

Solely relying on satellite imagery without on the ground assessment is not enough to give the right information

Your coverage of the recent MapHubs report (News Now Finland, *Investigation: Neste biofuel link to orangutan habitat destruction*, 4 September 2019) incorrectly names Golden Agri-Resources (GAR) as the owner of plantations accused of deforestation. Your article compounds errors in the original MapHubs report, and presents a misleading view of what is actually happening in the landscape.

While satellite imagery is an incredibly useful tool in monitoring for and acting on deforestation, solely relying on satellite imagery without on the ground assessment can mislead. That is why GAR does not rely on this technology alone.

GAR's Mill Prioritisation Process (MPP) uses a combination of spatial analysis and monitoring of publically reported information to assess all supplying mills in our supply chain.

PT Samudera Sawit Nabati (PT SSN), wrongly reported as being owned by GAR – it is not, has been categorised as a high priority/risk mill through this process, due to its location near the boundaries of the Leuser Ecosystem.

Through multiple on-site visits and a review of sourcing practices, **we have not found PT SSN to be sourcing from the plantations** mentioned in the MapHubs report.

To help PT SSN mitigate their sourcing risk given their location, we are working with them to achieve traceability to plantation. This is in line with [GAR's commitment to achieve 100 percent traceability to plantation for our entire supply chain by end 2020](#). We've been 100 percent traceable to the mill since end 2015. To date we are about 62 percent traceable to plantation.

GAR takes claims of deforestation or other poor practice in our supply chain very seriously. While the palm oil industry undoubtedly has a legacy in this area, many producers are working hard to ensure that becomes practice of the past.

Sweeping statements based on 25km-radius of mills are unhelpful and can lead to false accusations that undermine genuine efforts to generate change in the industry. A call to GAR could have clarified and added detail to your article, that would have presented a more accurate and informed report on what is happening in the Indonesian palm oil sector to your readers.

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