

BUILD MOMENTUM FOR LANDSCAPE/ JURISDICTIONAL INITIATIVES BY SHARING POSITIVE, CLEAR STORIES ABOUT ONGOING SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

IN THE REAL WORLD

Showcasing progress at a green district festival

In Indonesia, the Sustainable Districts Association (LTKL) holds a festival where member districts can showcase progress towards their sustainability visions. In 2019, Siak District hosted this event to build support for its Green Siak Declaration and the multi-stakeholder collaboration that brought it to life. **Several palm oil and pulp and paper companies helped develop and implement the Festival, sharing their own actions that are contributing to the Green Siak goals.**

For example, APRIL presented its Fire-Free Villages program and its restoration initiative, and how both efforts advance Green Siak's objectives. Golden Agri-Resources shared its efforts to advance Green Siak by working with public and union officials to expand smallholder certification. A [video at the festival](#) showed company representatives discussing their engagement in the district's LJI.



DURATION

Short

1-3 months, including preparation
for an online presence or public event



COST

(\$-\$\$\$)

depending on the level of audio/visual
production and/or paid media required

KEY POINTS FOR COMPANIES



Companies should share how they are advancing an L/JI's objectives as well as what progress the initiative is making overall, communicating to both internal and external stakeholders.

- ◆ Within the landscape/jurisdiction, companies can help to explain the purpose of, local benefits from, and rationale for the L/JI. They can also share with potential participants the reasons why they are engaging, how committed the government is, what current participants are doing, and how other stakeholders can get involved.
- ◆ Outside the landscape/jurisdiction, companies can indicate where the L/JI is succeeding, and where it still needs support from donors or other businesses.



All storytelling efforts should be based on a clear, shared understanding of the target audiences, their languages, trusted media, understanding of forest and commodity sustainability issues, and what narratives and messages will most likely motivate them to support the L/JI and engage with it over time.

Foremost, companies should rapidly address negative impacts associated with their own operations and sourcing, and credibly report their progress. Although L/JIs need to generate excitement, momentum and support, companies risk the “greenwashing” label if they champion an L/JI while still driving deforestation.



If a company communicates specific actions taken to support an L/JI, these should be put in context by providing a sense of the relative scale and intensity of the contribution. ISEAL Alliance has developed [recommendations](#) for ensuring that such communications and claims are made clearly, precisely, and credibly:

- ◆ Describe the nature of the actions clearly, specifically, and truthfully.
- ◆ Quantify and contextualize the extent of the actions in relation to the entity's full operations, to allow proper interpretation of their scale and scope. For example, if a company claims that it supports 10,000 oil palm smallholders to become certified, it should also state the total number of oil palm smallholders in its full supply chain.
- ◆ Define and document the timeframe for implementing the actions, along with implementation progress.
- ◆ If an action is a partial contribution to a broader effort under an L/JI, specify the extent and nature of the specific contribution.

Messengers are as important as messages. Companies and their L/JI partners should identify who among their staff are most appropriate to contribute stories and examples. If several companies participate in the L/JI, find ways for each to gain public visibility. Company representatives can best present the L/JI jointly with suppliers, community members, NGOs and government officials so it is clear that the companies are full partners in the L/JI.

“ **DEVELOPING PUBLIC MESSAGES, STORIES AND EVENTS WILL ENCOURAGE L/JI STAKEHOLDERS TO DISCUSS THE OVERALL PURPOSE OF THE INITIATIVE** ”



Developing public messages, stories and events will encourage L/JI stakeholders to discuss the overall purpose of the initiative and what is/is not working. Companies can use discussions about public communications as a way to raise concerns with their partners and positively influence what other partners say and do.

EXTERNAL CONDITIONS

THAT IMPROVE LIKELIHOOD OF SUCCESS

- ◆ The L/JI is developed enough as concept or in implementation to be ready for public launch/outreach.
- ◆ The L/JI understands its target audiences and media channels for communicating its vision and work.
- ◆ To reach these target audiences, it has access to the most relevant broadcast media (radio, TV) and social media (platforms, blogs, podcasts).
- ◆ L/JI partners are willing to contribute spokespeople and recruit well-known government, business, NGO, entertainment figures to endorse the initiative.



THE BUSINESS CASE FOR THIS INTERVENTION

- ◆ By aligning jurisdictional goals and key performance indicators with its own sustainability messages, a company can leverage multi-stakeholder efforts to help amplify the story it needs to convey.
- ◆ Shared narratives can serve double-duty as a company's 'unbranded' communication and augment the credibility of the message itself for targeted audiences.
- ◆ Communicating the initiative to the residents and organizations operating in the landscape/jurisdiction can help to grow local support for it.
- ◆ Honest storytelling gains recognition for the company's contributions and strengthens its credibility and relationships in the jurisdiction.