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Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities Mr. Bernard Giluk Dompok No. 15, Area 13, Persiaran Perdana Presint 2

62654 Putrajeya Malaysia

Date 11 MEI 2011

Subject Considerations on MTCS in Dutch procurement policy for timber

Dear Mr Dompok,

Thank you very much for your letter of February 17th 2011, in which you have expressed your concern that no decision has yet been taken on the acceptance of the Malaysian Timber Certification Scheme (MTCS) for the Dutch procurement policy.

As you have indicated in your letter, MTCC has undertaken serious efforts to resolve the issues that have led to a negative judgement by TPAC in October 2010. This has resulted in, for example, additional instructions from MTCC to forest managers, strengthening the MTCS criteria on indigenous communities and on conversion by specifying the way these criteria are to be interpreted. Furthermore, MTCC has informed me that maps of MTCS-certified forests are made publicly available, giving stakeholders the opportunity to fulfill their role as monitors.

I appreciate the cooperation with MTCC to come to an understanding on the necessary improvements of the certification system. The revisions made by MTCC are an important step towards strengthening the certification scheme. I consider MTCS to play a leading role in promoting sustainable forest management in the region of South East Asia, where only 2% of the natural forests has been certified.

Environmental Protection Directorate

Sustainable Production Directorate Natuurlijke Hulpbronnen

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Our reference DP/2011044574 Despite my intentions to decide on the issue at an earlier stage, I have come to the conclusion that it is more constructive to respect the wish expressed by the Dutch Parliament that I postpone a decision on the acceptance of MTCS until after this has been discussed in a parliamentary debate. I expect a debate to be scheduled in May 2011 and I intend to take a decision on MTCS as from July 1st 2011. I will inform you of my decision as soon as possible.

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Sustainable Production Directorate Natuurlijke Hulpbronnen

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Yours sincerely,

Joep Atsma