
Campaign against illegal logging in Indonesian national parks

More than 150 Indonesian and international NGOs -among them the WRM- have endorsed a sign-on letter addressed to the authorities of that country denouncing the situation of two national parks and proposing solutions. The initiative was launched by Telapak Indonesia and the Environmental Investigation Agency. The letter reads:

"Illegal logging in both Tanjung Puting National Park and Gunung Leuser National Park is extremely serious and operates under the control of timber barons, members of military, the police and the Forest Department. The situation is made more serious because this is not simply a recent reaction to a political power vacuum, but an acceleration of illegal activities, corruption and collusion that were endemic prior to this recent emergency.

The local communities, although taking part in illegal activities, have reacted to the corruption they have experienced all around them for years. They are now being used in ever growing numbers to create anarchy in the forestry sector to the continuing advantage of the local timber barons and the corrupt officials that support them. It is already known that illegal logging is the larger part of the forestry sector in Indonesia.

The undersigned organizations and individuals demand the stopping of illegal logging in the national parks in Indonesia. This must be done in the context of the following:

- Closure of illegal sawmills and immediate audit of licensed sawmills in the vicinity of the parks. Immediate investigations and prosecution of owners of sawmills, proven to be acting illegally.
- Major international donors, including the USA, the European Union, Japan, the IMF and World Bank, must be held responsible for upholding actions to stop illegal logging and reform forestry law.
- Investigation into corruption of the authorities, including the police, military and forestry department in the local area, the provinces and central government in Jakarta. Prosecution and replacement of individuals, including those at the highest level.
- An alternative forestry law taking into account local community rights, local participation in forestry, and recognition of land claims.
- Establishment of a Consultative Forestry Council with real moral authority and power to provide a medium for forestry issues to be resolved between all the stakeholders at a national, regional, and local level.
- Strengthening PKA in areas of management and establishing park boundaries through participatory mapping. Create an enterprise spirit that includes the community, wildlife and forest conservation and tourism.
- The international community must take responsibility for their consumption of illegally produced timber from Indonesia."

Source: Environmental Investigation Agency, September 1999,

