Policy Brief: “A Human Rights Emergency for Palm Oil Workers in Tanjungpura: The Urgent Need for Decisive Action and Regional Rules on Mandatory Human Rights Due Diligence”



Recommended policy: urgently enact a Regional Regulation protecting oil palm plantation workers and requiring companies operating in West Kalimantan Province to undertake Mandatory Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD).

Executive Summary

The data are undeniable: of 165 oil palm plantation workers at 8 companies in Ketapang, Sanggau and Sintang regencies, 63.6% remain casual daily workers (BHL) despite having

worked for more than 5 years. Women workers handle 600–1,600 kg of fertiliser a day without adequate personal protective equipment (PPE), suffering chronic skin irritation and even miscarriages. Their entitlement to menstrual and maternity leave is not recognised. Freedom of association is restricted through unilateral transfers of union officials. Companies fail to provide BPJS social security coverage or register workers in the scheme. These are not merely administrative violations. They constitute a human rights emergency within West Kalimantan Province's jurisdiction. The provincial government, entrusted with protecting its citizens, can no longer remain silent. Using their powers under regional autonomy, the Governor and the West Kalimantan Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) must immediately enact a Regional Regulation requiring human rights due diligence by oil palm plantation companies. It must provide firm sanctions, an independent complaints mechanism and a requirement for companies to report publicly on their human rights compliance. Without action today, exploitation will remain "business as usual" in West Kalimantan.

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