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TAPPING FREQUENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY ON A FEW SMALLHOLDINGS IN WEST KALIMANTAN PROVINCE, INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

Latex production has been monitored on a daily basis, since tree opening in 2003, on 38 farms spread over 5 villages in West Kalimantan province. The purpose of this paper is to describe those practices and link them to the productivity achieved, and to relate them with the different socio-economic contexts in those villages. Substantial variability was found in tapping practices for each village. The farmers were assumed to tap their trees very intensively every day in d/1, with very high bark consumption. However monitoring data showed that in fact, for many of the smallholder plantations, tapping was less frequent and very irregular. Indeed, the annual number of tappings could double from one village to another (67 to 130 days/year) and remained well below the number obtained with a d/1 frequency. The time spent on tapping depended on other farming activities. Tapping frequency was a concept that could not be applied to smallholder farmer at least at Indonesian experience. For many plantations, trees tapped in unstimulated 1/2S were clearly under-exploited. Lastly, as bark is the productive capital of the farmer, we found that bark consumption per tapping was inversely proportional to the number of tappings per village. However, it remained very high, with many wounds. Technical training in tapping organized by ICRAF in June 2005 has helped farmer to improve tapping quality and thereby extend the economic life span of the plantations.