



For immediate release

## **APRIL Participates in Singapore's Inaugural Haze Public Exhibition, Pioneers Fire Prevention Incentive Programme for Riau Villages**

**SINGAPORE, 7 NOVEMBER, 2014** – Pulp and paper manufacturer, Asia Pacific Resources International Limited (APRIL), welcomed the opportunity to participate in Singapore's first-ever public exhibition on haze as a sponsor and exhibitor today.

The exhibition: "Haze: Know it. Stop it.", held at VivoCity from 7 to 9 November 2014, is organised by the Singapore Institute of International Affairs. The exhibition aims to reach out to members of the public to raise awareness of the underlying causes of, and issues related to the haze that affects Singapore.

APRIL's sponsorship and participation in the exhibition underscores its commitment to partner with communities, governments and NGOs to develop lasting solutions to forest fires and haze.

### Holistic Approach towards Forest Fires and Haze

APRIL has followed a strict no-burn practice since commencing operations in 1994. Since then, it has developed a holistic approach to address forest fires.

APRIL manages plantations in Riau Province that provides wood for its pulp and paper mill. To prevent the loss of mill fiber, the company aggressively combats fires on large neighboring unmanaged forest areas, which pose a threat to its plantations and conservation forests. The company has invested over USD 6 million in fire management programmes to detect and respond to fires started near its forest concession areas. It has also trained and equipped more than 400 people in villages near its concession

areas through its Fire Alert Communities (Masyarakat Peduli Api) programme, which involve mostly farmers.

Other APRIL initiatives include raising awareness on fire prevention through community education, deployment of fire detection systems and on-the-ground fire fighting capabilities, as well as initiatives such small business development schemes that contribute to uplifting the overall social and economic standards in rural areas.

#### Pioneering Village Fire Prevention Incentive Programme

This year, APRIL pioneered and piloted a Village Fire Prevention Incentive Programme that rewards Riau villages for successfully preventing fires in their vicinity. Of the 4 villages that participated in the pilot, Teluk Meranti met the stringent criteria and received a USD10,000 award from APRIL in the form of capability building grants and programme funding for the village. The other villages that participated made significant progress towards achieving a 'no fire' goal.

Bey Soo Kiang, Chairman, APRIL: "The Village Fire Prevention Incentive Programme is the latest initiative in our ongoing efforts to confront the causes of haze, specifically fires on unmanaged lands. This complements our fire management efforts, as well as our community development efforts that aim to alleviate poverty by creating meaningful ways of generating a livelihood. In the long term, we seek to promote a deeper and more intrinsic change in the behavior of the communities surrounding our operations.

"Like many others, APRIL suffers the adverse health and financial impact of forest fires and haze. Our approach – fire detection and response, prevention-based education and capability building, and localised economic development – forms a holistic strategy that is necessary to achieve lasting change on the ground," he added.

APRIL will continue to foster collaboration and build on the success of its pilot Village Fire Prevention Programme as part of its other ongoing efforts to prevent the causes of haze.

About APRIL:

Asia Pacific Resources International Limited (APRIL) is a leading producer of fibre, pulp and paper with manufacturing operations in Kerinci, Riau Province, Indonesia. APRIL has been a pioneer in implementing sustainability practices in the pulp and paper industry in Indonesia.

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