natural forest wood from a supplier who was logging in an oil palm concession of PT. Rokan Era Subur, which is inside the Libo Block. The logging operation of PT. Rokan Era Subur held a Timber Utilization Permits (IPK) issued by Head of Rokan Hulu District (No. 8/Forestry-VIII/2004). The logging was conducted by contractor CV. Tessa Indah.
- [September 2005 Investigative Report](#): APP purchased natural forest wood from PT. Bina Daya Bintara concession, harvested by CV. Sentral Mandiri Perkasa, holding IPK issued by Head of Rokan Hulu District (No. 09/Dishut/IX/2004). It is not known whether PT. Bina Daya Bintara concession is associated with APRIL or APP.

WWF is calling on Government to immediately stop all forest conversion, illegal logging and encroachment in Riau (see WWF press releases on [6 March](#), [13 March](#) and [24 March](#)) In the PR of [6 March](#), jointly published by WWF and the Indonesian Forest Protection and Nature Conservation Agency (PHKA), PHKA explicitly called for an immediate stop to the clearing of all natural forests remaining in Riau.

Eyes on the Forest, a joint project by 28 NGOs in Riau, including WWF asks APRIL, APP and 12 oil palm companies to:

- Immediately stop logging in their concessions in Libo Block and/or sourcing of any wood from Libo Block.
- Have the impact of their operations in Libo Block on elephants independently assessed.
- Have the impact of their operations in Libo Block on all other conservation values independently assessed.
- Protect all high conservation value forests identified during the assessments.
- Comply with all relevant laws and regulations.

[On April 13, APRIL replied to *Eyes on the Forest* that the company “made a corporate decision to immediately halt logging in Bina Daya until a better understanding is established on the impact of our operations on elephant habitat and the escalation of human elephant conflict.”](#) EoF thanks APRIL for this very fast reaction to a dramatic situation and hopes that Government and other companies, especially APP, will react as fast also to save Riau’s elephant habitat. Unless we act immediately, the elephants in Riau will continue suffering and dying a slow death. The day when the last viable elephant population in Central Sumatra has gone extinct might not be far. And tigers will not be long behind. The same tragedy is unfolding for Sumatran tigers - we just don’t see them and their dead bodies as easily.

Table 1. Industrial Timber Plantations and Oil Palm Plantations Overlapping with the Libo Forest Block

