

Creating healthy sustainable societies through smart land use planning, improved forest management, sustainable agricultural production and green supply chains.



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Rofiqoh Nasution, 35, harvests arabica coffee fruit from her coffee trees on recently deforested land in Pagar Gunung village near Batang Gadis National Park in Mandailing Natal, North Sumatera.

## Overview

The Sustainable Landscapes Partnership (SLP) works with local governments and private sector partners to conserve nature and improve community livelihoods in Indonesia. With SLP support, governments, communities, businesses and NGOs are working together to develop and test innovative, landscape-scale solutions to problems caused by human pressures on nature. Landscapes include watersheds, protected areas, production forests, national parks, agricultural lands, and towns and cities. The goal is a sustainable development path that protects our food, fresh water and livelihoods and that takes into account nature's critical long-term role in our wellbeing.

### The Challenge

Around the world, our food and fresh water are under threat due to climate change, increasing competition for agricultural lands and declining access to clean water. Deforestation contributes directly to these threats. In Indonesia, the rate of deforestation is accelerating faster than anywhere else on earth – much of it to make room to grow commodity products such as oil palm, pulp and paper, and rubber. Deforestation is further exacerbated by limited options for sustainable livelihoods in local communities, where people rely on the forest to meet their daily needs.

### The SLP Solution

SLP's strategy for tackling these challenges is to work with partners across sectors on climate-friendly development planning, improved forest management, sustainable agricultural production, green supply chains and community livelihoods. To put this strategy into action, SLP and government partners have selected a set of high-biodiversity landscapes in North Sumatera for intensive intervention, and SLP has forged agreements with the diverse range of players whose actions come to bear on these landscapes.

The SLP program focuses interventions at the district level while also working with provincial and national actors to create the enabling conditions to scale up impact.

### Land-Use and Development Planning

Smart land-use and development planning are essential to conserving forests and improving livelihoods, and smart planning requires good information and tools. SLP support to government partners includes strategic environmental assessments, ecosystem valuations, spatial planning and carbon accounting tools, so they can easily factor the long-term value of natural capital and low-carbon-emission development into their decisions.

For communities, SLP gives grants and capacity training to local NGOs so they can facilitate participatory mapping, community conservation agreements and village-level development plans. In addition, SLP works with government and communities to link village and district plans and to ensure that these plans include an integrated approach to managing watersheds.



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Farmer Sarindan Nasution, 48, harvests sugar palm juice from his sugar palm garden in Aek Banir village near Batang Gadis National Park in Mandailing Natal, North Sumatera.

## Livelihoods, Agricultural Production and Green Supply Chains

Agriculture is a driving force in SLP landscapes, and smallholder farmers and private sector companies have significant stakes in the move toward sustainable development. Most of the smallholder production systems in the focus landscapes are not optimized. Rubber, coffee, cocoa, oil palm and sugar palm yields are affected by issues associated with post-harvest handling and limited ability to produce high-quality harvests in a sustainable manner. By helping agricultural partners close these “yield gaps” by implementing best management practices, SLP helps partners meet district-level production targets in a way that avoids clearing forestland.

With the needs of smallholders and companies and the demands of global markets in mind, SLP designs and pilots farmer trainings to increase their productivity on key commodity crops and to improve their access to markets. At the same time, SLP supports private sector efforts to create sustainable action plans, implement best management practices and forge supply agreements with farmer groups. Additionally, SLP supports the piloting of new benefits-sharing mechanisms such as Payment for Ecosystem Services schemes, so benefits from improved conservation practices are shared equitably.

## Forest Management

A critical component of any landscape-wide approach is good forest management. Forests provide food, energy, water, shelter and medicine, and are critical for conserving important species and biodiversity. Forestlands in Indonesia are classified into a range of categories, which include production forests and community forests, as well as national parks and protected areas. Management responsibility for each of these forest categories is spread across national, provincial and district governments and is complex. SLP works with forest managers in the target landscapes to increase capacity and improve management and monitoring practices.

## Provincial and National Policy

To ensure that its work on the ground has lasting impact, SLP collaborates with the provincial and national government to align field activities and interventions with existing policy and regulatory frameworks. In addition, SLP provides information and advice for integrating successful district-level innovations into new policies when opportunities arise.

## What We Do

SLP's roles include convening, facilitation, capacity building and providing evidence-based information. The program:

- Provides reliable information that partners use to make informed planning and management decisions;
- Hosts meetings and workshops to build relationships and share knowledge within and across sectors;

- Facilitates agreements among partners;
- Works with partners to develop and test targeted interventions;
- Provides capacity building where needed;
- Helps partners align interventions with existing policies and processes at local, provincial and national levels to ensure long-term change, and
- Catalyzes replication and amplification through grants, training and toolkits.

