

MEDIA STATEMENT

Continued activism leads to major Korean paper company's "zero deforestation" vow

International civil society organizations urge Moorim to commit to forest restoration and conservation after years of clearing Indigenous land

June 12, 2023 (SEOUL) – On June 2, South Korea's second-largest paper company, Moorim Pulp & Paper, announced that it would halt deforestation in Papua, Indonesia.

The commitment comes after continued pressure and engagement from international civil society to stop Moorim from clearing forests and violating human rights, all the while claiming to produce eco-friendly paper and pulp.

In the joint investigative report, "Trashing the Last Rainforest", [we found](#) that Moorim cleared more than 6,000 hectares of forest—equivalent to the size of 8,500 soccer fields—in one of the world's three largest rainforests. The forests, which had remained relatively intact prior to land clearing, had boasted unique biodiversity, and were home to threatened species recognized by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

The company also took away local people's livelihoods and "[stripped] them of their social and spiritual values" through land grabbing and deforestation. Moorim failed to respect the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC).

While we welcome Moorim's latest announcement, the company has a major responsibility to hand back the lives of Indigenous People and the life of nature that it took away.

We urge Moorim to follow through with their promise and set a precedent for other multinational companies that are causing deforestation in other parts of the world and be a leader in environment-conscious management that also respects the rights and livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples.

In response to the announcement, **Sergio Baffoni, Senior Campaign Coordinator at Environmental Paper Network (EPN), said:**

"The world's forests are under pressure because of the growing consumption of paper. Three billion trees are logged every year just to produce single-use packaging. We are pleased to see that Moorim stopped the deforestation in the precious biome of Papua, and we now expect the company will restore the forests that have been destroyed and make steps to return the land back to its traditional owners. We also hope that this company will consider minimizing the use of virgin pulp and focus on durable products instead of promoting the single-use products."

Franky Samperante, Executive Director at Yayasan Pusaka Bentala Rakyat, said:

"Corporations have a responsibility to respect and protect human rights. Whatever Moorim's plans for customary lands and forests in Indigenous peoples' areas may be,

the company must obtain free and prior consent of the Indigenous Peoples who are affected by its projects. A greener corporate image does not eliminate social and environmental problems that have occurred in the past.”

Amanda Hurowitz, Senior Director at Mighty Earth, said:

“It is not enough anymore, in a climate and nature emergency, for companies to stop deforestation and give themselves a pat on the back. Business needs to make reparations to communities affected by land grabbing and compensate for forest and wildlife habitats destroyed for, in this case, pulp and paper. Now Moorim needs to take the next step to engage with Indigenous communities in Papua on how best to do that.”

Shin Young Chung, a lawyer from Advocates for Public Interest Law (APIL), said:

“If Moorim is truly the ‘eco-friendly’ company that it claims to be, it only makes sense to end its deforestation in Papua. To ensure that this decision is welcomed by the Indigenous communities already affected by Moorim’s actions, we hope that the company will continue to engage with local communities and do its best to provide remedies for ecosystem restoration and violations of Indigenous rights.”

Hansae Song, a researcher from Solutions for Our Climate, said:

“Moorim’s decision shows that it is possible for companies to shift their behaviors toward environmental conservation. At a time when we need all hands on deck, many companies are still busy hiding their role in exacerbating the climate crisis. We urge multinational companies involved in deforestation, including Moorim, to stop environmental destruction and focus their efforts on conservation and restoration.”

ENDS.

Solutions for Our Climate (SFOC) is a South Korea-based non-governmental organization that advocates for stronger climate policies and reforms in power regulations. SFOC is led by legal, economic, financial, and environmental experts with experience in energy and climate policy and works closely with policymakers.

SFOC’s Bioenergy and Land Use program works at the nexus of climate and forest to phase out unsustainable bioenergy, stop deforestation, and monitor forest-risk commodity supply chains. The team’s investigation of industrial plantations’ impact on Indigenous Papuans¹ has recently been released as a documentary, which can be watched [here](#).

For media inquiries, please reach out to:

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¹ The Papuans featured in the documentary are from Subur village, which should not be confused with Boepe village, which has been affected by Moorim Pulp & Paper’s operations.