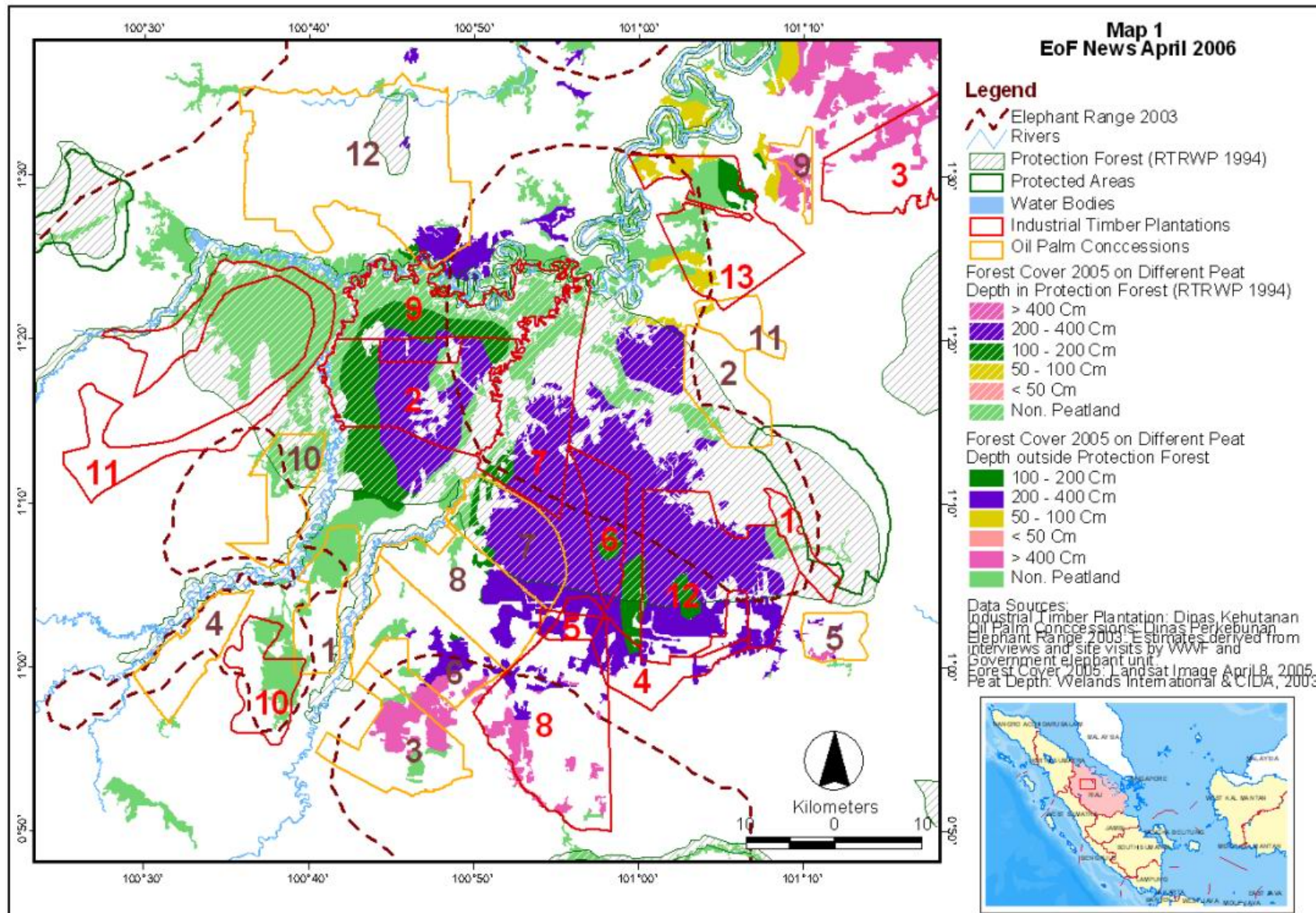
Industrial Timber Plantations

# in Map 1	Concession Holder Name	Associated Pulp Mill	Size (ha)	Elephant Range 2003	Natural Forests on Peat depth 2-4m	Natural Forests on Peat depth >4m	Protection Forest (RTRWP1994)	Natural Forests
1	Koperasi Atan	Not Known	3,166	Yes	No	No	Yes	No more forest
2	Koperasi Harapan Mulya Sejahtera	Not Known	19,173	Yes	-	-	Yes	No more forest
3	PT. Arara Abadi - Beringin	APP	16,624	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
4	PT. Balai Kayang Mandiri	Not Known	6,578	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
5	PT. Bina Daya Bintara	Not Known	1,915	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
6	PT. Bina Daya Bintara	APRIL	6,193	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
7	PT. Bina Daya Bintara	Not Known	18,022	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
8	PT. Insan Sastra Abadi	Not Known	25,925	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
9	PT. Peputra Siak Makmur	Not Known	15,269	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
10	PT. Perawang Sukses Perkasa Industri	APP	7,520	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
11	PT. Rimba Rokan Lestari	Not Known	19,701	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
12	PT. Rimba Rokan Perkasa	Not Known	24,390	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
13	PT. Titian Tata Pelita	APRIL	16,647	Yes	No	No	No	Yes

