

## Report questions European ecolabel's integrity

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An investigation into two brands of photocopy paper produced by Indonesian firm Pindo Deli that were awarded the EU ecolabel by French standardisation body AFNOR has shown that one of the firm's suppliers was causing serious environmental damage.

The operations of PT WKS and its subcontractors, which supply one of Pindo Deli's two paper mills in Indonesia, "are ... environmentally destructive and some of [their] operations may even be illegal," according to a report issued by green group FERN.

The EU ecolabel, seen as a mark of environmental excellence for products and services, should be removed from Pindo Deli's two brands of photocopy paper, Golden Plus and Lucky Boss, says FERN. These brands were awarded the label in 2006.

FERN also criticised AFNOR and Pindo Deli's lack of transparency, saying they ignored requests for environmental information about the products and the awarding process. "We do not know on what basis the ecolabel was awarded," the group added.

Lukas Hammer from Brussels-based environmental group EEB said: "Unfortunately, this comes as little surprise. We have been warning that stricter requirements on the origin of forest-related products were needed to avoid having wood from highly controversial sources in ecolabelled products."

The European Commission's environment department said it will ask AFNOR to investigate the claims and "act in response to these severe accusations". "When licenses are found to be in breach, which happens occasionally, they are taken away immediately," it told ENDS on Monday.

Revised ecolabel criteria for copying and graphic paper will be discussed in Brussels on Tuesday. Last year, EEB said the proposed criteria were too weak. It wants fully certified products with high percentages for wood from sustainable sources and stricter requirements for certification bodies.

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