



Media Release

For Immediate Release

Samling Welcomes FSC's Acceptance of PFA Complaint as a Positive Opportunity to Clear the Air

12 May 2023, Miri Sarawak – Samling Group (Samling) today confirmed that it has received a formal notice (“Notice”) from the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), that the FSC has accepted the Policy for Association (PFA) complaint against Samling.

Samling was notified that pursuant to the Notice, FSC intends to contact the parties with the aim of promoting dialogue between the parties and to resolve the situation without initiating a full investigation and seeks to explore an alternative dispute resolution (“ADR”) to the complaint. Samling welcomes any initiative to resolve by FSC.

Samling is and has always been a firm advocate of the principles of sustainable forest management with engagement with the various kampungs and actively ensures the protection of High Conservation Value forests. Samling welcomes FSC's initiative as an opportunity to address and refute the numerous allegations and misinformation that have been made against Samling by irresponsible parties once and for all.

Samling Group also emphasised it will facilitate the ADR and extend its fullest cooperation to the FSC through proactive and transparent dialogue.

In this regard, Samling clarified that the FSC had not yet established that two of the group's FSC certificate holders are indirectly involved in alleged unacceptable activities as reported in the media recently. This is given that the FSC is now only in the process of notifying Samling that the PFA complaint has been accepted and seeking to explore ADR.

In relation to the allegations that have been made against entities of Samling that are not FSC-certified but are connected to two chain of custody certificate holders that also belong to the group, Samling reiterated that ALL its companies comply and adhere to all relevant laws and regulations and are committed to operating in a sustainable manner.

The accusation of alleged unacceptable activities conducted by these companies are unfounded. Samling has on numerous occasions readily submitted clear evidence and clarifications to its stakeholders and the press to address this misinformation, even in circumstances when Samling was not given prior opportunity to clarify or address the misinformation.

Samling also explained that it has been left with no choice to file a lawsuit against a non-government organisation for defamation after exhausting all avenues to engage with the NGO in an attempt to clarify the misinformation and address allegations in an amicable manner.