Oil Palm Plantations

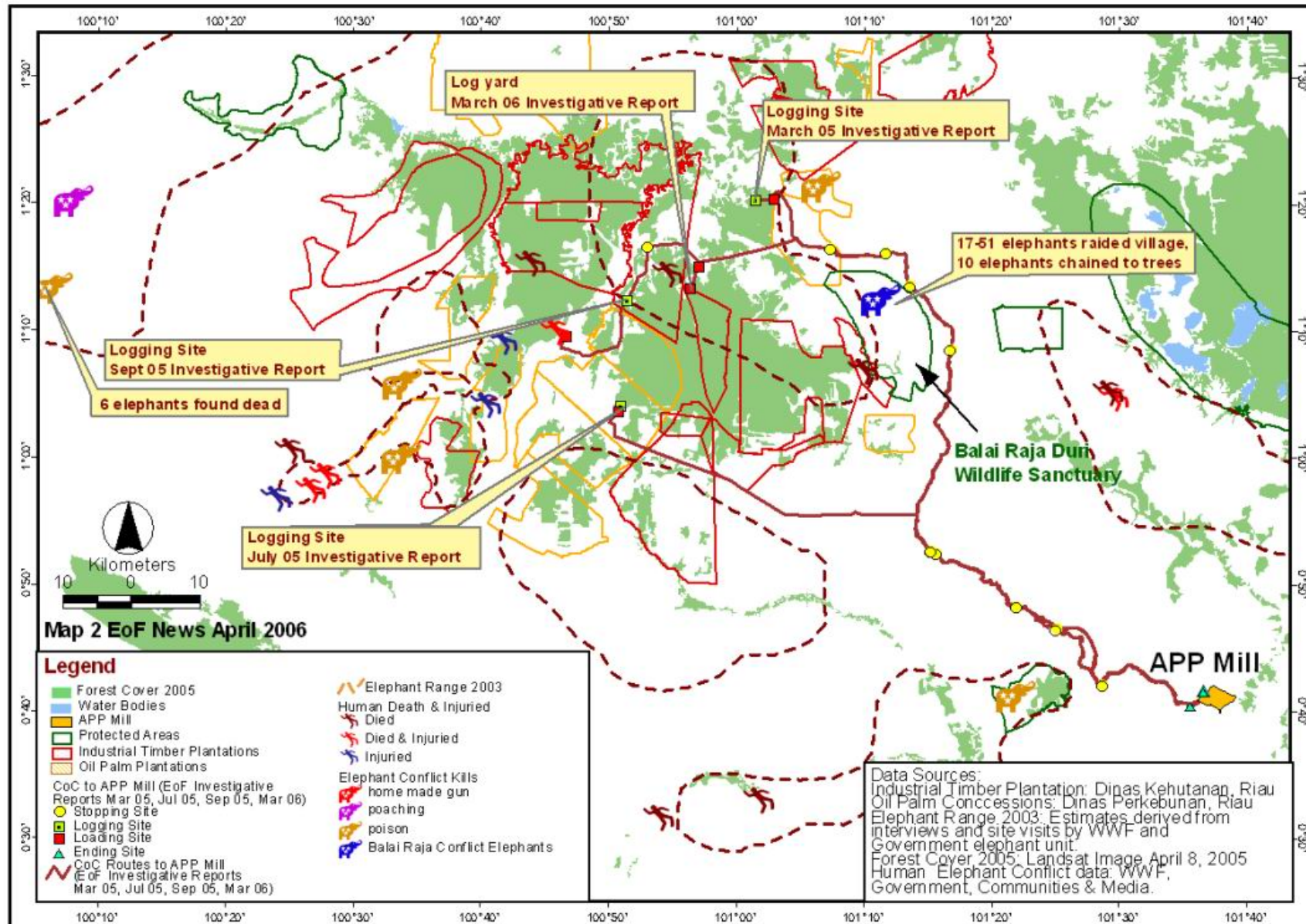
# in Map 1	Concession Holder Name	Group	Size (ha)	Elephant Range 2003	Natural Forests on Peat depth 2-4m	Natural Forests on Peat depth >4m	Protection Forest (RTRWP1994)	Natural Forests
1	PT. Aditya Palma Nusantara (SK Pencadangan)	Duta Palma	7,580	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
2	PT. Darmali Jaya Lestari	Unknown	5,400	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
3	PT. Ekadura Indonesia	Astra	11,123	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
4	PT. Eluan Mahkota	Duta Palma	5,933	Yes	No	No	No	No more forest
5	PT. Murni Samsam	WILMAR	967	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
6	PT. Rokan Adi Makmur	ROKAN	8,000	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
7	PT. Rikan Adi Raya	ROKAN	12,086	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
8	PT. Rokan Era Subur	ROKAN	12,737	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
9	PT. Rantau Bais Famili	Unknown	200	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
10	PT. Sumber Jaya Indah Nusa Coy	Non Group	9,517	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
11	PT. Tumpuan	Unknown	8,000	Yes	No	No	No	No more forest
12	PT. Tunggal Mitra Plantation	Guthrie/Minamas	13,836	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

(Data sources: Dinas Kehutanan, Dinas Perkebunan, APRIL, APP publications)



Map 1. Libo Forest Block: Elephant Range 2003, Forest Cover 2005 and Peat Depth, Protection Forest (RTRWP 1994), Industrial Timber and Oil Palm Plantations.

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Map 2. Four Chains of Custody of Wood from Libo Forest Block to APP.

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