## Our Implementing Partners

SLP's diverse range of partners include the Ministry of Forestry; national, provincial and district-level governments; private sector companies working in the focus landscapes; communities and farmers in priority watersheds, and local NGOs that are in good position to facilitate community agreements and village governance processes.

## Where We Work

SLP's integrated activities work together to build a new way of doing business in priority watersheds and areas of high biodiversity conservation value in three contiguous districts in North Sumatera.

The SLP focus landscape in North Sumatera consists of three key biodiversity areas of global significance: Batang Gadis National Park, Batang Toru Protected Area and Angkola Lowland Forests and Peat Lands. These three areas together represent an important region for conservation, greenhouse gas mitigation and sustainable agricultural production, and they provide important habitat and biodiversity corridors for several endangered species along the Bukit Barisan mountain range.

### North Tapanuli

The North Tapanuli District covers 379,971 hectares—roughly 3,799.71 square kilometers—and hostrich biodiversity including orangutans, tigers and tapirs, which are part of the Bukit Barisan ecosystem. Just over 287,166 people live in the district, with average density of 73 people per square kilometer.

Agriculture is the strongest economic driver for the district, where more than 27,000 hectares of land are dedicated to rice and food crop production. The main commodities are incense and Arabica coffee, which farmers grow in the districts' extensive highlands. Incense-producing trees grow naturally as part of complex agro-forestry systems.

Deforestation and land clearing for new plantations by local communities are among the most critical environmental issues in North Tapanuli along with human-caused natural disasters, such as haze, landslides watershed sedimentation and loss of valuable biodiversity.

### South Tapanuli

The South Tapanuli district covers 444,482 hectares, or about 4,444 square kilometers, and is home to the

Sumateran Tiger and the southernmost population of orangutans in Sumatera. The total human population of South Tapanuli is estimated at just over 268,000 people, and the average population density is 60 people per square kilometer. Roughly half of inhabitants over the age of 15 have no formal schooling.

At the core of the district's economy is a strong and growing farming sector. The contribution of agriculture to the district's GDP has grown from 41 to 49 percent since 2010, providing income to about 85 percent of district inhabitants.

Smallholder agriculture in South Tapanuli is dominated by irrigated rice production and upland agro-forestry systems that include rubber, durian, sugar palm, cinnamon, coffee and a variety of vegetables, among other things. Large commercial plantations in the flatter areas are focused on monoculture oil palm and rubber plantations.

Population growth, inadequately planned development and rapid expansion of plantations have reduced the amount of cultivatable land, increased air pollution and contributed to a significant rise in river pollution, as well as degradation of ground and surface water.

### Mandailing Natal

Formerly part of South Tapanuli, Mandailing Natal is now a separate district covering 662,270 hectares—roughly 6,600 square kilometers. The district contains several areas of high flora and fauna diversity, including species of hornbills, tigers and primates. SLP is supporting the management of landscapes around the Batang Gadis National Park and a pilot forest management unit that encompasses the Angkola Lowland Forests and Peat Lands.

Mandailing Natal is home to more than 400,000 people. Less than half of the population has completed secondary school. The agriculture sector is the main source of income for over 80 percent of district inhabitants, who work in farm- and plantation-based jobs.

Hills and mountains dominate Mandailing Natal and make it prone to landslides, floods and other natural and human-made events. In coastal areas, the region is affected by increased sedimentation and salt-water intrusion due to the loss of peat land forests and coastal vegetation to make way for large oil palm plantations. Land conflicts and river pollution are hot-button issues, and community protests are not uncommon.

## Oversight, Guidance and Advice

SLP is guided by a number of councils and committees. The Management Council is composed of representatives of the Ministry of Forestry, Conservation International, founding donors and selected private sector partners. The Council provides guidance and operational strategic direction to the SLP executive team.

An Associates Committee, made up of like-minded private sector companies willing to make significant commitments



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Binsar Rajab, 39, harvests cocoa fruit from his agroforestry garden in Sibanggor Julu village high in the hills near Batang Gadis National Park in Mandailing Natal, North Sumatera.

to climate-friendly development in Indonesia, provides perspective on potential SLP supply chain programs and the status of global demand for sustainably harvested commodities. Members also provide knowledge of best management practices.

At the local level, a Steering Committee in each district, comprised of representatives from district government partners, ensures coordination and relevance of SLP activities on the ground and helps evaluate SLP implementation and results.

SLP holds Multi-Stakeholder Forums to engage with the broader community on specific issues and provide a platform for more informed and inclusive planning and decision making.

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## SLP FOCUS DISTRICTS



sustainable landscapes partnership

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